

# Doing the Arts Justice

A Review of Research Literature,  
Practice and Theory

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## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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- establish partnership research in the arts in criminal justice sector
- develop a research programme to distil high quality evidence of outcomes from arts interventions in criminal justice settings
- feed the results of research back into the development of a coherent evaluation framework for arts activities in criminal justice settings.

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## Foreword

Within the Criminal Justice agenda the arts have a history of being used as a tool to work with offenders to reduce crime and re-offending, one of the major priorities of the Government.

Of the 700 projects run for offenders by the voluntary and community sector in 2003, 400 were arts projects. Through accessing arts programmes many offenders have gained valuable communication skills and new-found confidence as well as gaining a means of positive self-expression. These newly acquired skills may lead to changes in behaviour and attitudes which can open doors for the future through increasing educational and economic opportunities and strengthening relationships.

There is an abundance of success stories to be told within this field. However it is important to understand how and why the arts can make transformative changes and how sustainable these changes are. The answers to these questions will lead to strategies that will ensure support and guidance is effectively targeted.

**This review is the first stage in strengthening the evidence base for the effectiveness of the arts within criminal justice. It has been brought about through a partnership between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Offenders, Learning and Skills Unit based in the Department for Education and Skills and Arts Council England.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Aims and rationale

The criminal justice agenda is a central focus of the government's drive to increase social inclusion. Arts activities are considered to have a range of benefits – from increased self-confidence to transferable skills – which can help divert people away from pathways to crime or break the cycle of re-offending. While several important studies have generated evidence to support such claims for the arts, and although the body of evidence supporting the case for the arts has grown significantly over the last ten years, questions remain about the quality of research methods and findings. This report aims to provide a clear account of the current evidence and theory base for the arts in the criminal justice sector which will inform both practitioners and policy makers, and provide the foundations from which to develop appropriate and robust models of analysis to support critical, longitudinal evaluation of arts practice in the criminal justice system.

### Methodology

The report examines the application and impact of arts practice in the three key areas of criminal justice service provision:

- Prevention (arts practice with young people up to 21 years who are at risk of offending or escalation of existing offending)
- Custodial and community sentencing (arts as interventions in sentencing, both in prison and community contexts)
- Resettlement (arts as an intervention made to assist reintegration into society)

It is based on a critical review of published and unpublished literature which was gathered via searches of academic databases, the world wide web, websites of key policy making organisations and direct contact with arts organisations in the UK and across the world. A set of quality assessment criteria for research design and methodology was applied to assist sorting and analysis of data.

The aims of this review were to:

- generate increased knowledge and greater understanding of the impact of arts interventions on crime prevention and reduction and the rehabilitation of offenders
- distil existing theory and practice-based models of engagement in arts in criminal justice settings.

The objectives of the review were to:

- survey and evaluate the range, practice, method and effectiveness of previous arts interventions in criminal justice settings
- explore and specify the causal mechanisms/models of change underlying existing practice and any links to rehabilitation or prevention
- analyse existing evidence for any differential effects of participation in specific art forms.

The report presents the review's findings in four parts:

- Part One introduces the context for the research, including an outline of the survey methods employed and a summary of literature gathered
- Part Two presents the evidence relating to the effectiveness of arts interventions in the prevention, custodial and resettlement areas of criminal justice provision
- Part Three explores issues and models of arts practice and the development of a theory base for arts provision in the sector
- Part Four draws conclusions and makes a series of recommendations for research development in the arts in criminal justice sector.

## Key Findings

While confirming the current paucity of high quality research and evaluation in the field, the survey findings show very clearly that the arts have the capacity and potential to offer a range of innovative, theory-informed and practical approaches that can enhance and extend provision of educational, developmental and therapeutic programmes across the criminal justice sector. They show that the arts are associated with positive criminal justice outcomes and can play an important part in changing individual, institutional and social circumstances which sponsor criminal behaviour. These findings have extra significance in the light of recent research which has shown that the cognitive behavioural approach does not necessarily provide a blueprint for the sector and that there is a need for a range of exploratory programmes to tackle the risk factors associated with re-offending.

The search for 'grey' literature<sup>1</sup> carried out as part of this review highlighted the depth and breadth of arts provision in the sector, with many examples of interesting, challenging and creative projects in a range of settings. Analysis of the variety of practice identified a series of common effective programme and practice models and features. However, it is important to note that arts practice tends to be generated by local and specific contexts; flexibility and responsiveness is a key indicator of success for arts interventions and should not be dispensed with in favour of standard models.

The weaknesses in the evidence base for the impact of the arts are both technical and conceptual. On one level, the material generated has been lacking in quantity, quality and longitudinal reach. At the same time most arts in criminal justice research has paid insufficient attention to issues of design, rendering it unable to explain what it is about participating in the arts that makes a difference. In particular the arts have lacked an explicit theory base from which to develop plausible and testable models of change.

The review of theoretical frameworks from psychological, sociological and educational research carried out here, together with models of engagement arising from how artists working across the criminal justice sector construct and describe their practice, identified a number of promising, often overlapping, theoretical strands which might be developed to help explain how and why participation in arts activities may achieve changes in behaviour and achievement.

The main findings of this report can be summarised as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Grey literature is commonly defined as documentary material produced by government, public, private and voluntary sector sources, in both print and electronic formats, that is not commercially published and therefore difficult to identify and acquire. It typically comprises technical reports, working papers, conference proceedings, theses and business documents.

- **Context**

The challenge for the arts in criminal justice sector is to demonstrate its effectiveness to the satisfaction of external audiences. While it is important to be able to reveal an association between arts interventions and positive prevention and reconviction outcomes, the primary challenge for the arts in criminal justice sector is to explain this link.

- **Evidence of Effectiveness**

The quantity and consistency of findings from across the key areas of criminal justice service provision suggest that there is a strong case to be made for the effectiveness of arts practice across a range of areas.

In prevention contexts with young people, evaluation studies provide evidence that arts programmes can reduce offending behaviour and incidents of disruption, help disaffected young people re-engage with education, and sponsor personal and social development.

Evidence from work in custodial and community sentencing settings shows that arts interventions are associated with reductions in re-offending and raising awareness of the criminal justice system, reducing rule-breaking and improving relationships in prison, delivering basic and key skills and developing the prison education system, changing attitudes to offending, building up human and social capital and enhancing the effectiveness of offending behaviour programmes.

There is a relative lack of practice and research on arts interventions with ex-offenders. Nevertheless, arts-based resettlement programmes have had some success in routing ex-offenders into training and employment by helping them to develop a range of personal and social skills which increase employability as well as facilitating the acquisition of formally accredited educational skills and qualifications. There is some evidence to suggest that participants in these programmes are much less likely to re-offend than non-participants.

- **Practice**

Although the arts in criminal justice sector is not bound together by a coherent set of practices or consistent thinking, it is possible to identify a number of major thematic strands in practice. These include: arts to enrich and broaden the education curriculum; arts education; arts as therapeutic interventions; arts as adjunctive therapy; arts for participation and citizenship; arts as a cultural right.

Effective features of practice which are generalisable across the sector as a whole include: the provision of opportunities for artist training, reflection and self-evaluation; coherent aims and objectives; recognition of cultural differences between ages and ethnicities; partnership with a range of agencies to provide an overarching structure to support and develop the gains made by participants; a recognition of and commitment to developing the personal and social qualities the individual practitioner brings to the process.

While there are some examples of robust approaches to research and evaluation across the sector, these are isolated and disconnected. The weaknesses repeatedly noted in the research and evaluation material gathered for this review include: lack of baseline information; lack of controls; problems finding appropriate measures; over-reliance on anecdote; assumptions made about links between outcome and intervention (and limited linking of evidence to findings); lack of use of research and literature; short-term views; small samples; difficulties accessing information relating to offending; and lack of information about how qualitative data has been analysed and interpreted.

- **Theory**

A key component of a robust evidence base in the arts in criminal justice sector is the development of a theory base from which to distil testable models of change. The literature indicates a number of established explanatory models within, or in relation to, which the impact of the arts in general can be specified. These include cognitive behavioural theory; role theory/social learning theory; resiliency theory; social capital theory; learning theory; intelligence theories; and arts therapies.

Analysis of how artists working across the sector construct and describe their own practice suggests that there is a promising basis for the development of arts-specific models of change. This is particularly strong in the context of drama, theatre and performance, where marking theory and performance theory are two particularly distinctive reflective strands.

- **Impacts**

The existing evidence base in the arts and criminal justice sector suggests that the participatory arts work on affective, cognitive and behavioural, as well as neurological levels. Specifically, four types of impact are identified: changing individuals' personal, internal responses to drivers or triggers that lead to offending; changing the social circumstances of individuals' lives by equipping them with personal and social skills that can help them build different relationships and access opportunities in work and education; changing and enriching institutional culture and working practices; changing wider communities' views of offenders and the criminal justice system.

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



## PART ONE

### INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND METHOD

The first part of the report explains the context for this study, dealing with its rationale, links to current policy development and methodology employed. It is organised as follows:

- introduction
- policy and delivery frameworks
- research methods.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The criminal justice arena has represented a central context in the government's drive to tackle social exclusion. Research evidence from around the world has demonstrated that there may be a link between participation in the arts and favourable criminal justice outcomes. The arts may, therefore, have the capacity to contribute significantly to this aspect of the social inclusion agenda by helping people turn away from crime.

Arts activities are considered to have a range of benefits, from increased self-confidence to transferable skills, which can help divert people away from pathways to crime or break the cycle of re-offending. But, while several important studies have generated evidence to support such claims, and although the body of evidence supporting the case for the arts has grown substantially over the last ten years, questions remain about the quality of research methods and findings.

In the main, research and evaluation in the sector has tended to be short-term, lacking in conceptual and methodological rigour, over-reliant on anecdotal evidence, unable to adequately specify, quantify or explain outcomes, or to demonstrate clear causal connections between participation in the arts and a positive outcome (Miles, 2004). In addition, and as noted at a recent Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) seminar, 'Offender Rehabilitation and the Arts' (11 September 2003, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS): for details see [www.ippr.org.uk/research](http://www.ippr.org.uk/research)), there is currently limited evidence for the specific impact of participation in arts interventions on key social policy goals, including (alongside rehabilitation) improved educational attainment and mental and physical health.

Other difficulties of evaluation in the criminal justice sector highlighted by the IPPR seminar included:

- the question of what 'success' might mean in this context
- how to measure outcomes of practice
- how to show that gains made through the arts transfer to life outside the situational context of the arts project
- how to attribute outcomes of projects to participation in the creative process.

The arts sector needs to substantiate its claims for effectiveness in the criminal justice arena which, at a minimum, requires that it matches the 'What Works' criteria for effective evidence-based practice (Maguire, 1995). In addition to generating a robust evidence base, the sector must be able to explain how and why the arts can have a positive effect on the factors influencing re-offending. To do this it needs to develop its own body of theory from

which arts-specific models of change can be identified. Above all the process of research underpinning this review highlighted the lack of long-term studies showing hard and measurable outcomes of participation in the arts backed up by a testable model of change.

This review of research literature, practice and theory development in the arts and criminal justice sector was commissioned by Arts Council England, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit (OLSU) at the Department for Education and Skills.(DfES) It marks the first stage in strengthening the evidence base for the arts in criminal justice.

## 1.2 Report aims and structure

The aim of this report is to provide a clear account of the current evidence and theory base for the arts in the criminal justice sector. Its findings will inform practitioners and policy makers across the sector and help to develop appropriate models of analysis to support critical, longitudinal evaluation of arts practice in the criminal justice system.

The report is constructed from a critical review of research and practice in the arts and criminal justice sector within the UK and internationally.

The aims of the review were to:

- generate increased knowledge and greater understanding of the impact of arts interventions on crime prevention and reduction and the rehabilitation of offenders
- distil existing theory and practice-based models of engagement in arts in criminal justice settings.

The objectives of the review were to:

- survey and evaluate the range, practice, method and effectiveness of previous arts interventions in criminal justice settings
- explore and specify the causal mechanisms/models of change underlying existing practice and any links to rehabilitation or prevention
- analyse existing evidence for any differential effects of participation in specific art forms.

The report seeks to represent the variety and balance of practice across the different art forms - theatre, drama, visual arts, music, dance, opera, sculpture, crafts, literature and multi-art projects - and to examine its application and impact in three key areas of criminal justice service provision:

- prevention
- custodial and community sentencing
- resettlement and reintegration into society.

For the purposes of this exercise, prevention is defined as provision that seeks to address the risk factors associated with offending to prevent an offence occurring in the first place; interventions as provision that directly challenges offending behaviour; and resettlement as provision targeted at risk factors associated with increased risk of offending at the end of sentence. However, it should be noted that these categorisations are constructed to facilitate

ease of reporting rather than as entirely accurate reflection of practice. The work of the Youth Justice Board (YJB), for example, crosses over prevention and intervention categories, while the process of rehabilitation itself is clearly often cyclical rather than linear (with a majority of offenders currently re-entering the system at various points).

The report is comprised of four parts:

- Part One introduces and explores the background to and context for the research, including an outline of the survey methods employed and a summary of literature gathered
- Part Two presents the evidence relating to the effectiveness of arts interventions in the prevention, custodial and resettlement areas of criminal justice provision
- Part Three explores the issues relating arts practice in the criminal justice sector and the development of a theory base for arts provision
- Part Four draws conclusions and makes a series of recommendations about the development of the arts in the criminal justice sector.

## CONTEXT - Policy and Delivery Frameworks

The prison population in England and Wales has increased by 55% over the last ten years (Counsell, 2003). By March 2004, the prison population in England and Wales stood at 74,960, including 4,500 women and 11,000 under 21-year-olds, of whom 2,500 were under 18 (Prison Reform Trust, 2004). Greater use of prison and probation in recent years has occurred due to increased severity of sentencing within the judicial system (Blunkett, 2004: 9). At the same time, 58% of offenders (including 76% of young male offenders) are reconvicted within two years of completing their sentence (Social Exclusion Unit - SEU, 2002: 5).

It is widely accepted that low levels of educational attainment and poor employment prospects are associated with the propensity to re-offend. Many offenders' basic skills are rudimentary. Half of all those in custody are at or below Level 1 (the level expected of an 11 year-old) in reading; two-thirds in numeracy; and four-fifths in writing. These are the skills required for 96% of all jobs (SEU, 2002: 44).

The costs of crime are considerable. In monetary terms alone, recorded crime committed by ex-offenders amounts to at least £11 billion per year (SEU, 2002: 5). In 2002-3, the average cost per offender in custody to the Prison Service was over £36,000 (Prison Reform Trust, 2004).

These statistics and the associated costs to the system highlight an urgent need to identify and implement more effective interventions to encourage offenders to avoid re-offending, both within community and custodial settings and in preventative work.

## 1.3 Programme delivery and key drivers

This section briefly explains and examines some of the key programmes delivered across the main areas of the criminal justice system, the key drivers informing them and their relevance to arts practice, research and evaluation.

### 1.3.1 What works in preventing offending by young people?

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) adopts a risk and resiliency framework, aiming to reduce the risk of offending by young people and to enhance resiliency by altering individual young people's responses to their environment (which lead them to commit an offence) and intervening in that environment (improving environmental factors which lead to offending). Risk factors for offending by young people have been identified as (YJB, 2001):

- low achievement in school
- family problem behaviour
- peer involvement in problem behaviour
- a range of personal/individual factors.

Strategies that have been identified as successful in reducing risk/enhancing resiliency include family-based strategies (for example, parenting support), school and community based strategies (for example, reading schemes and after school provision), reasoning and social skills education and specific intervention programmes.

Programmes that aim to improve personal and social skills, and which focus on changing behaviour and multi-agency programmes (combining a number of approaches and addressing a number of risk factors), have been shown to be most successful (YJB, 2001 quoting Lipsey, 1992). Restorative justice – involving young offenders in direct reparation to victims and/or the wider community - has also been applied successfully in youth justice settings. An evaluation of the Final Warning scheme for young offenders (adopting a restorative justice model) showed a 17% reduction in re-offending compared to the previous approach based on police cautioning (SEU, 2002: 84).

Effective group work interventions with offenders incorporate the following features (Gornick, 2001):

- delivery in the context of a multi-service approach that aims to tackle a range of risk factors
- adherence to the risk principle - more intensive programmes aimed at high risk offenders and vice versa
- focus on 'criminogenic' needs - direct focus on risk factors that cause offending and protective factors that can prevent it.

Group work with young offenders also incorporates (Merrington, 1998):

- a delivery style that matches young people's learning styles (including a participatory approach and combination of active and reflective components)
- structured, directive approaches (incorporating a 'teaching' element)
- a flexible approach that can respond to young people's changing needs.

### 1.3.2 Interventions in custodial and community settings

The UK government's Social Exclusion Unit identifies the 'drivers' that contribute to re-offending as drug and alcohol addiction, housing problems, physical and mental health problems, family problems and poor basic skills, reducing employability (SEU, 2002). The government's strategy for reducing offending focuses on resolving these issues in offenders' lives (through improving prison education and resettlement services, for example) and changing individual offenders' responses to them (via programmes to improve personal and social skills). This strategy includes the following priorities:

- delivery of offending behaviour programmes, to improve thinking skills, anger management and self-control, for example (7)
- improved drug rehabilitation services inside prison and connections to community-based treatment: government research has shown that drug rehabilitation programmes reduced reconviction rates by 11% (7)
- delivery of accredited basic and key life skills programmes that can help offenders gain employment on release from prison (43)
- vocational training programmes for offenders that provide opportunities to make contact with employers and gain practical work experience (55)
- continuing promotion of the 'decency agenda' that recognises prisoners' basic rights, improving the atmosphere and prisoner/staff relationships inside prisons (Carter, 2003: 3)
- linking custodial interventions with reintegration into the community more effectively via the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), providing end-to-end monitoring of offenders and working in partnership with a number of agencies to tackle the range of risk factors associated with re-offending (Carter, 2003).

Evidence-based practice in the UK draws heavily on research and practice in the USA. An influential review of the evidence base for crime prevention in the USA makes an important distinction between programmes and practices which explicitly address crime, and informal social controls that make an invisible yet highly significant contribution to crime prevention and reduction - '*a critical mass of institutional support for informally deterring criminal behaviour*' based on attachments in family, schools and communities (Sherman et al, 1997).

#### a. Offending behaviour programmes

Offending behaviour programmes address issues such as anger and violence, thinking skills, self-control, victim awareness/empathy and attitudes to crime. Programmes aim to develop insight and teach personal and social skills to encourage offenders to make positive choices in situations of risk. In the UK offending behaviour programmes are based on evidence-based models from North America and incorporate a cognitive behavioural approach. In an effort to maintain standards of programme content and delivery, a number of accredited offending behaviour programmes have been developed for community and custodial settings. Cognitive behavioural offending behaviour programmes can be measured by the use of psychometric tests (assessing factors such as attitude changes and anger levels) and reconviction studies.

A recent evaluation of prison and community-based thinking skills programmes found no significant differences in two-year reconviction rates for treatment and control groups (Falshaw et al, 2003; Cann et al, 2003). These findings contradicted those of an earlier study of the same programme that found a reduced reconviction rate of 14% for offenders taking part (Friendship et al, 2002). The more recent evaluation considers a number of reasons for this inconsistency, including motivation being higher with the introduction of a new programme leading to initial positive findings. It concludes that *“there are still gaps in our understanding of “what works” in practice – in particular, “what works with whom?”* and suggests there is a need for programmes to be seen as ‘exploratory’, as current evidence does not offer a blueprint that will be relevant to all offenders. The Home Office is currently working on a qualitative evaluation of cognitive skills programmes to uncover information relating to quality of programme delivery and improve understanding of changes triggered by participation.

### **b. Learning and skills**

Compared to the general population, offenders have disproportionately poor personal and social skills which makes it hard for them to break out of the cycle of re-offending. In recent years learning and skills for offenders in custody has focused on providing those opportunities which enable offenders to gain the skills and qualifications they need to hold down a job and play a positive role in society. Progress is measured through achievements in literacy, language, numeracy and work skills qualifications.

The Offenders’ Learning and Skills Unit supports a strategic partnership between the Department for Education and Skills and the Home Office, and is a key contributor to the Government’s Skills for Life Strategy and the Home Office’s programme to reduce re-offending. The OLSU is working to ensure that the needs of offenders are addressed in line with the Government’s National Skills Strategy. The aim is that the content and quality of learning programmes for offenders in custody, and the qualifications which these lead to, should increasingly be the same as those of comparable provision in the community.

The OLSU strategic approach for working with the Voluntary and Community Sector (DfES, 2004a) identified the following areas in which these organisations have contributed to meeting learning and skills needs for offenders:

- employment
- basic and key skills
- personal and social skills
- parenting and family learning
- debt counselling
- money management
- driving skills
- the arts
- work with young people
- work with women
- health and sexual health
- environmental awareness
- mentoring
- victim awareness.

Information gathered in December 2003 showed that many projects delivered by the voluntary and community sector were delivered by arts organisations (394 out of 703 in 2002-3). The Guide for Heads of Learning and Skills in prisons and Managers in the Voluntary Sector (DfES, 2004b), prepared in collaboration with CLINKS<sup>2</sup>, acknowledges that voluntary organisations bring a number of important qualities, including:

- flexibility and innovation
- specialist skills and interests
- informal, non-institutional approaches to learning
- real contributions to purposeful and key performance targets (KPTs)
- added value through broadening activities and opportunities offered to prisoners
- creating a positive atmosphere in the establishment.

This document emphasises the need for consistency in joint working, setting up and analysis, discussion and action planning.

### 1.3.3 Resettlement

The resettlement agenda also focuses on resolving the drivers' to crime identified by the SEU, including poor basic skills and drug and alcohol problems, particularly highlighting the need to support offenders on release from prison to facilitate take up of further education and/or training, resolve practical problems and develop skills needed to access the job market (SEU, 2002). The £30 million *Custody 2 Work* initiative delivered by the Prison Service, running for three years from April 2003, aims to increase the numbers of offenders obtaining jobs or training places on release.

*FRESH START*, part of the Job Centre Plus investment, provided New Jobseekers Interviews for over 14,000 released prisoners in 2002-3. Focusing on ex-offenders with a history of drug misuse, the *Progress to Work* programme provides access to the labour market, while *Jobpoints* and *Worktrain* give prisoners electronic access to information on job vacancies and training places. This is complemented by *Jobcentre Plus* surgeries across the secure estate, providing employment and benefits advice and support, at both the induction and pre-release stage.

The targets for 2002-3 were for 28,000 prisoners to gain employment, training or education outcomes upon release. Actual figures showed a 17% achievement above those targets, including 30% of prisoners with an ETE (education, training and employment) place on release. These key performance targets (KPTs) are the measures of success used to provide evidence of reducing re-offending by 5% by 2006 (Prison Service News, 2003).

### 1.3.4 Relevance of the arts

The literature reviewed for this report includes examples of arts provision that directly and explicitly seek to address the risk and protective factors relevant to reducing offending. However, this is problematic because much arts practice does not construct itself in this way. Based on Sherman's principle of 'critical mass', it seems likely that arts initiatives operating within (and outside) the criminal justice sector work, alongside a range of other initiatives and relationships specific to local contexts, to reinforce many of the protective factors that act as a deterrent to and reduce or prevent crime.

<sup>2</sup> CLINKS is an umbrella body that supports and develops the work that voluntary organisations undertake within the criminal justice sector in England and Wales. For more information see [www.clinks.org](http://www.clinks.org)

In the context of prevention, specific programmes incorporating the arts, such as *Splash Extra 2002*, have had independent evaluations and arts projects are commissioned for Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs), as well as contributing to specific intervention programmes such as Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes (ISSPs). Arts Council England's partnership with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) is focusing on work with the juvenile offender population (15-17 years) through the key Detention and Training Order (DTO) programme in both custodial and community sentences, and through the ISSPs.

The improvement of offenders' literacy, language, numeracy, access to ICT (information communications technology) and employability is at the heart of learning and skills provision in prisons, and provides the foundation for effective resettlement. The arts can make significant contributions in these areas. The arts curriculum in prisons complements other parts of the learning and skills provision and gives opportunities for learners to develop an understanding of the arts and their contribution to culture and society; increase their self-esteem and confidence; develop increased creative, personal and work-related competencies and to achieve national qualifications. Those with poor educational experiences need to be engaged in a range of ways, indeed sometimes creative activities can be the first step to addressing needs in a wider sense. They have proved to be effective in engaging disaffected learners and encouraging participation in other learning and skills activities. The arts contribute to the cultural and creative life of the prison, giving opportunities for informal interaction between staff and prisoners. They provide an opportunity for self-expression and can thereby assist in maintaining good order.

Anger management, basic and key skills, personal, social and life skills, family learning and and victim awareness are among the specific prison-based programmes relating to offending behaviour where arts organisations have made valuable professional contributions and interventions.

In the context of resettlement, arts organisations have delivered presentation and ICT skills, work-related and professional skills, and have made effective contributions to drug treatment programmes.

## RESEARCH METHODS

A strategic approach was taken towards identifying and collecting literature relevant to the sector. The importance of gathering grey literature was highlighted early in the process of designing the research. The desire to generate a theory base and arts-specific models of change necessitated analysing how artists and arts organisations construct and describe their practice in literature produced from source, which was often difficult to track down.

### 1.4 Search strategy

The survey of literature and practice included:

- a review of the Arts Activities in Prisons Directories produced by the Unit for the Arts and Offenders in 2002 and 2003 which include comprehensive lists of arts practice in UK prisons for the last four years. Key practitioners/companies in the UK were identified and contacted by letter, email and telephone with requests for research/evaluation reports and other literature about practice. Throughout this process practitioners' knowledge and understanding of the range of practice and research in the sector was explored by means of telephone interviews and email correspondence
- a call for literature, announced on a UK arts email network, the Prison Arts Network and arts magazines in the UK, including *Mailout* and *Arts Professional*

- telephone contact with Arts Council England Officers responsible for social inclusion in each region of England, to gather details of key artists and arts organisations working in their area who were, in turn, contacted. This was particularly useful for identifying artists and companies working in prevention or with young people at risk, for whom there is no centrally collected/accessible database (from these search activities, 63 UK-based artists and arts organisations were identified and contacted with requests for literature)
- a search of the world wide web, using combinations of words and phrases including: 'arts' 'music' 'drama' 'dance' 'performance' 'theatre' 'opera' 'visual arts' 'sculpture' 'crafts' 'ceramics' 'pottery' 'literature' 'poetry' 'offenders' 'criminals' 'prisoners' 'prevention' 'detention' 'corrections' 'prisons' 'custody' 'penal system' 'research' 'evaluation' 'report/s'. In addition, a call for literature was announced on the Community Arts Network (USA) and Community Arts Network (South Australia). Key international practitioners and companies internationally were identified
- searches of the policy and publication/research pages of web sites of key policy makers or organisational bodies in the UK and internationally, including: Arts Council England, Social Exclusion Unit, Youth Justice Board, Home Office, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Institute for Public Policy Research, Unit for the Arts and Offenders, Centre for the Study of Arts and Community (USA), National Criminal Justice Reference Service (USA), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (USA), National Endowment for the Arts (USA), Correctional Service of Canada
- a search of electronic databases (using the search terms listed above), including: International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, Psychinfo, CINAHL, EMBASE, SportDiscus, Social Sciences Citation Index (ISI Web of Science), ERIC/Dialog. In addition, bibliographies of research literature were searched and appropriate papers and reports selected and gathered.

## 1.5 Analysing the literature

All the literature gathered was assessed for its relevance to the study aims and objectives. All relevant literature was then critically reviewed. Single examples of practice were analysed in relation to four key themes/categories:

- practice model or arts method
- theory base
- research/evaluation method
- evidence of outcomes/effectiveness.

The analysis of literature proceeded along 'best evidence' principles. This means that evidence from empirical studies (both qualitative and quantitative) that had a strong research design and/or evidence of research quality were prioritised in the early stages of the analysis. Categories emerging from these studies were then used to examine other literature. The final categories or research findings were refined and are reported in the results section. Throughout the presentation of findings there are attempts to communicate the relative quality of evidence presented.

## 1.6 Quality assessment criteria for research design and methodology

An assessment of the research quality of qualitative and quantitative research was attempted, conforming to generally accepted standards for each research paradigm (although it is acknowledged that issues of quality in research are contentious). Each study was examined to answer the following questions and a relative score given to each.<sup>3</sup> The findings of higher scoring studies were used to guide the analysis.

Thus for all studies:

- was a clear research question addressed?
- is the method of data collection clear and recognisable?
- is there clear information regarding the programme/intervention aims and participant rates?
- is there clear information about selection procedures and sample size?
- are strategies to minimise bias incorporated?
- are correlations treated as evidence of causation, or is there consideration of other explanations for findings?
- are claims made linked to evidence presented?
- is there any consideration of the strength or magnitude of the effects identified (are participants tracked beyond the intervention to assess transferability of gain to contexts outside the intervention, or is there assessment of 'effect size' where relevant)?

For quantitative studies:

- is the sample size representative?
- are sample selection procedures clear and reliable?
- was a control or comparison group (or other means of eliminating different explanations of effects) used?
- is there a consideration of drop out rates over time or of response rates and their impact on findings?
- was there a consideration of the statistical significance of findings?

For qualitative studies:

- is there an attempt to triangulate research findings (by including evidence from other research, employing some quantitative methods or representing perspectives from different 'stakeholders')?
- is the procedure for analysis and interpretation of self-reports or anecdotal data clear and recognisable?

The focus of quality assessment is on whether a study has detailed clear procedures for identifying findings and can support, via a range of evidence, their interpretation of effects (a standard of empirical research that can be applied across qualitative and quantitative research methodologies). This meant that qualitative and quantitative research findings were given the same status. This greatly facilitated the analysis process and is important in a study of the arts since quantitative methods (generally perceived as generating more 'reliable' or high quality findings) are, on the whole, not refined enough to explore the subjective experience of participation in the arts.

<sup>3</sup> These questions were devised via consultation of Arts Council England and National Foundation for Educational Research standards for qualitative and quantitative research methodology (Reeves, 2001) and scientific procedures employed in the influential Sherman Report (1997). The decision not to strictly apply quality criteria of the Sherman review was taken as it would exclude all qualitative studies and research based on small samples. Most research studies carried out in the sector are small scale and include some qualitative methodology. Broader assessment criteria were therefore adopted.

## 1.7 Summary of literature

This section presents a summary of the literature collected and reviewed during the study, separated into:

- publication type
- criminal justice context – area of intervention
- art form
- country.

This was assessed for how representative it is of the sector as a whole and is followed by a brief summary of research methodologies employed in studies reported in the literature.

### 1.7.1 Summary of literature by publication type

The following literature was gathered and analysed:

- books/monographs (n=14)
- articles/research papers (n=63)
- evaluation reports (n=57)
- literature/practice reviews (n=4).

The 14 books collected ranged from edited books containing anecdotal or reflective accounts of practice and detailed descriptions of single initiatives to academic texts. Four unpublished papers were included in the articles/research papers collected. The evaluation reports collected varied widely in terms of quality, length and method. A range of other literature was also gathered including:

- annual reports
- conference reports
- press articles
- project descriptions
- marketing material
- creative products, including writing anthologies, CDs, videos and prison magazines which were also sent by artists and arts organisations.

### 1.7.2 Summary of literature according to area of criminal justice intervention and context

Of the examples of arts interventions described in the literature:

- 31% (n=59) described interventions in prevention contexts
- 64% (n=122) described interventions in custodial or community sentences
- 5% (n=9) described interventions in resettlement contexts.

Interventions in each area of criminal justice provision may take place as mandatory education or therapeutic provision, or as special projects based on voluntary participation. They may be ongoing education classes, rolling programmes or special one-off projects. Most projects involve active participation in the creative process, though there are examples of less active participation, for example, audiences of performances and prison reading programmes. Most often the literature describes a stand-alone intervention taking place in an educational or therapeutic context, but there are examples of arts tools and techniques being incorporated into a non-arts educational or therapeutic intervention, for example, the use of role play in a cognitive behaviour treatment programme.

## 1.7.3 Summary of literature according to art form

Of the range of arts interventions described by the literature:

- 38.5% (n=77) were theatre or drama projects
- 19.5% (n=39) were multi-arts projects
- 10% (n=20) were art therapy interventions
- 9% (n=18) were visual arts projects
- 8.5% (n=17) were creative writing/words/storytelling projects
- 8% (n=16) were music or music therapy projects
- 3.5% (n=7) were dance projects
- 2.5% (n=5) were dramatherapy or psychodrama projects
- 0.5% (n=1) was a craft project.

The figures indicate that there is an emphasis on theatre/drama and multi-arts projects in the literature analysed in this review.

## 1.7.4 Summary of literature by country

The literature included in this report has primarily been drawn from UK-based practice. In addition, a limited amount of literature from research and practice was gathered from other countries, including the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and South Africa. All literature included in the review was written in English. Of the non-UK literature, that from the USA is best represented, reflecting the strong tradition of the arts in criminal justice sector in the USA.

## 1.8 Methodology of research and evaluation studies

Across the literature gathered, 76 examples of a clear research or evaluation activity were described. As noted above, evaluation and research reports varied widely in terms of quality, length and method employed. The following briefly summarises the research and evaluation studies reported according to the methodology employed:

- quantitative methodology only (n=2)
- qualitative methodology only (n=38)
- quantitative and qualitative methodology combined (n=31)
- literature reviews (n=5).

This analysis shows an emphasis on qualitative and combined qualitative/quantitative research approaches.

## 1.9 Assessment of quality of research findings

There is much variation in the strength of evidence across the literature and the majority of studies are relatively weak when assessed against strict 'scientific' standards. However, the exceptions to this general rule highlight evidence of practice methods or models that 'work' or, at least, show promise for the effectiveness of arts in the criminal justice sector as a whole: *'programs for which the level of evidence is too low to support generalisable conclusions, but for which there is some empirical base for predicting that further research could support such conclusions'* (Sherman et al, 1997). This promising evidence and practice is summarised in Part Two of this report.

Of the 76 examples of a research or evaluation activity, 42 were assessed as studies of some quality, using the criteria outlined above. Key, or most frequently noticed, weaknesses of many of the studies included:

- small samples
- reliance on self-report measures
- lack of control or comparison groups
- assumptions made about the link between outcome and intervention (limited linking of evidence to finding)
- lack of use of other literature/research to examine themes/findings
- short-term views.

Lack of information about how data were analysed and interpreted was a frequent limitation of qualitative studies (only ten of 69 studies employing qualitative methodology reported this). Many studies only focused on identifying effects, without consideration of their strength or transferability to other contexts beyond the arts intervention.

Much of the literature collected for this study did not include any clear research or evaluation exercise (that is, an attempt to evaluate the impact of a programme) but was limited to descriptions of implementation processes. Descriptions of implementations are important sources of learning, however. In addition, absence of evidence does not mean there is an absence of effect: evaluation is a resource-heavy activity and many arts organisations do not have the time or resources to commission or carry out high quality evaluations.

### 1.10 How representative is the literature gathered?

It is difficult to estimate the size of the arts sector in prevention and resettlement as no central database of activity is held to record the range or extent of activities across these areas of criminal justice.

A useful source of information about arts provision in custodial settings is the Unit for the Arts and Offenders' Arts Activities in Prisons: The Directory (2003) which shows in 2002 93% of prisons returning a postal questionnaire (n=121) had carried out one or more arts activities within or outside the education curriculum. Of those reporting arts activities carried out within the curriculum, 77% offered visual arts classes, 25% drama classes, 22% music classes and 5% dance classes. Outside the education curriculum, drama was the most commonly recorded art form, followed by visual arts, music and writing/words/storytelling. In terms of arts provision in custodial settings, therefore, the sample of literature in this review is more representative of work happening outside the prison education curriculum.

Other limitations in the data collected include over-representation of theatre and under representation of arts in resettlement contexts. These limitations may, therefore, reflect an imbalance of practice. Whilst there is a handful of arts companies that have a strong tradition of working with ex-offenders, this area of practice may not have become generalised across the sector. There may be other reasons for over-representation of theatre within resettlement contexts. There is a tradition of academic institutions supporting and developing theatre practice in the sector and this is reflected in the published literature: seven of the 14 books/monographs published focus on theatre and have been edited or written by practitioners and researchers working in academic settings where producing publications is more the norm than for arts practitioners in other contexts.

## **PART TWO** **Findings - Evidence of Effectiveness**

Here the discussion considers in turn the reported impact of arts interventions in prevention, custody and resettlement. In each case the sections are organised to reflect the prioritisation of key themes and issues within each sector and in policy. The strongest evidence base is found in projects and programmes based in custodial and community settings, which is where most practice has taken place and where research and evaluation are, in general and relatively speaking, easier to carry out. This part of the report is organised as follows:

- the arts in prevention
- arts interventions in custodial and community sentencing
- the arts in resettlement.

### **THE ARTS IN PREVENTION**

This section describes the main findings regarding effectiveness of arts programmes in the area of preventing offending by young people. Young people involved in the criminal justice system have specific needs, particularly in developing the skills and capacities needed to counter risk and make a successful transition to adulthood. The discussion here is separated into five sections:

- preventing offending by young people
- facilitating re-engagement and attainment at school
- challenging offending behaviour
- sponsoring personal and social development
- the arts and social inclusion.

#### **2.1 Preventing offending by young people**

A number of evaluations have attempted to measure the impact of taking part in arts programmes on offending by young people. For example, an evaluation of *Hull Cop Shop* (2000-2002), a mobile police unit moving into areas with high rates of youth annoyance, which included the commissioning of arts and sports projects for young people, achieved a 62-78% reduction in youth causing annoyance (Unit for the Arts and Offenders, 2003). Similarly an evaluation of a persistent youth offenders project incorporating arts and drama workshops with a range of social provision, found a significant drop in police charges (compared to charges for six months prior to participation) amongst a group of 37 participants and that '*participation in an organised activity, good use of leisure time and motivation with education appear to have the greatest impact*' on reducing crime (University of Portsmouth, 2002:31).

On a much larger scale, *Splash Extra* involved £8.8 million of government funding on arts and sports activities over the summer of 2002 in the ten crime hot-spot areas as part of the Street Crime Initiative (including 125 arts organisations providing arts activities for 13,455 young people). Evaluation of *Splash Extra* found an overall 5.2% reduction in crime rates in areas that received funding for programme activities. In South Yorkshire, *Splash* areas achieved a 17% reduction in street crime compared to a 62% rise in other areas and Avon and Somerset achieved a 31% reduction in street crime in compared with a 56% rise in non

*Splash* areas over the summer period (Holford, 2002). The *Splash* initiative led to £25 million being allocated to *Positive Activities for Young People* (PAYP), extending the scheme to all areas and all holiday periods, supported by the DfES, Home Office, DCMS and the New Opportunities Fund. The PAYP programme started in early 2003 with a key objective being to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the short- and long-term by means of individually tailored programmes for the most 'at risk' youth, including access to arts, sports and cultural activities that provide opportunities for personal development and promote community cohesion. PAYP is currently being evaluated.

None of these evaluations established a causal link between participating in the arts and reduced crime rates, though it seems reasonable to assume that providing activities in this way is likely to lead to reduced crime rates, if only as a diversionary mechanism for young people who are at risk of offending. On the other hand, evaluation of *Splash* 2001 indicated that many young people taking part in activities might not have been those most 'at risk' of offending anyway, because the initiative did not successfully link with organisations working with young people most at risk (Loxley et al, 2002).

An evaluation of drama-based cognitive behavioural programmes for sex, violent and persistent offenders within a youth offending team (Hewish, 2001) analysed convictions of offenders one year prior to, during and one year post participation and found that from 38 starters, convictions were reduced from 21 in the year before participation to 13 in the year following: 67% of non completers were reconvicted within the year following participation, compared to 43% of completers. The data for this study was incomplete, due to difficulties carrying out the evaluation, but, despite this, the results indicate the promise of the approach. Once more, a lack of other evidence means that a causal connection to participation in the programme cannot be established. In addition, the small sample size means that it is not possible to test for statistical significance.

An evaluation of *Blagg* (Hughes, 2003b), a drama-based offending behaviour programme run with young offenders in community settings by TiPP (Theatre in Prisons and Probation), included a reconviction study. A study of 32 participants and a matched control group found that 30% of participants were reconvicted within one year of participation compared to 39% for a matched control group. Some evidence generated by a qualitative evaluation of the programme supports a link between offending and participation, although the findings are limited by the small size of the sample.

A research and practice initiative, *Gateway to the Arts in the Youth Justice System* (Unit for the Arts and Offenders, 2003), aimed to demonstrate the value and relevance of arts to the youth justice system by evaluating three pilot art projects in three locations with high unemployment, crime and poverty. Gaining access to complete reconviction data was problematic, but information gathered showed that 12 (of 13) participants on one project did not re-offend for a six-month period following participation (although after two years eight had re-offended). Evaluation of a second project found that 80% of completers did not re-offend, and that four of the core group have gone on to gain qualifications or take up training/employment. The report states: '*all three projects produced artistic outcomes of lasting value for the participants, wider community and the agencies involved*'. Again, however, attributing non-offending to participation in the arts projects is problematic.

A similar picture emerges from the other side of the Atlantic where one small-scale multi-arts project with young offenders included a reconviction study. This was run by a company called Opening Closed Doors and focused on producing art works that represented the individual's role in the community and encouraged young people to reflect on their lives.

The evaluation found that, of the 19 offenders successfully completing the programme, only three had probation revoked; and that of 73 offenders who did not access the programme, 23 (or 32%) have had probation revoked or have absconded (Faires, 2002). However, the apparently strong association between participation in the arts and positive prevention outcomes was not underpinned by evidence that could directly attribute changes to participation in the programme.

## 2.2 Facilitating re-engagement and attainment in education

Many project evaluations of arts interventions with young people note improved attitudes to education as an outcome. This section assesses the evidence for the effectiveness of arts programmes to positively affect engagement or attitudes towards education and academic attainment amongst at-risk youth.

An extensive three-year study, run by the National Foundation for Educational Research (Harland et al, 2000), investigated the range of effects and outcomes attributable to school-based arts education and identified seven sets of outcomes (this study was not explicitly related to at-risk youth but the categories of outcomes are useful):

- intrinsic and immediate effects (enjoyment and therapy, calming, relaxing, releasing emotions)
- art knowledge and skills
- knowledge in the social and cultural domains (awareness of surroundings and self, understanding of social and moral issues)
- creativity and thinking skills (acquisition of thinking and problem-solving skills, development of creativity, imagination and the capacity to experiment and innovate)
- communication and expressive skills
- personal and social development (developing a sense of self, enhanced self-esteem and self-worth, increases in different forms of self-confidence, enriched personal skills, growth in awareness of others and empathy)
- extrinsic transfer effects (qualitative evidence supplied by teachers and pupils that arts effects do transfer to other areas of the curriculum, although there was little evidence in terms of academic attainment to support this claim).

Other outcomes noted included the impact on schools, such as arts activity helping to develop a positive and adventurous school ethos and climate, supporting pastoral provision and effective behaviour management, and encouraging involvement of parents and the wider community.

In the USA the *Champions of Change* research initiative (Fiske et al, 1999) investigated the changes that take place via arts experiences. One study (Catterall et al, 1999) found that high levels of arts participation made a more significant difference to academic performance by students in the lowest socio-economic groups (from an analysis of a database containing records of 25,000 students).

A study of the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, that developed arts-enriched curricula in 14 high-poverty schools, found improvements in student performance, as well as other achievements, compared to control schools. A ten-year study of 124 non school-based youth organisations for disadvantaged youth, incorporating sports, academic, community involvement and arts activities (Brice Heath & Roach, 1999) found that young people taking part in out-of-school, informal education activities were doing better than their peers, and that those in arts programmes were doing the best. The authors carried out a detailed investigation

of the arts process with disadvantaged young people and suggested that taking part in the arts provided young people with opportunities to take risks, collaborate together in joint enterprise and experiment with roles (Fiske et al, 1999).

However, Winner and Cooper (2000) carried out an extensive and rigorous review of research that claims a connection between academic attainment and arts participation and found 'no evidence (yet) of a causal connection' between arts education and improved academic attainment (11) *Champions of Change*, and other programmes of this nature, did not control for existing academic ability.

A number of UK arts projects which aim to help young people excluded or on the verge of exclusion from school contributed literature to the review. For example, Talia Theatre run *InFocus*, a theatre programme with children at risk of school exclusion based on providing opportunities to take risks and responsibility and to develop emotional literacy. An evaluation of the programme showed that 32% of pupils involved showed improvements in their attitude to learning and 72% showed an improvement in attainment across subject areas via an analysis of SAT and CAT scores (Standard Assessment Tests and Cognitive Ability Tests - Standard Assessment Tests are used in schools in England and Wales to test a range of abilities at different key stages). The evaluation '*demonstrates the value of creative approaches to disaffection through arts based learning and the teaching of emotional literacy*' (Talia Theatre, 2003: 8). However, information about the evaluation process was not clear from the evaluation report, making it difficult to assess the substance of this finding. An evaluation of Proper Job Theatre Company's *Rehearsal for Life* programme (based on the same model as *InFocus*) found that the project helped prevent permanent exclusion of young people through intensive and in-depth engagement with issues affecting participants (Proper Job Theatre Company, 2002). Again, little information is given about how research findings were linked to the evidence generated, so it is difficult to assess the quality of this finding.

Action Factory's evaluation of their *Careers Education through Participative Arts* (CEPA, 2001) project reports similarly positive findings, but again it is not possible, through the information supplied in the report, to assess the quality of the findings. The project targeted children in alternative educational settings and was a response to the need to provide careers education to a disaffected group. Action Factory developed a model for delivering innovative careers education using participative arts techniques. The project was run in secondary schools, Educational Behaviour Disorder (EBD) schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in Greater Manchester and involved some 200 students. The project included drama, video, music and photography to encourage young people to consider their present situation and future prospects. Teachers involved in the evaluation reported significant progress in individuals' attainment and improved attendance. The report goes on to give accounts of individual change: '*many young people (who displayed serious behavioural difficulties and reject structured approaches to learning) were enthused, motivated and engaged by the art activities and achieved personal growth*' (10).

*Bad Behaviour*, a recent project run by Red Rose Chain (a theatre and film company working with socially excluded young people in Suffolk), involved a small group of young people at risk of permanent school exclusion in devising, performing and producing a six minute film about bullying. The film and teachers pack aims to support Key Stage Three teaching. An evaluation report indicated that young people gained technical skills in film production and publicity, self-esteem and confidence, self-value, and team work/collaboration skills (Red Rose Chain, 2003).

A multi-arts project at Mill Arts Centre, Oxfordshire, has developed an arts and life skills curriculum accredited by the Open College Network (OCN) offering NVQ credits to young offenders and young people experiencing social exclusion. The programme has not been evaluated but uses the arts to develop the life skills of young people and provides a positive alternative to entry into the criminal justice system (Snee, 2003).

Doncaster Community Arts (Darts) undertook a 12-month evaluation of a programme of arts work with young people, educated outside mainstream education and excluded as a result of emotional, behavioural, psychological and social problems. The *Otherwise Creative* programme involved pupils from Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in the Doncaster area during 2002-3 and was designed to use creativity to address low self-esteem and serious disengagement from the learning process. Within the programme there was an explicit attempt to develop an evaluation model which could provide a more rigorous understanding of exactly what impact the arts can have on challenging behaviour and learning engagement and to identify the optimum conditions for success. This model also attempted to compare impacts across and between art forms. A large body of baseline and observational data allowed experimentation with data mapping to explore patterns of behavioural change and an *Engagement Matrix*, identifying the stages of and the barriers to learning, emerged as a practical tool for both monitoring progress and planning appropriate activities. Although the study numbers were small (24), some clear patterns emerged. Attendance levels were 8% higher than on other PRU programmes; levels of engagement fell from 92% to 77% when there was less than one adult per pupil; there were striking differences in engagement between different art form-based activities; and of the pupils the researchers were able to track, 70% had made a successful transition to continued education and employment (Hirst & Robertshaw, 2003).

An arts in education programme with at risk children in South Carolina elementary schools infused arts activities into all aspects of the curriculum and was found to engage children who were not succeeding through traditional educational approaches. Assessment test scores rose dramatically: *'the percentage of fourth graders scoring in the highest quartile on the nationally recognised Stanford 8 achievement test zoomed from 19 percent to 33 percent...the most dramatic changes occurred with African-American children'* (Costello, 1995: 43). Other examples of positive outcomes included a 99% attendance rate in one school. The report concludes that the arts provide opportunities to learn by doing, and can engage and inspire children who find formal educational approaches do not meet their needs.

### 2.3 Challenging offending behaviour

The survey of activity carried out for the present report did locate a number of studies directly related to this area, although the robustness of methodology and findings reported are variable. All the projects described in the sections above sought to address themes or risk factors relevant to challenging offending behaviour, and to reinforcing protective factors. The *Gateway* initiative, for example, did this via a restorative justice project which involved young offenders producing a permanent piece of ceramic art work for a residential home for older people, while *Blagg* used a drama-based project that directly addressed young people's thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards offending.

Chandler's study of American young offenders (1973) still stands out as an exemplar of a research study that aims to evaluate the impact on young peoples offending through taking part in an arts intervention programme. In a preliminary study Chandler found deficits in role-taking skills among 45 'chronically delinquent' boys aged 11-13 years. This group of

young offenders was then assigned to one of three intervention groups: one receiving treatment conditions (an experimental programme employing drama and video making as a means of training in role-taking); a placebo group (on the same programme, but without a focus on role-taking); and a no treatment/control group. Pre and post-intervention comparisons showed that the video/role-taking intervention had significantly improved the role-taking abilities of those taking part, and an 18-month follow-up study showed improvements to be related to significant reductions in delinquent behaviour. The study findings highlight *'promising diagnostic and intervention strategies and a theoretical framework which recognises the important developmental tasks which confront youthful offenders and permits them to be viewed as other than diminished adult criminals'* (332).

Young people and staff participating in *Blagg* reported that participation provided opportunities for Youth Offending Team (Yot) workers to build more effective relationships with young people, and often highlighted previously obscured problems relating to offending behaviour that could be addressed through ongoing work. In addition, self-reports from participants indicated that participation led to increased awareness of thoughts, feelings and decision-making regarding offending; increased awareness of the personal costs of offending; increased awareness of the impact of offending on victims and the wider community and of the involvement of peers in offending (Hughes, 2003b).

An evaluation of a Geese Theatre programme with young offenders in HMP Maidstone, carried out by prison education staff which employed pre-and-post-participation tests (including CRIME-PICS attitudinal questionnaires), showed a reduction in prisoners' views of crime being worthwhile and improvement in attitudes towards offending and victim empathy post-participation. Staff assessment, post-course, indicated that young offenders had greater victim awareness, increased confidence and improved ability to work as a team. Young offenders reported greater awareness of victim issues and of the consequences of offending (HMP Maidstone, 2001).

An evaluation of a number of arts projects with young offenders ('demonstration' projects specially commissioned by a partnerships of arts and federal agencies) across the US reported reduced disciplinary infractions in both alternative education and correctional facilities, improved attendance in alternative education settings and reduced recidivism among young people. Furthermore an independent longitudinal evaluation of one programme claimed that involvement improved the incident rate of misbehaviour by 75% (Hillman, 2000).

These projects were pre-dated by the YouthARTs development project, initiated in 1995 to design, implement and refine effective art-based delinquency programmes. Three pilot programmes were undertaken, based on the same risk-protection-focused approach, though the evaluation report assessed the evidence collected as not conclusive (and noted several learning points for future evaluation), the findings indicated *'considerable evidence to support the hypothesis that such programs can contribute to the avoidance or reduction of delinquent behaviour'* (Clawson & Coolbaugh, 2001: 13). In one of these projects, 43% of young people demonstrated an ability to cooperate with others at start, which had increased to 100% by the end. In another, 85.7% of young people demonstrated the ability to communicate effectively with peers by the end (an increase from 28.6% at the start) and fewer had committed new offences during participation than members of control groups (50% compared to 78.6% respectively). Artistic skills, cooperation, participation and communication, self-esteem/sense of achievement, improvements in self-reported delinquent behaviour and attitudes towards school, resistance to peer pressure and sense of self-efficacy were reported outcomes of participation.

*The Mississippi Core Arts Program* (1998-2001) incorporated a range of arts projects with young offenders in custody and community settings. The programme evaluation reported improvements in behaviour in five areas: cooperation, self-control, academic performance, incidence of disruptive behaviour and interest in other programmes (across all projects). A study of one programme included analysis of programme counsellors' daily reports monitoring behaviour and attitudes across nine critical categories. During the two months of the new arts programme the ratings were 5.1% more favourable than in the three months preceding, especially in the areas of interpersonal skills, daily living skills, probation compliance, curfew compliance, interaction with authority figures, participation, peer interaction, attitude and co-operation (Center for the Study of Art and Community, 2001).

Coulter evaluated a pilot arts programme involving 40 young female offenders, with drug dependencies, in a residential centre in Victoria, Australia, and found that the arts were more effective in helping young women break the circle of crime (via staff and participant reports) than one-to-one counselling sessions (Chambers, 2003). Whilst the study did not include an analysis of reconvictions, the project has led to a three-year, cross-departmental arts programme run by the University of Melbourne involving young people who are at risk of offending, that will include analysis of re-offending and a number of other outcomes. (*The programme is designed and facilitated by staff from the School of Creative Arts, Department of Criminology, Department of Language, Literacy and Arts Education and a range of industry partners*)

## 2.4 Sponsoring personal and social development

As with arts interventions with adult offenders, research and evaluation studies that explore the general impact of participation in the arts on personal and social development are more common than studies that explicitly address offending behaviour. Many of the studies reported above explore factors relating to offending and other risk factors which have a broader personal and social development agenda, and may have a secondary impact on crime prevention/reduction. The studies explored have shown that participation in the arts can have an impact on:

- improved attitudes to learning
- increased readiness to participate in learning and other opportunities
- self-awareness
- awareness of others
- improved artistic skills and abilities
- a range of personal skills and capacities: confidence, positive self-image, imaginative ability, self-control, discipline
- a range of social skills and competencies: cooperation, communication skills, and the ability to see perspective from another point of view.

The evaluation of Arts Council England's contribution to *Splash Extra* identified the strengths of arts programmes that took part as (Cap Gemini, 2002):

- addressing social problems affecting young people
- changing group dynamics
- motivating participants
- facilitating a sense of pride and achievement.

The assessment of a county-wide, mobile digital music-making facility, involving young people from Pupil Referral Units or connected to local Yots, found young people gained skills in the art form, team-building and social development, as well as transferable skills in computing and communication (Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership, 2002). Young people reported a sense of pride in their achievements and enjoyment. Key workers' feedback indicated that the project was successful in reaching and engaging young people who could not engage in the classroom, and went on to praise the informal teaching style, flexible content and user-led approach.

Similarly an evaluation of a digital photography and video project with young people that explored community safety issues found that none of the participants suggested a direct contribution to community safety was a marked outcome of the project, but in building confidence, developing team-work and changing attitudes and exploring community issues it did have an impact on community safety (Thames Valley Partnership, 2003).

Findings from a youth arts project using street arts and club culture to engage young people in participating in activities within their local areas (which was based on young people's self-reports) showed many young people valued opportunities for involvement, a chance to develop music-related skills, a break in routine and building relationships with other young people. The project leaders concluded involvement led to increased confidence and team-working skills (West Sussex County Council *Gravity* project, 2003).

An evaluation of *Openshaw Uncovered* (Hughes, 2001), a ten-month long community film project, run by TIPP, with young people from a deprived area of East Manchester included post-project interviews with young people, residents, arts practitioners and youth workers. Analysis of the interviews indicated that young people valued the opportunity to participate in new experiences, develop new skills, counter negative stereotypical attitudes and promote a positive image of their area. The project offered young people opportunities to build new friendships, develop confidence, self-esteem and form positive relationships with adults. The experience of participating, and the positive outcomes for young people, relate directly to key resiliencies and protective factors for young people growing up in a context of high risk. The report concluded that the project had a positive impact on the social and psychological experiences of social exclusion.

## 2.5 The impact of the arts on social exclusion

The evidence regarding the impact of the arts on social exclusion is relevant here, especially if effective crime prevention is viewed as a result of programmes and practices that seek to reduce or prevent crime by establishing a network of informal social controls based on attachments in family, schools, communities and elsewhere (Sherman et al 1997). In a review prepared for Arts Council England, Jermyn (2001) argues that research and evaluation of the impact of the arts on indicators of social exclusion is limited and underdeveloped, based on small samples and self-reports, and generally limited to soft outcomes. This review records the claimed impact of participation in the arts on social exclusion in relation to:

- confidence and self-esteem
- creativity and thinking skills
- planning and organising skills

## Doing the Arts Justice

- communication of ideas and information
- raised educational attainment
- increased appreciation of the arts
- social capital/strengthened communities/enhanced social cohesion
- community identity
- decreased social isolation
- improved understanding of different cultures
- promoted interest in the local environment
- social change
- raised public awareness of an issue
- enhanced mental and physical health and well being
- reduced offending behaviour
- alleviating the impact of poverty
- increased employability of individuals.

Matarasso's study (1997) claims that participation in the arts can lead to:

- personal development
- social cohesion
- community empowerment and self-determination
- local image and identity
- imagination and vision
- health and well being.

US-based research has reached similar conclusions regarding the impact of the arts for at-risk youth. *Coming Up Taller* (Humphreys Weitz, 1996), a survey of several participatory arts projects across America, found evidence of the capacity of participatory arts projects to engage socially-excluded young people by:

- providing images and experiences of success
- enhancing academic performance
- stimulating knowing and learning
- teaching discipline and team-work.

A survey of 113 community art centres across America found arts centres provided safe spaces for communities to enhance their skills and reinforce social networks (Davis, 2003). Another US report, describing examples of arts practice in a range of community settings, stated the arts can engage, instil discipline, self-confidence and creative thinking, help develop trust, provide a sense of achievement, help people discover new talents and abilities, develop skills, provide diversionary activity, develop problem solving, critical thinking and concentration, foster cultural identity and pride and enhance community/social networks (Costello, 1995).

Initiatives exploring the idea that artists could work with first-time juvenile offenders to help them find a voice and connection to the community have generated similar outcomes. Feedback from young people involved suggests that participating raised self-esteem, provided a diversionary activity, taught self-respect, developed team-work and social skills (as well as a range of art skills), provided a sense of achievement, developed confidence, critical thinking, non-verbal communication and concentration (Idaho Commission on the Arts, 1995).

## 2.6 Prevention - summary

Arts interventions in prevention contexts are consistently associated with positive outcomes. These include significant reductions in offending behaviour and incidents of disruption, at least for the life of the particular project or programme. There is also evidence to suggest that participation in the arts can help disaffected young people re-engage with education and that effects may transfer across the curriculum. Project evaluations commonly report a range of positive impacts on personal and social development, and in terms of social inclusion, which can help build young people's resilience while reducing their exposure to the risk of offending. There is, however, a clear need for further research employing better data and more robust methodologies. While there are many examples of interesting practice, the evidence base is limited by small samples, limited follow-up, lack of controls and over-reliance on self-reporting. Many of the evaluations raise as many questions as they answer, specifically around how gains were made, how sustained they were and how far they transfer to other areas of young people's lives and communities.

## ARTS INTERVENTIONS IN CUSTODIAL AND COMMUNITY SENTENCING

The most developed - and differentiated - research base for arts impacts in criminal justice settings refers to the effects of projects and programmes in custodial contexts. Much of the strongest evidence under this heading comes from overseas, particularly North America, but there are also a number of promising UK-based interventions which reported highly positive outcomes. The findings relating to the effectiveness of arts programmes in custodial and community sentencing are presented as follows:

- **impact on society** – reconviction rates, raising community awareness of the criminal justice system, cost effectiveness
- **impact on institutions** – reducing rule-breaking, reducing anger/hostility, enhancing staff/inmate relationships, enriching regimes
- **impact on delivery of education in custody** – delivery of basic and key skills, accessing higher education, enhancing the prison education curriculum
- **impact on individuals** – reducing anger, changing attitudes to offending, maintaining connections to the outside, personal and social development
- **impact on the intervention/programme** – arts interventions that enhance effectiveness of offending behaviour programmes.

## 2.7 The impact of the arts in the criminal justice system upon society

### 2.7.1 Reconvictions

There is some debate about whether reconviction is an appropriate measure of success for arts programmes. Can participation in the arts have a direct impact upon whether or not an offender commits a crime upon release from prison? As the summary of current criminal justice prevention debates shows, the causes of crime are complex and the interventions that are most effective tackle a range of risk factors. However, in the bid to provide 'hard' evidence of impact that can help convince policy-makers of the value of arts within the criminal justice system, it is inevitable, and perhaps quite right, that the arts should be measured in a way that is in keeping with the overall aims and objectives of criminal justice system.

## Doing the Arts Justice

The most extensive reconviction study has taken place in connection with the *Arts in Corrections* (AIC) programme in California. AIC, which recently closed as a result of budget cuts, was initiated as a pilot programme in 1977 funded by arts and law enforcement agencies and grew to become a state-wide network of artist residencies across a number of facilities. In 1991-2, 23 correctional facilities, 8,000 prisoners and 700 artists participated in the programme. A recidivism study was carried out in 1988, involving a study of parole outcomes for 177 randomly selected inmates who had participated in at least one AIC class for a minimum of six months: outcomes were studied at six months, one year and two years post-release and compared with parole outcomes of all California Department of Corrections parolees for the same time period (Williford, 1994). The study found that AIC participants had more favourable outcomes:

- AIC participants showed an 88% rate of favourable outcome (avoiding reconviction) compared to 72.3% for all parolees after six months
- AIC participants showed a 74.2% rate of favourable outcome compared to 49.6% for all parolees at one year
- AIC participants showed a 69.2% favourable outcome compared to 42% for all parolees at two years.

However, the research failed to show a causal link between participation in the programme and subsequent lower rates of offending.

It should be acknowledged that demonstrating a causal link in a context involving so many variables (including complex and changing human responses and relationships) is difficult to achieve. 'Classical' experimental research approaches this issue from the perspective of 'internal validity', or the ability to 'control' for rival explanations of an association or relationship. An alternative critical realist framework has also been applied to research within the criminal justice sector. This approach seeks to combine rigorous qualitative and quantitative research approaches to generate and then test theoretical propositions about how programmes work with specific populations and in distinct contexts (for more on this approach see Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Duguid and Pawson's (1998) major evaluation of the University of Victoria's (Canada) liberal arts degree programme is a good example of a study based on critical realist principles. This research found 75% of inmates out of a sample of 654 who had participated in at least two courses over two semesters avoided reincarceration for three years post-release (compared to a 40-50% reincarceration rate in most North American jurisdictions). At the core of the evaluation was an assessment of the rate of reconviction of a variety of sub-groups compared to predicted reconviction scores. One finding is of particular interest: 'the hard cases' (those that had most problematic histories and poor offending records) who took part in the theatre group running alongside the degree programme improved on predicted reconviction rate by 41%, which was 10% higher than the hard cases group as a whole. The authors concluded that theatre programmes can be particularly effective with more serious offenders.

Research and evaluation of smaller scale initiatives has discovered similar correlations between participating in arts programmes and lower reconviction rates. An evaluation of *Changing Lives Through Literature*, an innovative alternative sentencing reading/creative writing programme run by corrections staff and University of Massachusetts lecturers (1993, see *Changing Lives Through Literature* website) compared 35 participants with 40 controls and found that 18.75% of participants, compared to 45% of non-participants, were reconvicted

within a given time. Despite the favourable results this study failed to establish a causal connection between participation and positive outcome, although anecdotal accounts of the impact of the programme from participants and staff involved are powerful. A second evaluation conducted by a Chief of Probation (2001, reported in Stephenson, 2002) attending a women's group run as part of the programme found that fewer of the 100 women involved returned to crime compared to those who dropped out, and those who did re-offend committed fewer crimes against the person (as opposed to property crime).

The evidence for the impact of taking part in arts programmes is, at first glance, encouraging. However, there is only one convincing case, Duguid and Pawson's study cited above, made for reduced convictions resulting from participation in the arts initiative when assessed against strict research quality standards. Other research has not taken into account alternative explanations of outcomes – correlations are generally treated as evidence without consideration of other causes. In addition, small sample sizes and often limited follow-up periods reduce the possibility of achieving statistical significance. Finally, evidence presented tends not to be linked back to the aims and objectives or theory base of programmes. This is a problem with much of the research and evaluation reported: the lack of theory base for arts practice means that results cannot be substantiated or generalised.

### 2.7.2 Cost effectiveness

At a recent conference on the arts in the youth justice system, the UK Minister for Culture, Media and Sport stated that it costs £44,500 a year to keep a young person in custody, highlighting the need to find cost effective ways of reducing and preventing crime (Randell, 2002). Can the arts be cost effective? The former director of AIC California states that *'the arts are a low cost, high touch, non threatening intervention that has produced measurable results'* in the areas of reduction of psychopathological behaviour, reduced incident rates, reduced recidivism, improved educational performance and increased self-esteem (Cleveland, 2003). An early evaluation of the AIC California programme (Hillman, in Cleveland, 1992) stated that quantifiable monetary benefits and unquantifiable benefits far outstripped costs - \$228,522 in measurable benefits were generated, compared with a cost of \$162,790. Costs were calculated for delivery of art instruction, documentation and outreach and benefits included costs avoided as a result of reduced institutional tension, institutional enrichment and community service (Brewster, 1983).

Methods for assessing cost effectiveness are complex and contested, and many impacts of the arts are difficult to quantify, especially in terms of monetary return. As with reconvictions, it may be that cost effectiveness is not an appropriate measure of success for arts participation. However, lack of evidence does not indicate lack of effect: research may not have found a way of measuring cost effectiveness, but this does not signify that the arts in the criminal justice system are cost ineffective.

### 2.7.3 Challenging prejudice and raising awareness in the community

There is little available evidence of the impact of these initiatives on public perception. Audience feedback from performances of a recent Clean Break Theatre Company/King Alfred's College Winchester performance project with female prisoners (McKean, 2003) demonstrated that the show had positively challenged preconceptions/stereotypes about female offenders and the prison system.

People's Palace Projects, *Staging Human Rights* programme at Queen Mary College, University of London, used performances by prisoners to members of the community and the Latin American parliament in order to raise awareness of rights issues in Brazilian prisons. Unfortunately the evaluation of the programme (People's Palace Projects, 2002) only assessed changes in prisoners' awareness of rights issues; importantly no information regarding the impact of the performances on the community's perceptions or subsequent policy-making was available.

TIPP's drama-based employment programme, which was run in prisons and young offenders' institutions (YOIs) in the mid 1990s, culminated in performances to local employers specially invited into the prison. Performances explored barriers faced by ex-offenders trying to access the job market (Thompson, 2003). Rhodessa Jones' nine-year collaboration with female prisoners in California produced a number of public performances that aimed '*to rescue imprisoned women of colour from the invisibility to which they historically have been relegated*' (Fraden, 2001: xi). However, the impact on audiences was not formally evaluated in either of these initiatives.

## 2.8 Impact on the institution

### 2.8.1 Reducing rule-breaking in prisons

The evidence base in support of the argument that arts provision reduces disciplinary problems and violence in prisons is perhaps the most promising of all the research findings reported. A 75-81% reduction of rule-breaking activities amongst inmates taking part in AIC California was reported in an early evaluation of the programme (Cleveland, 1992).

Moller (2003b) reported that there were fewer disciplinary infractions amongst a group of 35 inmates participating in a theatre production compared to a control group of 30, matched for age, gender, ethnicity and general offence. The participant group committed half the amount of offences over a six-month period during and after the intervention, a difference that was not statistically significant but was practically significant. Infractions among the participant group were also less severe. Original members of the theatre group (those who had been participating in the ongoing intervention for a longer period of time) did not commit any offences. When compared with offences committed by the new members, the difference was statistically significant, suggesting that a longer time in the theatre programme motivated inmates to keep prison rules. Inmates wanted to continue to be part of the group and this served as an incentive.

Oklahoma Department of Corrections commissioned an independent evaluation of a three-year creative writing programme in Texas prisons, which explored incidence report data on programme participants six months prior to entry and during programme participation. The evaluation showed that the incident rate dropped from over 90% (in a Women's Unit) to 57% during programme participation (Morrison, 1987: 178). An early evaluation of Geese USA (1982, reported in Cleveland, 1992:61) indicated that 70% of men participating in a month-long residency showed '*significant positive change in their relationship with peers and authority figures over a three month period*'.

In the UK, an evaluation of the Irene Taylor Trust's *Julius Caesar Project* at HMP Bullingdon, a three-month project involving 50 prisoners in a musical production, included a study of prison adjudication sheets for participants six months prior, during and six months after completion. The evaluation found that 94% of participants did not offend during participation, a 58% decrease in offending over the six months prior to the project (Unit for the Arts and Offenders, 2003).

Prisoners attending an arts and craft centre in HMP Albany achieved a 29% reduction in discipline reports, compared with records prior to attendance at the centre. This compares to an 11% reduction among participants in an industrial wood workshop in the prison. Prison officers rated behaviour in the centre as generally better than in industrial workshops and on the wings, and noted improvements in prisoners' attitudes to work, including an increased ability to occupy themselves in their cells and improved relationships between prisoners and staff, therefore reducing the need for external control (Riches, in Leibmann, 1994).

Conversely a study carried out in a New Zealand prison by (Currie, 1989) contradicts this trend. From data on disciplinary charges during and prior to participation, inmates showed no differences in the type or frequency of offending, despite perceptions of inmates that this had been the case. However, the evaluation notes that prison custodial staff had not been effectively involved in the planning of the arts programme and expressed negative attitudes towards it, and Currie points out that this may have increased resentment and tension between staff and inmates.

### 2.8.2 Enhancing relationships between staff and participants

Reduction of tension and violence can enhance relationships between custodial staff and prisoners. This is a frequently reported outcome of many arts projects that involve criminal justice staff in planning or delivery of programmes. Anecdotal accounts of the *Changing Lives Through Literature* programme (an alternative sentencing programme for offenders in Boston, Massachusetts) and *Connexions* (a UK prison programme based on the same model) identify the power of the presence of judges, probation and prison staff in the reading and creative writing groups. All participants are required to take part in discussion of and writing exercises around set texts, showing that staff 'can relate personally to the dramas in life'. This helps break down barriers and reinforce a sense that what the offender does post sentence is important (Stephenson, 2002). Staff participating in *Blagg*, TiPP's drama-based offending behaviour workshop, valued an opportunity to meet and work with young people in an informal context, and reported that this had strengthened relationships with them (Hughes, 2003b). In addition, the opportunity to take part in a positive and enjoyable intervention can improve staff morale. Improvements in staff morale are a reported outcome of many small-scale evaluations of arts projects in prisons (for example, Irene Taylor Trust, 2000; Dance United, 2003).

## 2.9 Impact on delivery of education in custody

### 2.9.1 Basic and key skills

Arts in prison education takes the form of art classes and one-off special projects or programmes. A number of UK projects have embraced the recent policy emphasis on developing offenders' basic and key skills by incorporating skills accreditation into their programmes and generating specific, accredited arts courses. The arts are seen as an effective response to the need to innovatively engage offenders, many of whom have had negative experiences of formal education, in learning experiences. The arts are seen as an effective means of re-engaging disaffected groups and bringing about a state of 'readiness to learn' through the development of self-esteem and basic personal and social skills. The evaluation evidence relating to this category is, however, limited to quantitative summaries of attainment rates amongst participant groups and does not test the theory base for provision.

A Unit for the Arts and Offenders three-year pilot programme *Getting Our Act Together* (1999-2002), researched the value and viability of using drama-based approaches to improving the literacy skills of prisoners in eight prisons (DfES & HM. Prison Service, 2003). The programme incorporated drama-based projects leading to a performance with simultaneous key skills or basic skills qualifications at Level 1 or 2, with good attainment rates and positive feedback about the programme from prisoners and staff. For example, 93% of participants who completed projects for Key Skills Communication at Level 1 were successful in gaining this qualification in 59 hours, and 95% of participants who completed projects for Key Skills Communication at Level 2 were successful in gaining this qualification in 76 hours.

Also in the UK, The Firebird Trust recently piloted a scheme involving five prisons (124 prisoners) in workshops in Gamelan, a form of Indonesian percussion music. The evaluation reported improved basic and key skills in a number of areas (Eastburn, 2003). Confidence, team-working, concentration, numeracy, communication, listening and motor skills all scored highly on questionnaire responses from staff and inmates. Prison education managers also reported improved behaviour and performance in general education.

Clean Break Theatre Company/King Alfred's College Refuge Project led to 16 women being entered for OCN Working with Others and 11 women for OCN Exploring Drama and Theatre in Secure Institutions (McKean, 2003). Clean Break Theatre Company ran '*Ambitious Dreams*' in HMP Send in 2000, a drama and basic skills programme that led to 94% of participants gaining Wordpower Level 2 and 100% gaining Acting for Life qualifications: the project helped the prison achieve 44% of its annual target around literacy and numeracy. In addition, two women enrolled in Clean Break education courses on release (Clean Break, 2000).

The literature also includes an example of linking arts with vocational training. The Prison Art Foundation, Northern Ireland runs residencies in each of Northern Ireland's prisons including one programme called *Paint Magic*: an entry level programme for painters that acts as a bridge between work and art, '*it expands all those creative outlets not often available to those learning a trade*' (from website, 2003).

### 2.9.2 Accessing higher education

The argument about what type of education to offer in prisons has been important in debates about prison education in the USA, increasingly so since the dismantling of the Pell Program which supported a number of inmates on University-run degree programmes (and effectively ended higher education-run programmes in prisons). The focus on developing basic and key skills, while important, should not detract attention from the positive findings of the impact of more academic programmes on offenders and of the need to widen the curriculum across all areas of the service.

A key programme, the University of Victoria liberal arts degree programme in Canadian prisons (1973-1993), stands out here. Duguid's early evaluation (1981) of the programme included follow-up of 65 students over a three-year period and reported a 14% recidivism rate compared with 52% for non-student prisoners. A second major evaluation (Duguid & Pawson 1998, also reported above), carried out after the programme was cut, included a follow up study of 654 participants and found that 75% of inmates who participated in at least two courses over two semesters avoided reincarceration for three years post-release, compared to a 40-50% reincarceration rate in most North American jurisdictions. The evaluation employed an exemplary methodology that enabled the researchers to assess programme

characteristics and theory base, leading to an assessment of 'what worked for whom'. Many sub-groups of prisoners 'beat the odds' and avoided reconviction, and this outcome was linked to a variety of programme mechanisms

### 2.9.3 Enhancing and enriching the prison curriculum

There are examples of programmes in prison which combine opportunities for skills development with interventions around social/personal issues that relate to risk factors for re-offending. Such programmes help the prison service provide a broad based curriculum and encourage the development of a range of skills as well as targeting specific criminogenic needs that are not addressed within routine education delivery.

The evaluation of Safe Ground's drama-based parenting programme *Family Man* and *Father's Inside* (Halsey et al, 2002) exemplifies this. Many prisoners have had negative experiences of family and lack opportunities to discuss parenting, and their imprisonment puts strain on family relationships. The project combined a drama course exploring parenting with opportunities to gain accreditation in key and basic skills. Eighty interviews with prisoners, prison staff, family members and Safe Ground staff were carried out and the evaluation found that the prisoners involved developed a sense of pride, growth in team-work skills and confidence, and in specific skills such as marketing, computing and film production, and that 98% of trial participants gained social and life skills certificates. Prisoners reported positive outcomes which included:

- better understanding of family relationships and parenting
- feeling more committed to their families
- improvements in frequency and quality of family contact
- enhanced team work skills
- improved confidence and communication skills
- improved literacy
- increased understanding of the needs/perspectives of others
- increased positive attitudes to education.

Family members involved in the evaluation confirmed many of these outcomes. The evaluation concludes: *'the courses should make a valuable contribution to parenting and family education in prisons, providing an interactive and exciting approach through the medium of drama.'*

Writers in Prisons Network's *Storybook Dad* scheme similarly employs the arts to broaden educational opportunity and help address difficulties caused by separation from families. Prisoners work with writers to develop and audio record stories for their children. The scheme has not been evaluated but anecdotal reports show that prisoners often feature their own children in the stories, and informal feedback suggests participants feel closer to their children as a result.

Examples of projects that fit into this category from an international context include a puppets in prisons HIV/AIDs educational project in South Africa, the evaluation of which (Evian & Bubb, 1996) showed that prisoners involved developed confidence and self-esteem, learned new skills in puppetry, improved their awareness of AIDS/HIV, were able to raise and discuss unspoken and taboo issues and showed more interest and concern about the disease. People's Palace Projects *Staging Human Rights* (2002) programmes in prisons in Brazil improved prisoners' awareness of their own and others' human rights, including the importance of extending protection to all, the importance of extending existing rights, the illegality of extra-official punishment and the seriousness of torture.

## 2.10 Impact on the individual

### 2.10.1 Coping with imprisonment and reducing anger and aggression

The impact on individuals participating in a theatre production in a New York prison reported by Moller (2003b) included lower anger rates post-participation, superior coping skills and higher levels of social responsibility (when compared to a control group). Lower anger rates post- production in the participant group suggests that participation helped release anger, possibly as a result of a 'catharsis effect': theatre makes it possible to express a wide range of emotions suppressed by the prison environment. The author concludes that the research highlights an important role for theatre in prisons. The supposition that prisons need places for expression of anger and other interventions such as therapy and anger management programmes is often viewed with suspicion. On assessing the results of psychometric tests, she notes, *'the areas in which the treatment group scores were superior to the control group suggest ways in which educational theatre has a positive effect as a management tool'* (25). 'Group members also showed statistically significant higher levels of social responsibility, gained from the interdependent social processes of mounting a production, the collaborative culture of a project and taking responsible roles in the process and in the performance. Moller concludes, *'theatre is a uniquely appropriate, cost-effective, affirmative strategy for the management and rehabilitation of offenders'* (26) .

Stallone (1993) also found that a series of psychodrama workshops helped 22 inmates adjust to prison life and reduced unacceptable behaviour to a greater extent than a control group experiencing a structured residential programme.

A study of Geese Theatre Company's *Violent Illusion Trilogy* led by clinical psychologists in Broadmoor (Reiss et al, 1998), examined changes in levels of anger in young men before and after a week-long dramatherapy project on a ward in a maximum security hospital. Self-report questionnaires were administered before and after the week and at a three-month follow-up. Questionnaires were constructed from two anger expression inventories devised by Novaco (1975). Significant reductions in anger levels after the week were maintained three months after the project, together with an associated increase in frequency of attempts to control anger. Reiss et al conclude, *'dramatherapy in a psychotherapeutic environment may be an effective therapeutic modality for reducing anger levels in young mentally disordered offenders'* (139). The authors felt that the intervention might help patients accept more long-term therapeutic input (amongst a population traditionally resistant to therapy), making this resource-intensive programme cost effective and they go on to suggest that the short-term benefits, when channelled into ongoing work, may contribute to more lasting change.

The theme of procuring positive adjustment to a stressful and damaging environment is taken up in an Australian study of a music therapy intervention with women in prison. Although the sample was very small (n=5), analysis of self-report measures and of music and verbal material shared during sessions showed that participation led to increased levels of relaxation, reduction in stress and an increase in self-expression. Sessions provoked much discussion of personal issues and relationships and many topics were explored in song writing/music making, mostly expressing frustration at imprisonment. The authors conclude music therapy *'can be used to achieve realistic, time limited and brief goals in the correctional setting'* (Davieson and Edwards, 2001:140-141).

### 2.10.2 Changing attitudes to offending

*'...the stories are here to do surgery. They're in there to trigger the feelings. Each story would relate to me in the sense that I could see myself, things that I did wrong, decisions that I made. I was eating it up like a starving man'*

(*Changing Lives through Literature* participant, Stephenson, 2002).

Researchers connected to the studies reported above generally concluded that participation in the arts can be a way of engaging populations resistant to therapeutic intervention in exploring personal experiences and thinking critically. Engagement in arts programmes may be important in procuring increased readiness to accept ongoing therapy for some prisoners. Thaut's American study of 50 music therapy psychiatric prisoner patients (1989) showed the beneficial impact of participation in music therapy on relaxation, mood/emotion, thought/insight in patients after music therapy. Thaut refers to research suggesting that changes in mood/emotion *'may be important in view of theories that postulate affect modification as an essential step in behavioural change'* (1989:165), highlighting the potential longer term impact of participation on challenging and reducing offending.

Schramski & Harvey (1983) reviewed 19 studies on the use of psychodrama in correctional facilities in the past 50 years (the earliest was published in 1939) and concluded that findings supporting the impact of psychodrama on offending behaviour were positive, although not consistent (different studies focused on different facets of impact). General attitudinal/behavioural change, social conformity, trust, interpersonal skills, lower levels of disciplinary infractions, the development of self-insight and anger control were reported by individual studies. The authors commented that many studies included in the review were methodologically flawed.

Literature relating to art and drama therapy, much of which is based on case studies with individual offenders, testifies to the impact of art therapy in exploring and challenging facets of offending behaviour. Art therapists' analysis of sessions describe how offenders have used a non-verbal medium to establish, maintain contact with and release/integrate feelings, to gain insight, to explore experiences from different points of view, to explore a sense of self and to take risks in a safe setting (Leibmann, 1994). The literature review did not uncover any studies involving larger samples which explored the impact of any of the art therapies on offending behaviour.

Poor thinking skills and lack of affect/empathy have been shown to relate to offending behaviour. Many arts interventions address poor thinking skills and lack of affect/empathy as part of wider cognitive behavioural programmes and ongoing interventions with offenders. These programmes use the arts to focus and enhance delivery of the overall programme and are reported on below.

### 2.10.3 Maintaining links with the 'real' world and facilitating reintegration with the community

Much of the research reported thus far shows that arts interventions in prison change the physical, emotional and psychological space within the institution, if only temporarily, and that this can have profound impacts on the behaviour and responses of participants. A key theme of the research findings, though there is little explicit evidence related to it, is that taking part in arts workshops can prepare prisoners for release by providing a context for

interaction, decision-making and problem-solving in a setting more like the 'real' world. This can help prepare prisoners for release, and may make maintenance or transference of gain from programmes more likely for arts projects than for programmes employing traditional approaches. Safe Ground's drama-based parenting programme and the *Storybook Dad* scheme are concrete examples of arts programmes that help maintain connections with outside life.

Thompson (2003), when describing TiPP's drama-based employment programme in the mid-1990s, asserts that arts interventions can achieve more generalisation of gain than other interventions in prison because *'the extended deliberate fiction engages people in a much fuller version of the practice of human interactions...the theatre workshop...[is]...an intense experience that creates a network of meaningful activities in the present...[some of which]... may linger or reform in a new situation on the outside'* (96-7). Grady Hillman, a prominent US-based writer and practitioner, asserts that writing is a popular activity within prisons partly because prisoners write to maintain connections with the outside world, express their feelings and sense of self, to release tension, to preserve memories and to escape from their current reality (Cleveland, 1992).

### 2.10.4 Personal and social development

The impact of participation in the arts on personal and social development may reinforce or trigger personal awareness in a way that will link to an individual's future actions and prevent offending. The research and evaluation studies of some quality which relate to broad personal and social development are reported below, followed by a bullet point summary of personal and social development and outcomes noted.

An evaluation of seven artists' residencies in probation services across Northumbria (Walker & Clark, 2000) did not include a reconviction study but offenders were asked to explore the link between their participation in the residencies and future offending behaviour via qualitative interviews. Offenders were 'largely positive' about the experience and identified positive impacts on personal and social development including increased confidence, the development of practical, artistic and team work/interpersonal skills, and of widened horizons. However, *'most did not regard these benefits as necessarily preventing them from re-offending, (though) they did acknowledge that there may have been some indirect impacts on their behaviour'* (xiv). The authors concluded that *'while the residencies in Northumbria Probation Service may not have directly reduced offending rates, they did, without doubt, widen the horizons of those clients who got involved. New experiences, which were on the whole positive and enjoyable, added new dimensions to their lives'* (85).

Moller (2003a) carried out an analysis of journal entries of participants in an ongoing theatre programme in a New York prison and found the following key themes:

- confidence gain
- learning of discipline
- venting emotions
- experience of a safe haven in prison
- opportunity to change others' image of oneself
- expansion of perspectives
- expression of sensitivity
- development of leadership skills
- establishment of friendships.

Dance United's evaluation of a two-week dance residency in HMP Styal (2003) found that in addition to technical dance skills, the women developed skills in:

- concentration
- patience
- team-working
- relaxation
- self-expression
- insight into own creativity.

Valuable experiences identified by participants included:

- building friendships
- enjoyment
- finding out about creative abilities
- working with a professional company
- feeling good about self
- trust
- new interests
- concentration
- relaxation
- increased discipline.

Personal development outcomes identified by both staff and participants included:

- increased ability to mix/less judgemental attitudes
- expression of feelings/different side of self
- improved self-image and self-care
- greater sense of connection to own feelings.

Social welfare outcomes identified by staff and participants included:

- breaking down barriers and defences
- promoting a positive sense of identity
- forgetting problems
- communicating feelings/experiences that they could not express through words alone
- cooperation
- fitness/health
- sense of confidence and own capabilities.

Prison staff noted that some participants 'seem different'; women became more caring towards each other, more animated and changed in physical stance and posture.

An evaluation of a range of arts workshops in a New Zealand prison by Currie (1989) included comparison of outcomes of participants (n=42) with a control group (n=42) via pre- and post-semi-structured interviews with participants and custodial and prison management staff. Effects on individuals included: increased self-esteem and confidence (surprise in own ability, pride in achievement), increased self-understanding and cultural identity, new personal and emotional insights, artistic skills development and enjoyment/relaxation. Effects on relationships with others included increased communication skills, easing gang tensions by facilitating communication between gang members, improving cooperation and building rapport.

These evaluations suffer from the key limitations already discussed, especially in that the link is assumed rather than proved and all rely on self-reports of offenders and staff. However, they indicate that the following are outcomes of participation in arts programmes on prisoners' personal and social development:

- enjoyment and relaxation
- improving quality of life in prison
- increasing artistic skill and appreciation of the arts
- insight, reflective thinking and perspective taking
- improved motivation and sense of achievement
- confidence, self-esteem and improved self-image
- communication skills (including listening)
- memory of a positive experience
- establishing friendships and respect from others
- understanding cultural differences
- improved posture and physical self-control
- release of suppressed feelings and energy
- improved discipline and self-control
- sense of responsibility
- safe and acceptable risk-taking.

The numbers of people, projects and related evaluation findings repeating the same message lead us to suggest that there is strong evidence that these outcomes are the immediate and short-term effects of taking part in the arts in prison. However, the evidence for any lasting personal change - whether or not these immediate impacts are lost away from the situational context of the arts project - is limited to reconviction studies which generally do not provide evidence of a causal connection to the arts programme and are in themselves short term. Research has not taken the opportunity to assess long-term change in qualitative and quantitative terms, using methodology and design (a theory testing and theory generating research model) that would permit linkage to participation in the arts.

### 2.11 Impact on the intervention

The research literature includes some examples of integration of arts approaches within specific interventions to focus and provide added value, including maintenance of gain, for wider therapeutic/analytic approaches to offending behaviour. There is strong evidence that the arts are an effective and efficient means of enhancing traditional interventions which aim to reduce or challenge offending behaviour.

An evaluation of Geese Theatre Company's Staffordshire Probation psychodrama programme (integrating psychodrama with cognitive behavioural approaches) with sex offenders used psychometric tests pre- and post-treatment and found statistically significant improvements in levels of empathy for child and adult victims of sexual abuse, and that levels of cognitive distortions about child sexuality were significantly lower post-treatment (Baim et al, 1997). The authors refer to a recent evaluation of pure cognitive behavioural programmes with sex offenders which found comparatively lower levels of victim empathy post-treatment, suggesting that incorporation of drama with cognitive behavioural approaches may enhance effectiveness. This evaluation finding increases in significance in the light of the recent negative critique of cognitive behavioural thinking skills programme in prisons (Falshaw et al, 2003; Cann et al, 2003).

McMackin et al (2002), in a study of a trauma psycho-education programme with juvenile offenders including therapeutic exposure and coping skills development through the use of

expressive arts, note that offenders reported increased understanding of the ways trauma had affected them (and how these were linked with past offending). All individuals participating in the programme were part of a clinically controlled environment and subject to other interventions as well. This made it difficult to come to any conclusion about the specific programme, including the benefits of the arts.

A study of the use of the art therapy diagnostic tool, 'House-Tree-Person Drawings' (Lopez, 2001), found consistent trends in the drawings of sex offenders (n=46) when compared to those of a control group (n=44), and recommends that using art as a diagnostic tool may aid early detection and help develop a clinical treatment focus for therapists.

Goldstein et al (2004) describe an example of a cognitive approach to working with young offenders, incorporating psychological skills training – deliberate teaching and training in prosocial behaviours using role play, moral dilemma discussion and anger management techniques. References to evaluation/research of this programme show it has been successful in enhancing prosocial skills including empathy, negotiation, assertiveness, self-control, perspective-taking, co-operative behaviour and following instructions. Skills acquisition across diverse populations is a reliable training outcome in more than 90% of trainees. Skill transfer (as applied in real world settings) occurs with 45-50% of trainees, compared with a transfer rate of 15-20% for other forms of psychotherapy.

Tate Liverpool runs a 'stereotypes versus different perspectives' session as part of Merseyside Probation's year-long mandatory domestic violence programme, which explores how gender, sex, power and control are represented through art, using images that reflect or challenge stereotypes. The session has not been evaluated, but feedback from the probation service suggests that exploring images through art helps widen perspective taking: different ways of looking at a picture reinforce the message that there are alternative ways of appraising situations. Gallery staff report that many offenders bring families to visit the gallery in their own time after participation in the session (*Tate Liverpool*, 2002).

## 2.12 Custodial and community sentencing - summary

Arts interventions in custodial and community sentencing contexts are associated with a range of positive outcomes, although the quality of the evidence available to substantiate such effects is variable. The most consistent findings of direct impact are to be found in evaluations of institutional effects, where arts programmes and projects are frequently shown to have stimulated a reduction of tension, disciplinary problems and violence in prisons, while sponsoring better relationships between custodial staff and inmates. There is also good evidence to suggest that the arts are a highly effective medium for delivering basic and key skills and for enhancing traditional interventions that seek to modify or challenge offending behaviour. It is argued that the arts have the capacity to engage otherwise resistant populations because they create an alternative physical, emotional and psychological space within the institution. Profound impacts on the behaviour and responses of individuals and their personal and social development are regularly reported and, in some cases, have been measured. However, the mechanisms underlying these are poorly understood and there is little evidence of longer-term effects on the individual resulting from participation in arts programmes. A number of studies have found that reconviction rates among those who participated in arts projects while in custody were significantly lower than those for non-participants. This suggests that the wider social and economic benefits of arts interventions in custodial and community sentencing contexts are considerable but again, neither the causal processes linking arts interventions with reduced reconviction rates nor the sustainability of impacts has been properly established.

## THE ARTS IN RESETTLEMENT

*'Re-emerging into the world, after more than a decade of institutional life, I am more conscious than ever of the scale of my indebtedness [to theatre]. Rather than face a daunting transition steeped in uncertainty and an overwhelming sense of dislocation, I feel able to walk forward with a certain degree of confidence and genuine optimism'* (Joe White in Thompson, 1998: 183).

Literature relating to the use of the arts to facilitate resettlement post-release from prison is under represented in this review. This is likely to result from a relative lack of practice and research on arts interventions with ex-offenders. Many of the examples of practice reported below have not been effectively evaluated. This section considers the following two types of resettlement impacts involving the arts, reflecting the current Education, Training and Employment objectives within current resettlement programmes:

- **the arts in the development of education and skills**
- **the relationship between the arts and employment.**

### 2.13 The arts in the development of education and skills

An evaluation of an early model integrating the arts with education is provided by a US study of the use of professional theatre techniques in the education of prisoners and ex-offenders (Mecnick, 1984). This 'Skills through Drama' approach integrated theatre workshops with classes on reading, writing and maths. Subjective feedback from participants suggested participation helped self-control, confidence, self-awareness, communication skills and the development of responsibility and empathy. In addition, pre- and post-administration of the California Achievement Test (18 weeks post-participation) to 381 students revealed 'impressive gains' in reading, maths and language. The authors reported a drop in recidivism amongst the ex-offender population (although they do not explain how the statistic was calculated): 71.4% became regularly employed and were not involved in another offence (compared to the national figure of 85% of offenders rearrested within a year of release). However, the study did not use a control group and the programme was voluntary, making the findings open to accusations of selection bias.

Insight Arts, an established UK arts company, *'uses the arts as an imaginary territory to explore change and provides ground-breaking drama and multi-arts and life skills projects for ex offenders, probation clients and people in prison'* (Insight Arts programme literature, 2003). The project receives people who want to develop basic art and life skills and helps them access placements in training, education or voluntary work. The company employs and involves ex-offenders in planning and running the organisation, and runs a rolling programme of accredited group and arts skills (with 284 programme attendances in 2002-3) in a range of community and custodial settings, as well as 'stand alone' theatre productions employing ex-offenders. The company's work has not been formally evaluated but project literature describes outcomes of the rolling programme as: increased self-confidence, increased employability, an increase in social and life skills, educational development and qualifications.

Clean Break Theatre Company operates a similar model but with female prisoners and ex-offenders. Co-founded in 1979 by two women prisoners, the company uses theatre and arts

to develop personal, social, professional and creative skills. The company produces theatre performances, new writing, drama-based education, professional development and training, and aims to expand the skills, training and employment opportunities of prisoners and ex-prisoners and provide high quality theatre to voice the experiences of women and educate the public about issues surrounding women and crime. Clean Break's Arts Education and Training Programme runs a range of theatre courses for female ex-offenders, from the year-long *Access to Community Theatre* to smaller scale courses around personal development, life stories and writing for theatre. Courses are supported by learner support, reading/writing/computer skills, a student support service and help with travel/lunch costs. All courses are free. The structure offers progression routes to further and higher education and a work placement programme. Again, the company's work has not been formally evaluated.

## 2.14 The relationship between the arts and employment

In 1999-2001, Clean Break ran a programme called *Breaking In*, a two and a half-year training programme offering women ex-offenders the opportunity to become community drama workers (including an NVQ qualification). The programme trained 11 women, all of whom worked in a range of settings (some gaining paid employment), demonstrated exemplary attendance rates, observable skill development and professionalism (Clean Break Theatre Company, 2001).

Escape Artists, another theatre company set up by ex-offenders, which started as a prison theatre group in 1990, aims to provide 'a bridge from custody to the theatre world for prisoners and ex-prisoners' (Holford, 2002). The company has a number of ex-offenders as staff and runs theatre projects in prisons and a range of community settings. Again, the company's work has not been evaluated but one of its directors comments: '*I don't think it's possible to underestimate the effect Escape Artists has when we take our work inside. Prisoners see Paul acting, they see good theatre. In the post-performance discussion they learn that Paul – an ex prisoner – now has a career as an actor. Furthermore they discover that Escape Artists began life as a prison drama group. It offers hope and inspires*' (Escape Artists' website).

Talia Theatre runs *the Lab* project, an arts leadership programme for long-term unemployed people (including ex-offenders) in partnership with regeneration agencies. A recent evaluation (Talia Theatre Company, 2002) showed that of 34 people who completed the course, 12 entered employment, eight did some voluntary work, nine entered education and one entered self-employment. Of the 54 participants overall, eight were ex-offenders (the outcomes for this specific group were not shown).

Fine Cell Work is an arts charity carrying out craft work classes in prisons – prisoners develop skills and productivity and can sell work produced (earning up to £500 a year). The company works in prisons and with ex-offenders who want to continue to take commissions on release. While it is not likely that prisoners take up embroidery to make a living on release as the economic situation is too difficult (although one person has succeeded in doing so), transferable skills learned including planning, negotiation, design, perseverance, attention to detail and ability to take instructions can support offenders on release. Saved income, although small, can also assist the transition from prison to the community (Jackson, 2003).

A number of early US theatre programmes with offenders sought to facilitate the transition from prison to the community (reported in Ryan, 1976). It is claimed that participants in

theatre workshops in the New York/New Jersey area in the early 1970s were re-arrested at rates of 10-15% within one year of release, compared to the national average of 85%. Programmes included Cell Block Theatre's *Crucial Bridge Gap Therapy* project, a four-month full-time scheme aiming to change attitudes of offenders by using acting exercises and improvisation to develop self-awareness and communication skills, leading to a performance by ex-inmates to audiences (including members of the business community). Street Theatre Company's workshop and performance programmes in a number of prisons led to the formation of *The Family*, a professional, urban, repertory theatre company composed of ex-prisoners and former drug addicts.

Arts-based programmes with ex-offenders reviewed for this study all include a progression route that trains ex-offenders in skills and provides a space for their development as artists or arts practitioners. They additionally provide courses that help ex-offenders gain work-related or basic and key skills. There is also an emphasis on creating jobs and increasing employability (offering non-traditional career options, art works as marketable products), reflected in the US literature on resettlement.

### 2.15 Resettlement-summary

Arts-based resettlement programmes have had some success in routing ex-offenders into training and employment. It has been shown that they help develop a range of personal and social skills, which increase employability, as well as facilitating the acquisition of formally accredited educational skills and qualifications. There is also some evidence to suggest that participants in these programmes are much less likely to re-offend than non-participants. The fact that some programmes offer direct routes into employment raises the issue of where the emphasis in the arts in resettlement agenda should lie. Should it be focused on developing skills, or should it be about providing routes into employment in the arts? Some caution is required here. The evidence presented above suggests that the arts can play a part in helping to develop confident, able and articulate people but there is a need to manage expectations - to both allow and manage fantasy - when it comes to holding out the prospect of a particular type of career. As in the rest of the arts in criminal justice sector, there is a lack of robust evaluation and research into the arts and resettlement. Future research should include tracking participants to assess how successful they are in accessing the job market or further education/training in different areas.

## PART THREE

### Findings - Practice and Theory

Part Three begins with a review of the current state of practice in the arts and criminal justice sector, examining key issues, the range of practice applications, and the features of effective practice. It then turns to consider the potential components of a theory base for the arts in criminal justice, exploring models of change from the social sciences and from art-form specific practices themselves.

This part of the report is organised under the following headings:

- **practice methods**
- **models of change.**

## PRACTICE METHODS

This section seeks to address the question of how services and organisations within the criminal justice system can assess the quality of arts provision and attempts to provide a framework of expectations appropriate to, and reflective of, the range of practice in the sector. The guidelines or frameworks presented here should not be applied in a tick-box style to arts organisations working within the sector. A thorough set of reviews of practice in the arts with young people at risk, carried out by the US Rand Corporation, found that *'interactions of program and individual level variables are the strongest source of prosocial effects'* (Stone et al, 1998:iv). Innovation in response to local contexts should not be forgone in favour of a 'model' approach that seeks to replicate practice across a range of settings. The section is organised as follows:

- issues in practice
- six models of arts interventions in the criminal justice sector
- arts interventions in the criminal justice system – effective programme and practice features.

### 3.1 Issues in practice

The review of practice carried out for this section of the report has identified a number of differences and tensions in descriptions of practice across the sector. These refer in particular to:

- roles within the administration and implementation of the intervention
- the aims and objectives of arts practice across the sector.

In terms of the leadership of arts interventions there are a number of approaches: projects are facilitated by professional artists, criminal justice staff (from a range of disciplines) and arts practitioners<sup>4</sup>. Practice in the US tends to favour a 'master artist' model, where contact with a professional artist is thought to enrich the creative process and provide a model of a non-traditional career path for offenders. It is clear that many practitioners in the UK are not

<sup>4</sup>The distinction between 'professional artist' and 'arts practitioner' is one of emphasis and context. The former specialises in a particular art form(s) but not in its application as an intervention in criminal justice contexts. The role of the latter focuses on the application of art practices in such contexts.

just practising artists, neither are they criminal justice sector staff, although there are models of trained criminal justice sector staff delivering arts programmes. Whether non-arts staff are properly qualified to deliver arts projects is a further point of contention within the field. The role an artist or arts practitioner adopts within projects also varies across different examples of practice. For example, an artist can be a visiting artist (carrying out a brief project with a specially formed group), an artist in residence (working with a range of groups over a longer period of time) or an applied artist (facilitating workshops as part of a wider educational or therapeutic remit).

The principal division in practice aims is between initiatives which exist in their own right as arts processes/products ('art for art's sake') and those which may have more instrumental purposes, ranging from art for therapeutic outcomes to art to tackle and reduce re-offending. While this remains an issue of debate within the art world itself (Belfiore, 2002), the practice reviewed in this study shows that the separation of 'instrumental' value and 'true' art is not valid or useful. It does not reflect exciting activity across the sector which shows creativity has instrumental outcomes for individuals and society. Specific aims and objectives in relation to outcomes for participants also vary. Projects may aim to develop hidden talents (helping offenders and ex-offenders to become artists or employed in the arts), develop confidence, pre-vocational and other skills and capacities, and/or facilitate therapeutic or personal change. Finally, there is some tension within the arts in the criminal justice sector about whether interventions are being made to change individuals or to change the ethos/practice of a destructive and failing system.

The key questions arising from current practice issues are:

- what is the most effective model of roles and responsibilities as far as the implementation and administration of an arts intervention is concerned?
- what qualifies someone to lead an arts intervention?
- is the arts intervention aimed at the individual or the institution?
- is the arts intervention aimed at increasing cultural rights?
- is the arts intervention social or even political in its intention?
- if there are any measurable effects are they for the period of the intervention only or are they sustainable and transferable?

### 3.2 Six models of arts interventions in the criminal justice sector

Although the arts in criminal justice sector is not bound together by a coherent set of practices or consistent thinking, it is possible to identify a number of major thematic strands in practice. While not definitive, the following six practice 'models' can be seen to represent the core range of practice applications of the arts across the sector.

**3.2.1 Arts to enrich the prison curriculum** – arts projects that provide opportunities to enrich teaching/delivery of traditional education curricula and/or special arts-based education programmes to broaden the curriculum and lead to transferable skills. For example, Safe Ground's drama-based parenting programmes *Family Man* and *Father's Inside*, which enhanced basic and key skills of participants and improved understanding of family relationships (Halsey et al, 2002).

**3.2.2 Arts education** – art classes in prison or in community settings, to educate or develop skills in specific art forms. For example, Bernie Masterton’s portrait classes and subsequent exhibition in male adult prisons (Donoghue, 2003).

**3.2.3 Arts as therapeutic interventions** – including arts as one tool in a broader intervention or ongoing programme, and in one-to-one art therapy. For example, a study of the use of the art therapy diagnostic tool ‘House-Tree-Person Drawings’ (Lopez, 2001) recommended using art as a detection aid and to help develop a clinical treatment focus for therapists.

**3.2.4 Arts as adjunctive therapy** - arts interventions that aim to have broad personal and social development outcomes that may involve some therapeutic outcomes and procure readiness for future therapeutic interventions. For example, TiPP’s drama-based offending behaviour programme *Blagg* raised issues that were fed into one-to-one counselling/support sessions with participants (Hughes, 2003b).

**3.2.5 Arts for participation and citizenship** – arts that prepare offenders to play a positive role in the community, arts programmes that adopt a peer education model aiming to employ the skills and abilities of offenders to provide a useful programme for others, and arts programmes based on a restorative justice model. For example, the Unit for the Arts and Offenders *Gateway to the Arts* pilot programme included a restorative justice project involving young offenders producing ceramic art installations to enhance the living environment of elderly people (Unit for the Arts and Offenders, 2003).

**3.2.6 Arts as a cultural right** – based on the idea that every social group has the right to participate in high quality arts opportunities, including theatre performances, arts exhibitions, production of writing anthologies, where personal and social benefits are of less concern, for example, Glyndebourne Opera’s residential projects in HMP Lewes (Glyndebourne Education Department, 2002).

### 3.3 Arts interventions in the criminal justice system – effective programme and practice features

The following sections present features of effective programmes and practices in arts programmes across the three areas of the sector, based on an assessment of the body of evidence and practice reported. There is an attempt to highlight programme features (relating to the design and organisation of arts interventions) as well as features of practice (relating to how arts interventions are facilitated, the delivery style and interaction with groups).

#### 3.3.1 General features of effective practice

The following features of effective practice are relevant across the sector as a whole:

- providing opportunities for artist training, reflection and self-evaluation
- communicating coherent aims and objectives, which are accepted by each partner and member of staff that has contact with the programme
- recognising cultural differences between ages and ethnicities – providing opportunities to work in a range of culturally specific arts forms and techniques
- working in partnership with a range of agencies to provide an overarching structure to support and develop the gains made by participants and tackle the range of risk factors relating to re-offending: ‘a group member might “fly” with the bizarre machinery we have

*created during the programme, but once they finish they need great perseverance and favourable conditions to succeed'* (Thompson, 1996: 86)

- recognising and committing to developing the personal and social qualities which the individual practitioner brings to the process - individual interaction can create barriers or facilitate, regardless of the model or method employed.

### 3.3.2 Arts in prevention

The following features of programmes and practices are held to be effective:

- taking arts opportunities to 'where young people are'
- signposting other opportunities in the arts and supporting young people in accessing them
- signposting support and other services and supporting young people to access them (working with other institutions over the long term and providing a gateway to other services)
- training staff in the needs of specific groups
- providing high quality resources
- using high quality creative products
- offering active and direct involvement in the creative process and with artists
- promoting a sense of ownership
- employing leaders who combine high quality arts skills with the ability to relate to, inspire and teach young people and who are comfortable around and committed to understanding the dynamics of vulnerable young people
- responding flexibly to individual needs
- providing opportunities for one-to-one support and positive adult role models
- combining arts with other provision (for example, sports, outdoor activities)
- offering opportunities for young people to raise their status in the community
- offering opportunities for performance/public exhibition
- offering opportunities for young people to 'graduate' through projects, taking on greater responsibility and different roles and opportunities
- providing multiple exit and entrance points
- providing opportunities to succeed as well as maintaining high expectations and standards
- focusing on individual development through working in small group contexts
- using inclusive learning and delivery style
- promoting self-directed learning
- providing safe and accessible settings within communities.

The series of reviews of practice completed by the Rand Corporation as part of their Arts and Prosocial Impact Study (MacArthur & Law 1996; Stone et al 1997, 1998) have made an important and rigorous contribution to the understanding of effective practice in this area.

The study was a response to the need to develop better quality evaluation in the arts with youth at risk sector, and a conceptual framework to identify specific features of projects that could be associated with positive outcomes and inform more longitudinal research. The review began with a study of a national database of more than 200 projects and a review of literature, and included detailed examination of a number of initiatives. These reviews identified the following features of effective practice:

- extended time in programme
- complementary programme components (for example, counselling, sports, tutoring)
- ties with other community organisations (for example, schools, youth services)
- youth mentorship opportunities (opportunities to graduate up the programme)
- emphasis on performance and presentation
- the inclusion of life skills development as a primary objective
- offering enabling services such as meals and transport
- individual level variables associated with specific programmes are also important, for example, 'putting youth on the edge'
- 'inspired leadership' - individuals who could be 'change agents', instrumental in effecting change in social environments, highly committed and showing a commitment to developing youth as 'whole people'.

A range of organisational structures were identified as effective, from independent (stand alone organisations), to contractors (offering services), and consortia (loosely aligned groups offering a range of services): *'the fact that such a broad range of structural forms exist suggests a highly adaptive arts community that utilises various market niches to deliver its programming effectively to at risk youth, usually under tight financial constraints'* (Stone et al, 1997:iv).

### 3.3.3 Arts in custodial and community sentencing

The following features of programmes and practices are held to be effective:

- long-term programmes (although short-term interventions are also effective)
- partnership programmes integrating staff from social/therapeutic professional groups, where appropriate
- opportunities for feedback about one's own performance/progression as part of the process
- programmes informed by a theory base (usually cognitive behavioural) but incorporating theoretical strands and practice from arts-generated models of change
- courses and programmes developed in partnership with inmates, facilitating inmates' input into programme design (for example, Safe Ground's parenting programme), gain credibility and relevance

- programmes if not led by a 'master artist' then at least with serious artistic instruction/commitment to a disciplined process
- involving offenders in planning and steering ongoing programmes
- active and direct involvement in the creative process
- challenging work that takes risks
- good, supportive relationships with key staff within regimes.

### 3.3.4 Arts in resettlement

The following features of programmes and practices are held to be effective:

- integrating arts method with educational training and opportunities for development of insight
- developing involvement of/strong relationships between arts organisation and the community
- acknowledging the need for continuity – ensuring continued arts programmes to assist reintegration with the community on release, providing support to access other opportunities in employment and education/training
- providing financial support and other 'enabling services' (in connection with travel and childcare, for example)
- offering accredited courses.

## MODELS OF CHANGE

This section presents an analysis of how artists working across the sector construct and describe their practice, and draws on relevant strands of psychological and sociological theory to identify 'models of change'; ways in which participation in arts activities may achieve changes in the behaviour and actions of individuals and/or groups and communities. It is divided as follows:

- existing theoretical frameworks
- art form specific models of change.

A key challenge for the arts sector in substantiating its claims for effectiveness in the criminal justice arena is to explain how and why the arts can have a positive effect on the factors influencing re-offending; to be able to distil the causal mechanisms and contexts underlying existing practice and their links to prevention and rehabilitative outcomes. To do this, it needs to develop its own body of theory (Miles, 2003).

The aim here is to inform theory building, to begin the exercise of developing models for reflection and future research rather than to guide specific actions around planning and practice, and in the process to explore two key questions:

- is there a generic transformative potential common to all of the arts?
- are there different and distinct models of change which are applicable to particular art forms?

First models of change drawing on psychological and sociological theory are reported on. This is followed by a discussion of promising strands of 'grounded theory' (or theory arising from practice) developed from descriptions of art-form specific models of change?

### 3.4 Existing theoretical frameworks

The literature indicates a number of established explanatory models within which, or in relation to which, the impact of the arts in general can be specified:

- cognitive behavioural theory
- role theory/social learning theory
- resiliency theory
- social capital theory
- learning theory
- intelligence theories
- arts therapies.

Before describing each of the above in detail, it may be useful to consider the perspective offered by the 'transtheoretical model of change' that has emerged from health research (primarily into smoking cessation). The model was stimulated by research suggesting that there is a common process of change that can be identified across different therapies (Prochaska et al, 1994). The model states that the process of change is cyclical rather than linear, and relapse is the norm (Prochaska & Velicer, 1988; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983). The features of each dimension of change identified in the model represent areas of activity/behaviour that can be targeted to facilitate progress in individuals. They include:

- processes of change (activities used by individuals to change their behaviour), including consciousness-raising, self-liberation, social liberation, self-re-evaluation, environmental re-evaluation, counter-conditioning, stimulus control, reinforcement management, dramatic relief (catharsis) and helping relationships
- levels of change (representing what needs to be changed), for example cognitive ability, interpersonal skill, family systems
- stages of change (temporal dimensions of change, that is, when changes occur), including precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance.

This model describes features implicit in any change process and therefore may be a helpful reference when developing understanding and 'operationalising' the models of change described below for application in future research.

#### 3.4.1 Cognitive behavioural theory

This is a compound model rooted in a range of personality and social psychology theories including social learning theory. Cognitive behavioural approaches are designed to address the complex relationships between thoughts, feelings and behaviour, which an individual learns to manage from experience and by example from significant people in their lives. The process of socialisation can result in deficits which reinforce anti-social behaviour. The premise of cognitive behavioural theory is that such deficits can be corrected through training which reinforces positive behaviour rather than negative behaviour in a consistent

way. Essentially this training is comprised of three components (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 1998):

- **cognitive** – i.e. learning thinking skills
- **emotional** – i.e. learning self-awareness, self-expression and self-control
- **behavioural** - i.e. learning pro-social ways of acting to achieve goals.

The underlying principle of the cognitive behavioural approach, then, is that in order to change the way people behave it is necessary first to change the way they think. In the context of those susceptible to offending there are several 'risk' or 'criminogenic' factors which can be targeted including temperamental characteristics, anti-social attitudes and values, poor problem-solving capacities and low levels of training and educational skills (Gendreau & Andrews, 1990). Programmes designed to address these factors aim to develop and restructure thinking habits and belief systems to develop 'pro-social' behaviour.

Acting Out Theatre Company's drama programmes for persistent, sex and violent offenders exemplifies an arts approach that incorporates cognitive behavioural theory. Role play and drama games or exercises aim to increase perceptual ability, perspective-taking, self-awareness, concentration, expression, inventiveness, problem identification and solving, confidence and self-worth, social learning and negotiation skills. Role play can provide opportunities to experience events from different points of view and to practice new skills and behaviours in fictional contexts that mirror real world settings. Drama can also add value to a cognitive behavioural approach by 'initiating affect'; exploring the emotional states of one's self and others via freezing actions and roles (Hewish, 2001).

In recent literature relating to the arts in the criminal justice sector there is an explicit move away from cognitive behavioural approaches towards engaging with offenders on a more affective or imaginative level. It is interesting that this has coincided with Home Office evaluation findings which have cast doubt on the impact of cognitive behavioural group work (Cann et al, 2003). Notable examples of arts practice in this area include Hewish and Johnston's work on 'kinetic sculptures' – an arts programme taking place alongside a conventional cognitive behavioural intervention with young offenders, addressing deficits or gaps in the cognitive approach. Kinetic sculptures are moving, non-verbal representations of pressure moments related to offending. The programme employs a holistic approach, engaging with personal culture/beliefs, fantasies/ imagination and empathy/affective skills of offenders: *'if we don't understand this internal dreaming and simply try and "graft on" an apparently more wholesome set of lifestyle goals, they may just fall off again in a matter of months'* (Johnston, 2004:127). The emphasis is on providing the 'experience' of exploring and then representing the thought and feeling process and unconscious fantasy/self-beliefs associated with offending.

The relevance of neurological research relating to attachment theory and memory present an interesting development of arts practice informed by a cognitive behavioural approach. Bergman and Hewish (2003) draw upon attachment theory (based on the precept that there is a need to attach to a caring adult to facilitate growth) to explain the impact of their practice. Neurological research has suggested that attachment disorders result from damage to the function of the brain sustained by trauma or abuse early in life; those involved in the criminal justice system can be presumed to have attachment disorders as a result of early experiences of trauma or abuse. Specifically the ability to 'map' experiences can be limited:

*“mapping” is another term for making precise descriptions – representing something in pictures, memory, or through precise physical representation. We do this all the time. We rely on the small interior representations we make in different ways to work safely and intimately with others. It means, for instance, having a reliable and accurate system of mapping the meaning of a partner’s behaviour from spatial movement...it is hard to ‘attach’ or connect with people when you have a poor mechanism for internally representing other people’ (12).*

Bergman and Hewish describe a set of drama and acting exercises to assist practitioners working with attachment issues, *‘these exercises assist the client to focus, sense that he is sensing and describe what he is sensing in minute detail. They augment the mind’s mechanism of remembering’ (13).*

A recent evaluation of a theatre project in a women’s prison (Hughes, 2003a) drew on advances in memory research to interpret themes in qualitative interviews with participants and arts practitioners. Project leaders noted that the women’s difficulty in remembering creative work from previous sessions presented obstacles to the ‘flow’ of the residency. This may have been an issue of low self-esteem – the lack of value the women felt for their personal stories could have restricted engagement. However, research into memory suggests that experiences of trauma can alter the function and quality of memory. Some people who have experienced trauma develop ‘over general memory’: in order to control painful feelings the mind aborts the search for specific events in favour of more general accounts of experience. This creates a *memory trap*, a key feature of which is negative self-perception. Memory traps result in a limited ability to remember positive experiences (a source of self-esteem and hope for/ability to imagine the future) as well as negative events (Williams, 1995; Conway et al, 2003; Williams, 1997). Taking part in an arts project is an intense social and emotional experience for many participants and may provide an opportunity to challenge and counter the destructive impact of trauma on memory, and subsequent unsuccessful coping strategies.

### **3.4.2 Role theory/social learning theory**

Role and social learning theory clearly overlap with aspects of a cognitive behavioural approach. The ability to play a social role, to understand and perform to expectations of others, as well as to develop and sustain personal style and identity, are both important for successful development. Role theory originates in the work of Erving Goffman (1959), who draws on theatrical metaphor to propose that each individual learns to become human by doing what others already do and by ‘playing’, at different times and in multiple ways, a wide range of roles. Role theory relates to social learning theory (see in particular the work of Mead, 1934, which suggests that the formation of self and social roles occurs through interaction with others).

The arts are social processes. Participation in the arts provides opportunities to learn and develop role-taking and role-playing skills via the social process of creating/presenting a piece of art, the fictional space of a creative process (such as performing roles in plays) and the opportunity to take on different life roles in a group or team process. Moller’s (2003b) article draws on role and social learning theory in an analysis of a theatre programme in a New York prison. Inability to play roles/role-take contributes to limited perspective-taking capacity; taking part in a theatre ensemble in prison can prepare offenders for release by providing opportunities to play fictional and new life roles:

*‘as a prisoner, to participate in theatre is to restore one’s role repertoire to a normative state, to allow the self to be something other than one’s crime... circumstances can be viewed*

*through multiple perspectives. When individuals are able to shift their lenses, they are capable of developing empathy, becoming other-centred and assuming the values of good citizenship' (2003: 1).*

### 3.4.3 Resiliency theory

An important focus in recent research on young people's transitions to adulthood is risk and resiliency theory, relating to research that has sought to identify protective factors, or resiliencies that help to ensure positive outcomes for young people who grow up in conditions of high risk or vulnerability. Protective factors are skills, relationships and experiences which alter or reduce exposure to risk, interrupt the chain reaction of negative events, help to establish and maintain self-efficacy and self-esteem and create opportunities for change (Newman, 2003).

Participating in the arts can both reduce risk factors (by providing a diversionary activity for example) and reinforce protective factors (by providing access to a support network, positive adult role models and opportunities to develop personal and social skills). Individual resiliency factors include (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1996):

- cognitive competence (ability to think abstractly and flexibly)
- social competence (empathy, acting independently, sense of humour)
- goal orientated competence (ability to set goals and make plans, motivation)
- physical competence (health, fitness)
- civic competence (participation, respect).

Positive development outcomes identified in risk and resilience research are the same characteristics that research and evaluation have indicated are the outcomes of participating in arts programmes, for example, personal and social skills, problem-solving skills and a sense of autonomy. In addition, arts projects can provide the environmental support associated with a number of protective factors.

### 3.4.4 Social capital theory

Social capital is a concept subject to competing definitions that has attracted a great deal of focus from political and academic audiences over the last decade. It has been defined thus:

*'the state of civic engagement and social trust in liberal democracies...successful and healthy democracies and economies are those possessing dense webs of community participation' (Walters, 2002: 377).*

Social capital refers to personal and social skills and networks/relationships that help communities and individuals achieve success despite exposure to risk. At the level of theory it is put forward to explain why some communities work better than others, with resulting health, social and economic benefits. Social networks and implicit norms that facilitate coordination, social trust and local democracy, it is argued, lead to healthier, more efficient communities wherein a range of social problems can be more readily addressed. As a concept, social capital has been used to define or measure the properties accruing to communities and individuals from active participation networks.

Social capital theory has been applied across a number of disciplines, including education, economics, criminology and politics, and has clear relevance to any attempt to provide an explanatory framework for the impact of the arts. As with resiliency theory, the outcomes of arts programmes overlap with characteristics of social capital. Arts programmes seek to engage individuals in participating in social processes that can develop a range of skills, capacities and new social networks. Arts programmes in communities can contribute to the “critical mass” of institutional structures’ that act as an effective deterrent to crime (Sherman et al, 1997; see also Matarasso, 1997). In terms of arts in prisons, evidence referenced elsewhere in this report (Section 2.4. for example) suggests that engagement in an arts programme can have a number of personal and social effects, including improved relationships between inmates and between inmates and staff.

### 3.4.5 Learning theory

It is argued that all art forms have the ability to transform the environment for learning, that they all share the creative mechanism which encourages critical thinking and the channelling of personal expression, and that they have more sustained effects because the context in which they occur and the degree of cognitive/creative engagement they require makes them more memorable (Silvis, 2002).

Winner and Cooper (2000) provide a theory base for a link between the arts and positive educational outcomes. They outline three main arguments:

- ‘the cognitive structure argument’ - cognitive structures used in the arts (for example, critical thinking, close observation, problem-solving) can be applied to learning in other disciplines
- ‘the motivational argument’ - the arts stimulate motivational and attitude change that can help young people re-engage with education and boost confidence
- the ‘epiphenomenal’ link - the arts facilitate positive reforms in teaching and in the learning culture/environment that support more positive educational outcomes. The language of the arts can help young people make the cultural leap, to procure a state of ‘readiness to learn’ that can increase chances of success in a mainstream educational environment.

Piaget’s (1966) theory of children’s development is relevant to learning theory. The arts can facilitate a child through each stage of development, sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete, operational and formal operational via play, imagery and symbolism and appropriate opportunities for social interaction at each stage. Duguid (1981) draws on Piaget to suggest that criminal thinking is adolescent in style; demonstrating the features of ‘concrete operational thinking’. The arts can provide the ‘cognitive conflict’ that Piaget suggested was necessary to move to more mature styles of ‘formal operational thinking’ (abstract thinking). The arts provide opportunities to reflect, to consider experience and the consequences of actions and to generate alternative solutions: characteristics of a cognitive style associated with maturity. The arts engage multiple skills and abilities and nurture the development of a range of cognitive, social and personal competencies.

Play theory, and its association with the developmental models proposed by Piaget, Maslow, Erikson, Klein and Winnicott, provides a further dimension to a learning theory framework for the arts. Play is enjoyable, spontaneous, voluntary and requires active engagement. ‘Learning through play’ offers a unique medium for building bridges between stages of personal development. Children and young people develop the ability to role-take through play (in play children take roles in an imagined world, step in and out of role and world, experiment

with, manipulate and test actions and interactions) and organised games (games require an individual to take into account the different perspectives of many different people). Pearson-Davies (1989) draws on the ideas of Klein (children's play as a symbolic representation of unconscious fantasy) and Erik Erikson (play as a way of achieving mastery over traumatic or difficult experiences) in describing arts practice with troubled young people. She states that formal play (for example, theatre productions), when organised to meet young people's needs, can provide emotional release, opportunities for social interaction, an opportunity to try out new roles in a safe environment and success experiences.

### 3.4.6 Intelligence theories

Gardner's (1993) work on multiple intelligences suggests that the arts are in a crucial and perhaps unique position to offer alternatives to the formal literacies of the traditional education system. Multiple intelligence theory draws on anthropological and biological research to identify seven forms of intelligence – linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence. There are many ways of learning about a subject, depending on an individual's combinations of intelligences. Traditional education tends to operate in only two or three intelligences and therefore does not meet the learning needs of many young people. The arts encompass elements relevant to each intelligence and can cater for different learning styles. The alternative lexicons of music or media or poetry, for example, may more effectively engage those who are often excluded from traditional educational settings in learning opportunities. Arts enriched curricula employ music and dance (drawing on musical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic and inter/intrapersonal intelligence) to teach mathematics and science, for example (see Stucker in Costello, 1995). The learning process can be more inclusive for young people who exhibit combinations of intelligence that do not fit with formal teaching styles.

The concept of 'emotional intelligence' has emerged recently (Goleman 1995, 1998), based on advances in neurological sciences which suggest that areas of the brain which manage emotions are linked to social skills/competence, and that the emotional part of the brain may learn differently from the cognitive part of the brain. Emotional intelligence is a learned characteristic that refers to *'the capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships'* (Goleman 1998: 317). Emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor, regulate and use feelings to guide thought and action and relates to basic emotional and social competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation and empathy.

Role play and games can help to teach emotional intelligence through facilitating exposure to, and expression and examination of, the thoughts and feelings of self and others. The concept of emotional intelligence is drawn on by Talia Theatre Company to describe their work with young people on the verge of school exclusion:

*'focusing on engaging participants through drama based learning, each programme develops the participant's emotional literacy and allows time for participants to come to a deeper understanding of themselves through a combination of reflective and self-esteem building exercises'* (Annual Report, 2003: 12).

### 3.4.7 Arts therapies

The arts therapies are a range of disciplines distinct from the arts in their generic use and aims, and in their application and use in criminal justice settings. They include (visual) art therapy, dramatherapy, dance therapy and music therapy. All the arts therapies have specific professional training, accreditation routes and structures and are most commonly employed in education and health settings. They are all allied to play therapy, which is again a distinct discipline, often used with young children who have been emotionally or sexually abused.

While the arts may claim to be therapeutic in certain contexts, the intention of arts therapy is to actively use the medium of the arts to engage in a therapeutic relationship between the therapist and the client, and for the client to engage in a therapeutic relationship with their emotional and psychological issues. For Liebmman the distinction is that while *'Most arts activities have as their main expressed aim an external product, such as a mural, concert, play or mask... Arts therapies tend to look more explicitly at the personal processes involved, having this as their aim'* (1994:8). For Jones, the aim of dramatherapy is to engage the client in a therapeutic relationship through which they can find *'resolution, relief, a new understanding or changed ways of functioning'* (1995: 6). Dramatherapy, with its relationship to role and performance theories, and visual art (with a reputation as the most practised form of art therapy) shed some light on art form-specific uses. These distinctions are useful and necessary to delineate the aims and objectives of the arts therapies and the arts within criminal justice settings. The arts therapies are able to define the specific ways in which the elements of an arts medium are used, their specific intended purpose and their intended objectives in relation to personal and emotional problems. Some of the arts therapies processes and assessment criteria are relevant to the understanding of how participation in the different art forms can contribute to objectives around changes in personal, social and cognitive behaviour.

#### a. Dramatherapy models

Jones identifies nine core processes in dramatherapy, which are crucial to its effectiveness. Of those, three have direct links to their theatrical processes and origins:

- 'life-drama connection' - the relationship between the 'theatre frame' and 'life frame'
- 'empathy and distance' - the process of entry into and playing of a character
- 'interactive audience and witnessing' - the audience and the process of witnessing in theatre.

The 'life-drama connection' (Jones, 1995: 99) allows and develops a realm between the client's subjective and objective worlds, within which both emotional and cognitive connections can be made. This process has acknowledged direct correlations with the 'transitional space' identified in psychoanalysis by Winnicott in *Playing and Reality* (1974). 'Empathy' encourages emotional resonance and involvement, whereas 'distancing' encourages involvement through thought, reflection and perspective. In the process of playing with and playing in roles at different levels of emotional resonance and reflection, clients are able to make individual connections between their subjective and objective worlds. The intensity, effectiveness and sustainability of these connections is akin to models of 'catharsis' in psychotherapy and theatre. 'Interactive audience and witnessing' parallels conventional audience and performer dynamics but identifies four ways in which the audience in dramatherapy groups can be used. Its function as support, confronter, guide and companion is coupled with the client's ability to experience both audience and performer roles and functions within a session or group, creating opportunities for being 'an audience to others and oneself' (Jones: 112).

In dramatherapy, assessments are made of individuals' abilities to function socially, based on Piaget's series of cognitive play categories. These were developed to assess social-cognitive components of play, focusing on areas such as constructive play or dramatic play in terms of solitary, parallel and group interactions (Rubin, 1979). Moreno's social atom, originally developed in the 1930s and used widely in a range of contexts, has been applied to work with people on alcoholism treatment programmes. Buchanan, writing in *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, described the dramatic use of the social atom as '*a barometer of change as well as an assessment tool*' (Buchanan, 1984: 3).

### **b. Art therapy models**

Liebmann (1994: 9) outlines the benefits of using visual art therapy which highlight the following:

- form and process of non-verbal expression
- form and process of non-verbal communication
- vehicle for self-exploration (of 'hard to put into words' issues)
- safe and acceptable vehicle to release intense emotions
- images (products) which are a catalyst for discussion, a reference for reflection.

These benefits are informed by two generic criteria, namely the element of active participation (encouraging and supporting motivation) and the element of play and enjoyment (leading to a sense of creativity). The visual art therapies emphasise the importance of 'playing' with art materials, leading to non verbal expression of feelings and insight that would not otherwise be accessible: '*Art therapy's distinctive approach mediates between verbal and non verbal, acting and thinking. All behaviour has meaning. As the criminal act is non verbal, the art therapist has a unique way of engaging patients to find alternative ways of processing difficult feelings and impulses*' (Delshadian, 2003: 68). The visual art therapies emphasise the importance of 'playing' with art materials, leading to non verbal expression of feelings and insight that would not otherwise be accessible: '*Access to art materials can provide an alternative way to express reaction to upheaval, change and distress – and sometimes enable women to symbolise that which is unspeakable...the physical boundaries of the materials and images can offer women in chaotic and vulnerable states a means of containment for difficult feelings, thereby lessening the likelihood of acting out in a more destructive form*' (Cronin, 1994).

### **3.5 Art-form specific models of change**

The final section of the report focuses on art-form specific models of change, based on an analysis of how artists and arts researchers/evaluators across a range of art forms have characterised arts practice. The art-form specific models of change are presented as tentative propositions only and, as with the theoretical strands described above, many themes interrelate and overlap. Most of the literature reviewed for this report consisted of descriptions of process; attempts at reflection or explanation of process or impact were few and limited.

The models expounded below represent a first attempt at theorising (providing a set of arguments that can be used as an explanatory framework) from such descriptions of arts practice. They are therefore offered as stepping-stones towards the development of testable models of change which might inform future research.

This section is presented as follows:

- **Visual arts and film** – developing perceptual abilities and visualising self in relation to others
- **Drama, theatre and performance** – marking new relationships in liminal or transitional space
- **Creative writing/words/storytelling** – naming experiences and exploring moral dimensions of social worlds
- **Dance** – discovering new physical routines and a sense of self via physical response and interaction with others
- **Music** – learning and using patterns to develop language and communication skills and a more refined interpretation of the world.

### 3.5.1 Visual arts and film

The visual arts in the criminal justice sector involve the creation and investigation of images to facilitate the development or expansion of perceptions and understanding (of self, others and the world). For example, Bernie Masterton's portrait classes and subsequent exhibition in male adult prisons in Ireland facilitated *'a way of seeing and expressing one's place in the world...the portrait is a marker of time...[that] initiates new responses and insights from the men'* (Donoghue, 2003:1). Tate Liverpool's input into a domestic violence programme and Insight Art's autophotography project have helped develop offenders' perceptual abilities (and subsequent understanding and behaviour) by engaging participants in creating, exploring and analysing images that provide opportunities to reflect on self/others.

What theoretical purchase might these activities have? The described outcomes clearly have some relation to the processes of cognition, perceptual ability, mapping and emotional insight outlined in the section exploring cognitive behavioural models (above). There are two distinct themes: the first is in the use of the image, both viewing and creating images and symbols (in detail), to interpret and develop perspective on experiences. The second theme relates to the relationship of self to the image; implicit in the creation or exploration of images is the link between what is being perceived, how and by whom. There is a concrete, material and mental/emotional relationship between internal perception and external object that yields material for personal development. Visual arts provide an opportunity to develop a sense of self or perspective of one's place in relation to objects and others in the world.

The same model applies to the medium of film and video. Film provides opportunities to view and reflect on self in relation to the world from new perspectives, via feedback from other audiences. Chandler (1973) found that incorporating video in a programme focusing on role-taking enhanced perspective-taking ability among a group of 'delinquent youth'. The process involved providing regular feedback to participants about their performance in role plays through showing video recordings. A more recent example provides an interesting parallel of this model of change. *Pathways to Work* (2003), an initiative connected to Children's Services in Tyneside, worked with young ex-offenders to create a short film aiming to challenge discrimination against and the inequality of young ex-offenders in the labour market. A short film produced by a local film company and 11 young people from the project was premiered at the Newcastle Odeon. The project provided an opportunity to project a positive self-image to a public audience, raise the self-esteem and social status of young people involved and challenge the perceptions of others.

## 3.5.2 Drama, theatre and performance

Drama, theatre and performance in the criminal justice sector contains perhaps the most developed and differentiated theory base of all the art forms. There are three particularly distinctive theoretical or reflective strands reflected in the literature pertaining to drama and theatre in the criminal justice system:

- Marking theory
- Performance theory
- Dramatic metaphors and mask.

### a. Marking theory

Thompson's 'marking theory' (2003) represents an extension of the cognitive behavioural model, linking role and social learning theory with Boal's forum theatre (1979, 1992). Marking theory is a reaction against the limitations imposed by the theoretical frameworks of role rehearsal when explaining the impact of participation in theatre. Thompson asserts that a theatre workshop exploring offending behaviour should not be described as repeated or rehearsed 'pro-social' actions that can be learned and reproduced in other contexts. Participation in theatre and drama has a more complex relationship to behaviour or action in the future. Applied theatre workshops involve *'examining the web of interrelations and making new connections...in playing with "bits of behaviour" applied theatre can gently or faintly, mark'* (Thompson, 2003: 53). Thompson states:

*'we are all in fact "marked people" who exhibit the patterns created by "little dramatic performance" of others, in and through our daily actions. Our bodies and our lives are both shaped and we in turn shape our bodies, giving us the ability to engage with our friends, families and communities' (57).*

The behaviour or action ('little dramatic performances') of an individual is a result of an embodiment of past experiences and relationships; a theatre workshop engages with, reveals and can adjust these performances:

*'applied theatre should be...an engagement with the marked and interconnected actions of participants. Even the shortest applied theatre project can adjust the links between people and enact new relations between groups that rub against and reveal the marks of our lives' (60).*

Drama workshops can be intense, exciting experiences that create 'social energy'. This energy facilitates changes in interaction, thought and feeling processes which in turn can leave 'marks' on participants that compete with or constrict rigid responses and conditioned behaviour. A participant can be left with a memory of different and more diverse possibilities of behaviour, ways of expressing feelings and new physical routines. Theatre processes mirror the complex process of day-to-day interaction and communication and this means that a greater impression can be made.

### b. Performance theory

Other research has drawn on performance theory to explain/interpret the impact of taking part in theatre. An evaluation of a drama-based offending behaviour workshop with young people made links with Turner's concept of the liminal/liminoid to suggest that drama workshops can provide 'transitional spaces' that facilitate changes in perception of self, others and the world (Hughes, 2003b). Within the arts, these spaces are characterised by informal contexts which take place outside the normal roles and routines of institutions, that challenge people to test themselves and take risks, explore a wider range of self-expression

and take on new roles and responsibilities with the effect of changing self and others' perceptions of abilities. A drama workshop takes place in liminal space and the new context, roles/relationships and forms of interaction can '*prepare young people to respond to other people and social moments more fluidly and effectively*' (Hughes, 2003:1).

Heritage (2004) is also influenced by performance theory. His theatre practice in Brazilian prisons focuses on the use of performance to challenge and positively change the dehumanising institutional structures and practices in prison and their damaging effect on relationships and the emotional/social environment: '*within my work, I have attempted to ask if it is possible to break the ways in which spaces and lives in prison are circumscribed*' (221). The transitional space supplied by an arts project is an opportunity to facilitate institutional as well as individual change. Heritage comments that it is very difficult to show how this affects behaviour in the future, however:

*'what we can show is how the presence of this drama work in the prison changes the institution, and how new relationships come about as a result of the project. This in turn may lead to an environment of respect for self and for the other, and that might make some of the necessary individual changes more possible'* (230).

### c. Dramatic metaphors and mask

This category relates to the work of Geese Theatre Company, specifically their work with theatrical metaphors in mask, performance and theatre workshops. As such, this theoretical strand is associated as much with the visual art model as drama and performance.

In an analysis of Geese's *Violent Illusion Trilogy*, a performance and workshop programme exploring violence, Liebmann comments: '*Geese developed imagery and metaphors that were reflections of the landscape of many different types of inmates' minds*' (Liebmann 1996: 97-8). Geese Theatre Company's masks and other theatrical metaphors are inspired in part by cognitive behavioural theory and research into criminal thinking and behaviour. For example, a mask can represent the front or persona performed by an offender in a specific context; within workshops and performances participants are challenged to lift the mask and say what they think and feel at a deeper level. This develops awareness of destructive patterns of thought and feeling and offers the possibility of changing behaviour: '*theatrically, the mask allows the actor to represent dynamically the "inner voice" (the thought process) emphasising thoughts, beliefs, rules, values and their effect on behaviour*' (Mountford, 1998: 112).

Dramatic metaphor creates a more direct connection with participants, by operating on the level of conscious and unconscious thinking and behaviour. Also, in the manner of the visual arts model of change, the metaphor or symbol exists in concrete and temporal space and creates distance from self: feelings can be safely contained and explored in relation to the image, developing insight and self-awareness.

### 3.5.3 Creative writing, words and storytelling

The model of change identified in descriptions of creative writing/words/storytelling practice within the criminal justice system focuses on an individual's capacity to use language to describe complex emotional experience, leading to increased social, moral and emotional awareness and improved management/regulation of self. John Siddique, a writer in prisons, emphasises the importance of developing participants' ability to describe specific experiences in detail:

*'crime reduces the size of people's worlds and reinforces selfish, narrow outlooks...in poetry, to be successful, you have to be let in on the world, whether you're describing bread, flowers, whatever. If you can get people to get real about what they're writing, they have to look at the subject in an objective way. I look at what emotions are and exploring physical reality, exploring memory...the process is about being as specific as possible about what you're talking about'* (Siddique, 2003, in interview with writer).

The *Changing Lives Through Literature* initiative, an alternative sentencing programme in the USA uses literature to explore and challenge offending behaviour; specifically, to generate insight into the complexity of human experience and challenge the value system of offenders. Exploring character and story encourages connection to and reflection on personal experience and facilitates *'the exercise of the moral imagination'*; understanding that there are many ways of thinking about a person/event, consciousness of one's own life and opportunities to encounter a range of human emotions/experiences. Literature *'allows men filled with rage to give that rage shape, to recognise it, and so finally understand it...(and develops) new dimensions of consciousness shaped by a language that yields understanding'* (Waxler, 1997).

Clive Hopwood, director of the Writers in Prisons Network in the UK, states: *'the first layer of knowledge is oral – a sense of I and the other, the naming of things. As this grows we expand our ability to describe and question the world around us. Slowly we learn to think abstractly and imaginatively, to absorb a sense of time, to assimilate the idea of consequence and action, a moral awareness of right and wrong, to construct a mental model of the world and its ways'* (Hopwood in The Home Office Standing Committee for Arts in Prisons, 2001).

As with the visual arts and drama/theatre models, the process of developing self-awareness, thinking and perceptual ability, and the ability to relate to others via the artistic medium is emphasised. In the writing model the unifying theme is language: naming experiences to facilitate engagement and interaction with the world combines with increased consciousness of the impact of self on the world and vice versa. The moral dimension of this model is highlighted in the descriptions above; perhaps by operating at the level of language – a deliberate and direct form of social communication/interaction - writing/storytelling can play a more explicit role in actively exploring social value and ethical issues than the other art forms.

### 3.5.4 Dance

Descriptions of dance practice within the criminal justice system focus on the development of physical routines, more disciplined and managed physical expression and concentration and focus. Interaction involving physical contact and movement can be powerful experiences for offenders, helping to tackle unhelpful body routines, releasing tension and feelings and enhancing physical posture, with subsequent positive impacts on sense of self and self-image. Dance offers physical opportunities for practising self-control and testing new forms of expression:

*'old anti-social behaviours, reflected in movement metaphors such as impulsive, harsh action, loss of control, withdrawal, can be traded in for new behaviours and responses, practised in movement structures such as slow motion action, deliberate eye contact as signal, regulated tension release, discovered here and explored, reinforced by group energy and attitude'* (Milliken, 2002:206).

Such descriptions reflect a different quality to most of the art-specific models considered thus far, more akin to the learning and intelligence theories (with their specification of non-verbal or pre-cognitive learning processes) than cognitive behavioural frameworks. The

unifying feature here is the body as the medium of expression, allowing exploration of experience that can at once be very abstract (or, at least, non-verbal, ambiguous or undefined) and very concrete (bounded or rooted in physical experience). Dance is as much a social activity as a drama or arts workshop and offers, as those art forms do, opportunities to forge new relationships and develop self-awareness through social interaction. However, in dance the means of expression is the body and the process is one of accessing experiences via physical movement, response and interaction.

### 3.5.5 Music

*'Music is the pretext – life is the text'* (Challis, quoting Kushner, 2003).

Descriptions of music practice within the criminal justice system focus on the impact of rhythm and sound on mood, concentration, relaxation, self regulation and cognitive/general functioning. Music communicates at a level of 'non-awareness' or 'pre-expression', and sound covers a broader spectrum than that of the human voice and thus stimulates additional parts of the brain, facilitating language development and emotional insight (Rovertson, 2003). Music can make links with areas of experience that are not accessible through verbal facility or conscious memory, and stimulate a process of change. This aspect may have particular relevance for work with some groups of offenders.

*'Since many sex offenders were also abused, often early in their formative years, their learning about offending occurred before cognitive skills were well developed. Many cognitive distortions were learned through experiences imprinted heavily with images, emotions and bodily sensations; therefore re-learning through experiential methods can be very effective. Accessing internal images, feelings and physiological responses with a focus on healing involves reconstruction that embraces not only the intellectual but all aspects of the human'* (Skaggs, 1997:74).

There is a wealth of research into the impact of music on cognitive development. Research that has discovered links between musical rhythms and physiological and neurological processes suggests that participation in music supports many processes associated with the ability to learn and use patterns (for example, language acquisition, interpreting others' movements and behaviour). Music plays a part in pre-cognitive neurological development enabling us to recognise and interpret the complex emotional information that underlies speech and can be used in language learning and recovery from brain damage. Music can also trigger moods and emotions which may support the role of emotion in cognitive function (Rovertson, 2003). In addition, research has shown that patterns of reading/cognition are similar to those of skilled motor performance involved in making music (Montello et al, 1998). Educational research has shown that there may be a relationship between taking part in music and cognitive performance (Winner & Cooper, 2000).

## **PART FOUR**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The final part of this report distils the main issues and findings of the review. It also makes a series of general recommendations for the development of research and evaluation activity in the arts and criminal justice sector. It is organised as follows:

- theories
- impacts
- practice
- research.

#### **4.1. Theories**

The models of change outlined above are not definitive, refined or exhaustive. They nevertheless provide some theoretical bases for substantiating claims for the effectiveness of arts practice in the criminal justice sector, supplementing and illuminating evidence presented in earlier sections of the report. They also begin to suggest that there may be mechanisms within different art forms that lead to specific effects or impacts relating to offending behaviour and to personal and social development. There are important overlapping themes, however, which suggest generic, or broader conclusions to substantiate claims for the effectiveness of arts provision.

The arts work on affective, cognitive and behavioural, as well as neurological, levels. Themes that recur across all art forms relate to the role of the arts in improving perceptual/thinking ability and emotional insight and, above all perhaps, in creating a context (physical, social, emotional) to facilitate personal change. In these terms, the notion of a liminal or transitional space is a key concept which applies across the specific art forms.

The experiences of participating in the arts are rooted in a range of human, social and environmental factors not fully available to or accessible via traditional therapeutic or educational modes of engagement and communication. Many offenders lack basic skills and have histories of engagement with social organisations and education systems that have failed to meet their needs: offenders are less likely to engage with traditional forms of relationships in institutional settings. The arts offer a non-judgmental and un-authoritarian model of engagement, as well as a non-traditional, non-institutional social and emotional environment. Engagement in the arts assumes and requires respect and responsibility, cooperation and collaboration - factors which are vital in stimulating lasting change.

The emerging theory base outlined here can be used to inform a conceptual framework for arts impacts in the sector and to develop appropriate refined measures by which to evaluate and research practice. Establishing an association between arts interventions and positive offending/reconviction outcomes is important, but this should be underpinned by a sophisticated research design along critical realist lines that can explore and specify the link between participation in an arts programme and re-offending, demonstrating which interventions work for whom, when and in what circumstances. Doing this effectively implies a coherent and substantial longitudinal dimension to research practice, which will involve tracking participants over a much longer period of time than has been possible in almost all previous or existing studies.

## 4.2 Impacts

The findings of this review provide an empirical base substantiated by clear theoretical propositions that indicate considerable promise for the impact of the arts in challenging and reducing offending. Although there is not enough high quality evaluation and research in the sector, some of the studies reported do support claims that a range of arts practice can have specific and measurable impacts on offending and related factors.

The arts provide an opportunity to participate in a creative process that involves both structure and freedom to explore thoughts and feelings via external representations of self (in music, image, word, performance). This facilitates expression of different thoughts and feelings (unfamiliar, suppressed or new) that can lead to experiencing self and others in different or significantly changed ways.

What are the specific outcomes of participating in the arts? The evidence base suggests that there are four main areas of impact:

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

There is evidence of impact across all these areas, but two key questions remain unanswered:

- how sustained are the gains - to what extent do they last beyond the experience of the arts project, and are changes palliative or can they be shown to have lasting personal and social effect?
- in what circumstances do interventions work best - for whom, when and in what contexts?

As noted throughout this report, recent research suggests that, while the cognitive behavioural approach has demonstrated some effectiveness, it has not provided a blueprint which can challenge offending behaviour in a way that is relevant for all offenders all the time. This report provides examples of (and a theory and evidence base for) how the arts can incorporate and add value to models based on cognitive behavioural theory by providing access to emotional and imaginative worlds. The theory base described gives substance to the argument that the arts can play an important part in providing a broad and flexible education curriculum, leading to increased creativity, adaptability and communication skills; to personal and social skills relevant to making a successful transition to responsible adulthood; and to leading pro-social lives post-sentence.

## 4.3 Practice

This review shows the currently limited capacity for quality research and evaluation in the arts in criminal justice sector. It raises the question of what sort of evaluation arts companies can be expected to carry out: which questions are better addressed by trained researchers with more knowledge of method and research quality? Artists spend more and more time carrying out evaluation. But while this review did detect rising interest in and aspirations for

more robust and standardised evaluation models, most current work does not generate conclusions that can be used to inform social policy. It is important that arts practitioners reflect on the quality and impact of their work, but carrying out reconviction studies, and/or sophisticated research exercises which can link to policy agendas, is time-consuming and demands expertise.

The weaknesses repeatedly noted in evaluation across the sector include:

- difficulties accessing information relating to offending
- lack of baseline information/detailed appreciation of levels of 'exclusion' and existing problems
- lack of controls
- problems finding appropriate measures
- over-reliance on anecdote
- assumptions made about link between outcome and intervention (and limited linking of evidence to finding)
- lack of use of research and other literature to explore issues/themes addressed
- short-term views
- small samples
- failure to address and incorporate drop out rates
- lack of information about how qualitative data has been analysed and interpreted.

The development of the sector over the last 15 years is reflected in this review. There is now more practice, more variety of practice and more writing about practice. But this is not to say that the field is any more coherent as a result. Inspiring and innovative examples of projects and practitioners engaged in reflecting on and making sense of their work are included across each section of the report. However, as outlined in the discussion of practice models, tensions, contradictions and inconsistencies remain. Sustainability is a key issue: much practice is short-term, offering little capacity for ongoing monitoring and tracking, and does not fully exploit the potential contribution of the arts to the sector. The arts still need to properly acknowledge, and begin to respond to, the pressures for robustness rooted in rigorous, evidence-based practice.

## 4.4. Research

The findings of this review indicate that the arts in criminal justice sector is worthy of development and would benefit from serious, thorough and long-term investigation. The following suggestions are made to inform that process:

- Future research and evaluation should adopt and build upon the principles of exemplary methodology outlined in this report. Alongside the application of traditional 'experimental' approaches, there is strong case for examining the potential of critical realist research frameworks in this sector, as illustrated by high quality investigations such as Duguid and Pawson (1998). This report illustrates the need for longitudinal studies which incorporate long-term follow up and tracking of representative samples of participants, combine and integrate qualitative and quantitative research methods, and enable researchers to test theoretical propositions about how programmes 'work', for whom, and in what circumstances.
- A strategy for long term investigation and development of the arts in the criminal justice sector might consider adopting a model from US crime prevention, by funding a series of demonstration programmes in the sector, based on guidelines for practice, theory and empirical evidence presented in this report. This would provide an exciting opportunity to develop well planned and focused practice alongside high quality, rigorous research and future practice. Competitive tenders, based on evidence and theory-informed guidelines for projects could be publicised and project proposals reviewed and selected. Research findings and practice models could be disseminated to other funders and arts practitioners on completion of the research.
- There is a need for trained evaluation specialists with knowledge of research methodology to be attached to arts practice across the applied arts sector. This would help to prevent wasteful research and evaluation exercises that have no relevance to social policy.
- Clear evaluation guidelines, based on realistic expectations of arts practitioners' capacity for facilitating evaluation in context and designed to generate findings that have direct relevance to the development of practice within organisations, need to be designed and disseminated.

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