

THE KOESTLER AWARDS 2016

The Koestler Trust is the UK's best-known prison arts charity. It has been awarding, exhibiting and selling artworks by offenders, detainees and secure patients for over 50 years.

Its annual Awards receive over 8,000 entries – inspiring women affected by the criminal justice system to take part in the arts, work for achievement and transform their lives.

Entries for the 2016 Koestler Awards are now open! New entry forms and guidance notes can be obtained from your WIP worker. Entries must reach the Koestler Trust before Friday 15 April 2016.

This year's themed category is "Comfort" – entrants are invited to have a go at producing a poem, drawing, painting, song or any other art form using the word "Comfort" as a theme. The 2016 UK exhibition will be curated by British Jamaican writer and dub poet Benjamin Zephaniah (see interview on page 30). Previous national exhibitions of the entries attracted 20,000 visitors – showing the public the talent and potential of offenders and people in secure settings.

Don't delay – enter now!



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About Women in Prison

Women in Prison supports and campaigns for women affected by the criminal justice system.

We help with housing, education, mental health, legal rights, work, benefits, debt, domestic violence, finding a solicitor, immigration, and more.

Prison does not work. We believe more women affected by the criminal justice system should be offered community sentences and, if needed, support to address any challenges they face.

Women in Prison is a charity working in England. We were set up in 1983 by a former prisoner. We have offices in London, Woking and Manchester.

Our service is by, and for, women. We offer the following advice and support to women affected by the criminal justice system:

- A freephone advice line on 0800 953 0125. We also give advice by mail.
- Visiting all 12 women's prisons in England, offering one-to-one support at advice and information sessions.
- Support for women being released from prison.

- Education: finding courses and colleges at the right level for you; funding towards course fees for distance learning or at college; money for course materials, including books and stationery.

- Housing: finding and keeping a home; applications to councils for housing; advice on housing benefit; referrals to hostels.

- Work: help applying for jobs, including CV writing; advice on disclosing a criminal record to employers; finding voluntary work.

- Counselling for women in London affected by the criminal justice system.

- Specialist support for women with a diagnosed mental health condition who are leaving prison.

- Specialist support for black and ethnic minority women.

- Specialist support for women under 25.

- Support for mums, including advice on your rights as a mum.

- A free quarterly magazine – the one you are reading now.

Got something to say?

If you need help, please contact us. We can visit you in prison or write to you, or meet up if you are released.

Write or call free:

Women in Prison

FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT

Unit 10, The Ivories

6 Northampton Street

London N1 2HY

National freephone advice line

0800 953 0125

info@womeninprison.org.uk

Women in Prison's services are open to all women affected by the criminal justice system in England. Women can choose to attend, leave, or return to our services. None are compulsory.

CONFIDENTIAL

Our service is confidential. Any information given by a service user to Women in Prison will not be shared with anyone else without the woman's permission, unless required by law.

COMPLAINTS

If you are not happy with the service we have provided and wish to make a complaint, you are welcome to do so. Just ask for a copy of our complaints procedure.

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T H E P R O B L E M

WELCOME

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hank you everyone for your letters and ideas – this is your magazine and is shaped by questions and issues that are important to you. So this edition, our main focus is the challenge of housing for women leaving prison – the most urgent issue facing many of our readers. We also have an interview with the great poet and campaigner, Benjamin Zephaniah – with the questions posed to him coming from our brilliant Magazine Group in Holloway. With Holloway's imminent closure, our thoughts are with the women who are moving to a different location. We know this often involves complex issues and feelings and hope that our workers, and those of our partner agencies, can support you as much as possible. In this issue, we take a look at the history of Holloway. We also feature an article about the wonderful therapeutic value of arts and crafts. At a visit to Bronzefield

recently, I saw first-hand some of the beautiful stitch craft of women in the “A Stitch in Time” project. It was also wonderful to see the sprouting bulbs in the garden areas at Bronzefield – fruit of the labours of the Gardening Gang there. We'd love to hear from those of you in other gardening clubs. Wishing you all a peaceful and hopeful springtime.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate".

Kate

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WOMEN IN PRISON

How to find Ready Steady Go! magazine

Freepost RSLB-UABE-TYRT, Unit 10, The Ivories Northampton St, London N1 2HY

The magazine you are reading is free for all women affected by the criminal justice system in England. We send copies each quarter to all women's prisons and you should be able to find the magazine easily. If you can't, write to tell us. If you are a woman affected by the criminal justice system and would like to be added to our mailing list for free, please contact us. Everyone else may subscribe, get in touch for prices.

Advertising To advertise in our magazine, call the office. 020 7359 6674

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WHERE TO FIND OUR OFFICES

Women in Prison offices

- Manchester
- London
- Woking – Surrey

HMPS offices

- HMP Low Newton – Durham
- HMP Askham Grange – near York
- HMP New Hall – near Wakefield
- HMP Foston Hall – near Derby
- HMP Styal – near Manchester
- HMP Drake Hall – Eccleshall, Staffordshire
- HMP Peterborough
- HMP Eastwood Park – near Bristol
- HMP Holloway – London
- HMP Send – Woking
- HMP Bronzefield – Ashford, Surrey
- HMP East Sutton Park – Maidstone
- HMP Cornton Vale – Stirling, Scotland



SOUNDBOX

Write us a letter. You don't need a stamp if you use our freepost address:
RSG, FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT, Unit 10, The Ivories, 6 Northampton Street, London N1 2HY

Illustrated by Chioma

Dear RSG!

Following the article you printed in the last issue by a woman who spent time in a Japanese prison, I thought you might be interested in the two and a half years I was in a Japanese jail.

The first nine months on remand I spent in solitary confinement. I worked from 7am until 5pm in a factory. I had to sit upright on a wooden stool and keep my eyes down at my work. There were two five-minute tea breaks and the lunch break was 20 minutes long. We were not allowed to talk.

Toilet breaks were regimented - so the prison officers had control over everything, even our bowel movements. Seven of us were in a tiny cell and we all slept on the floor. We had a shower twice a week, in a massive bathhouse where 40 women at a time would file in, strip and have a 10-minute shower.

My sentence was nine and a half years with hard labour and that's what it was: physical, psychological and emotional torture. No visits, no telephone calls, no canteen, no nothing. It was strict and unforgiving. The punishment for even the smallest mistake - such as taking too much dishwashing liquid or speaking to your neighbour - was the kneeling punishment, where you had to kneel facing the wall.

After a time, I craved the simplest gestures of kindness - a smile, a "good morning" from an officer. When I was finally transferred to a prison in the UK, I was a shell of my former self. In Britain, the penal system is still difficult. You are still locked up without liberty and away from your loved ones - but it is humane. It does offer opportunities to turn our lives around through education and work, should we choose to take them. I strongly believe that every challenge can be overcome and turned into a positive, but

you need to be creative and determined.

It is true, where there is a will, there IS a way... and where there is hope, there is life. So, stay determined and hopeful, and you will become the best you can be and make a reality of your dreams!

Anonymous

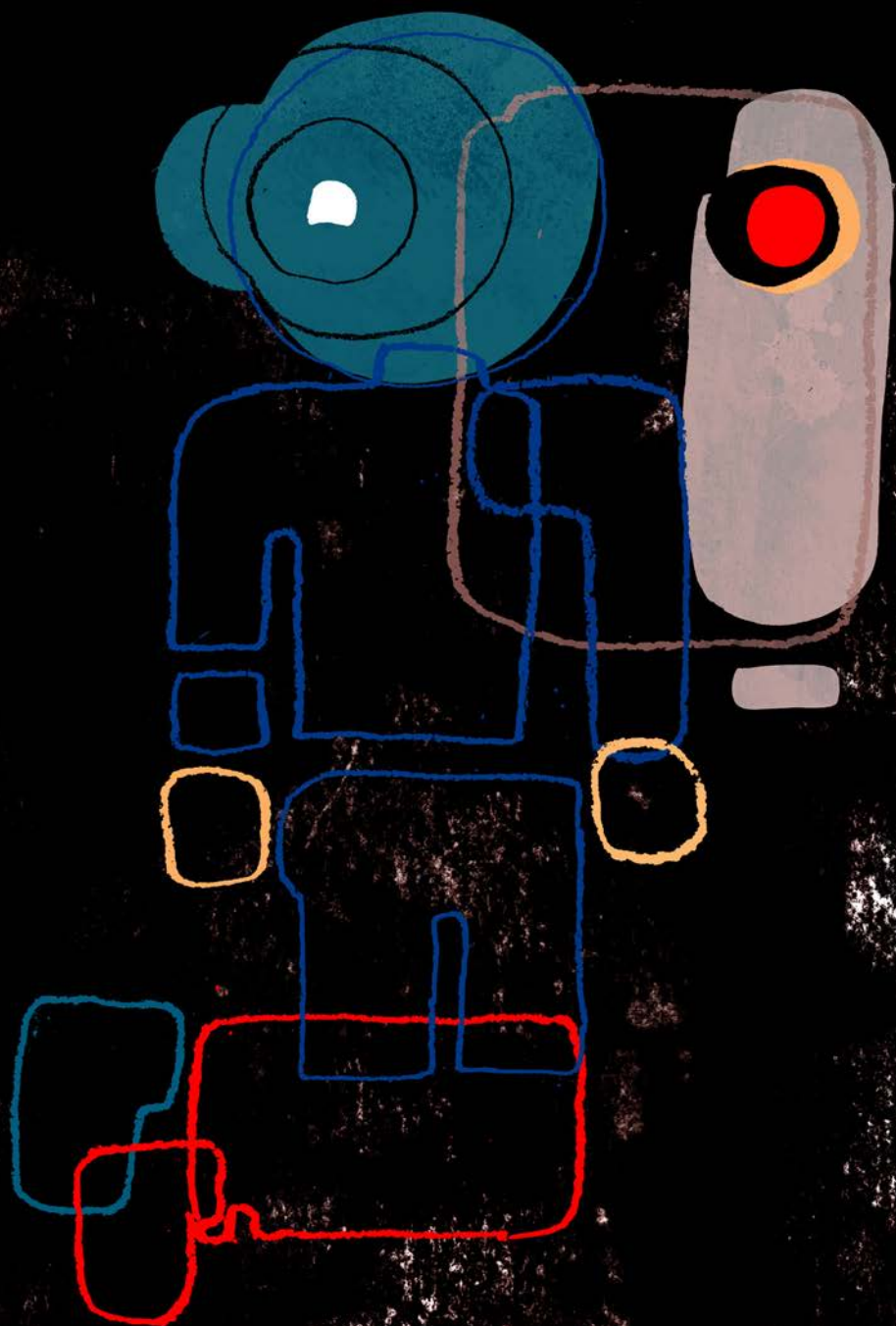
IT'S YOUR MAGAZINE SO JOIN IN AND HAVE YOUR SAY!

Ready Steady Go! is your magazine - written by you, for you and about you. Would you like to tell your story? Is there an issue you would like to see covered? Is there a famous person you would like interviewed? What questions would you like to put to him or her? Is there anything you love - or hate! - about the magazine? Is there something missing that should be included? Have you written a poem or a story, or created some art you'd like to share? Then, please get in touch!

You could use the Freepost address above, or talk to our WIP workers at our women's centres or in prison, who will pass your ideas on.

It is not just the magazine that relies on your stories, poems, and ideas. All those who work for or support WIP and all the women WIP works with are inspired when hearing about your achievements, seeing your resilience in action and learning how you have overcome or are overcoming adversity. We look forward to hearing from you! Many thanks, and take care!

Jo Ryan, vice-chair of the board of trustees of Women in Prison



STR8 UP!

NEWS AND VIEWS

THIS ISSUE

- NEW BEGINNINGS ART AWARDS
- VICTORY ON LEGAL AID
- CAMERON'S VIEW OF PRISON
- KNITTING YOURSELF CALM



AND A MESSAGE FROM VIKTORIJA.



MESSAGES FROM NATALIE (LEFT) AND CORELLE THIS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY.



International Women's Day

— AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN HMP HOLLOWAY

Every year on 8 March, people around the world take a moment to celebrate, respect and appreciate the achievements of women to mark International Women's Day.

International Women's Day is promoted by the United Nations as a day to recognise the social, economic, cultural and political contributions to the world made by women. Importantly, however, it is also a time to reflect on the barriers that still deny women equal rights and to promote the campaign to end the violence and oppression that too many women experience.

Every year to mark this event, the UK hosts a women-only march and protest called Million Women Rise. It's an opportunity to take part and have your voice heard.

As a contribution to that, WIP ran a workshop in HMP Holloway to create a protest placard, which we proudly carried on the Million Women Rise march.



Need a hero?

NEW BEGINNINGS 2015: 'HEROES AND VILLAINS' THE WOMEN'S SUPPORT CENTRE (SURREY) ART AWARDS

New Beginnings is an art awards scheme that not only showcases the talent and potential of the women who have been in contact with the criminal justice system, but also allows the public visiting the gallery to think about the real women behind the art works and the experiences they have been through to provoke such powerful responses.

The annual art awards scheme, hosted by the Women's Support Centre in Surrey, is designed to inspire women in prison and those in the local community who have been in contact with the criminal justice system (CJS) or who are at risk of offending, to en-

joy more positive experiences by motivating them to participate and achieve in the arts. Their artwork is displayed each year at the Lightbox arts centre in Woking and has become a keenly anticipated fixture at the gallery.

Crucially, the scheme also increases public awareness and understanding of the issues facing women in the CJS and encourages thought and discussion among visitors to the show about whether the system we currently have in place is fit for purpose or whether alternatives should be considered.

The name of the scheme, New Beginnings, is designed to encourage self-reflection and thought about past experiences, and to also reflect future aims and aspirations. Last year, the theme was "Heroes and Villains". Through a series of prison and community workshops, the women taking part were encouraged to consider both the literal depictions of heroes and villains, such as those in films and comic books (Robin Hood, Batman, Wonder Woman), and also the more subtle messages around what society feels is a



“true hero” or a “true villain”. Through the exploration of the theme, the entrants produced a wide variety of art pieces in mediums ranging from block printing, sculpture and photography to painting and textiles.

Entries were judged by a panel of professional artists and were considered both for their technical skill and their response to the brief. In addition, the entrants each submitted an artist’s statement to accompany their work to explain what inspired or motivated their piece. This was also taken into consideration by the judges.

The winning piece, entitled “The Godfather”, was a sculpture inspired by the film of the same name and the greed and selfishness that the artist felt exists in some people.

Last year New Beginnings also introduced a category for young women which produced works of an incredibly impressive standard. Pieces were submitted by women who access the Women’s Support



Centre, some of whom were as young as 14. Their pieces were commended by the judges for being both technically accomplished and creatively pleasing.

The winning piece from the young women’s category was entitled “Johnny Depp” and was a painting of the actor as four of his most famous characters (The Mad Hatter, Jack Sparrow, Edward Scissorhands and Willy Wonka). The artist felt the characters portrayed Depp in both heroic and villainous shades.

Participation and achievement in the arts motivates many women who have experiences of the CJS and helps them to discover abilities they never knew existed. Art requires engagement, an honest communication of feelings and a commitment to finish the job. Well done to everyone who took part and to the visitors who attended the exhibition!

Helen Emmings, Manager Women’s Support Centre Surrey

The upside of insider- outsider study

In a class conducted much like any other, students engage in lecture and debate. But when it's over, half the class will return to their flats and college digs, while the remainder will return to their prison cells in HMP Durham.

The Inside-Out programme sees third-year students from Durham University's criminology course studying alongside those from HMP Durham and HMP Frankland for 10 weeks.

The three-hour seminars see the "inside" and "outside" students working together on subjects including prison life and the criminal justice system.

Both sets of students only know each other's first names and the outsiders have no knowledge of the inmates' criminal histories.

"What's interesting is that some of the prisoners did better than the undergraduates," said Durham University's criminology professor Fiona Meacham earlier this year. "We found our 'inside' students understandably had a lot of time on their hands and did all the seminar readings - some of them twice."

It's time that women's prisons had a similar opportunity!

PRISONERS FROM
HMP FRANKLAND AND
HMP DURHAM STUDIED
CRIMINOLOGY FOR
10 WEEKS.



A VICTORY FOR RIGHTS OF WOMEN ON LEGAL AID AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women experiencing domestic violence will have a better chance of accessing legal representation in court after campaigners successfully challenged government rules on legal aid.

The women's campaigning charity Rights of Women took the government to the Court of Appeal after it was found that 40% of women experiencing domestic violence were unable to find the required evidence to prove they were eligible for legal aid.

Legal aid enables anyone who cannot afford the fees of legal representation to have those costs covered. For women going to court to escape an abusive relationship, it provides a legal representative to help them, protect their children and secure their finances.

In 2012, new rules around access to legal aid were introduced so that any evidence proving experience of domestic violence, such as medical records or social services documents, had to be less than two years old. Campaigners say the new rules prevented those experiencing domestic violence from accessing legal aid.

Rights of Women argued that this time frame was too short and the strict need for certain evidence too difficult to obtain. For instance, it is near impossible for women experiencing financial abuse to produce any evidence at all.

The rules as they stood meant that too many women experiencing domestic violence were either getting into debt covering the fees themselves or unable to take their case to court.

Rights of Women's victory in the Court of Appeal means that the Government must now make the necessary changes so that women and their children can access the evidence they need when taking an abusive partner to court.



The Prime Minister's thoughts on women behind bars

David Cameron says it has been more than 20 years since a prime minister made a speech about prisons. And, on 8 February, he decided to break that silence and address the nation on the subject, setting out his "vision for a modern, more effective, truly 21st century prison system".

Here are some of the key quotes taken directly from David Cameron's speech:

■ "[Some people think] that prisons are too soft - that they're a holiday camp, and we should make them harsher to provide more of a deterrent. Now, I get hugely frustrated when I see the poor security that, for example, means prisoners are able to access Facebook, or prisons that appear to be awash with alcohol and drugs... [but] prisons aren't a holiday camp - not really."

■ "Prisons are not full of offenders sentenced for drug possession, licence-fee evasion or petty, victimless crime. It's actually pretty hard to get into prison in the first place."

"I want prisons to be places of care, not just punishment; where the environment is one conducive to rehabilitation and mending lives."

On prison governors:

■ "We are going to give prison governors unprecedented operational and financial autonomy, and [allow them to] be trusted to get on and run their jails in the way they see fit... And they'll also be able to tailor their own regimes - including the amount of time spent 'out of cell' doing purposeful activity."

■ "...we will develop new 'prison league tables' that allow us to easily compare different institutions."

On education:

■ "We have only four organisations nationally who provide education in prisons... We're focusing too much on the number of qualifications - regardless of their usefulness - and neglecting basic literacy and good-quality qualifications that are actually going to help people to find work. This needs to change."

On alternatives to prison:

■ "...we are locking up some severely mentally ill people in prison who should not be there. And that's why, as a matter of urgency, I have asked Michael Gove and Jeremy Hunt to look at what alternative provision can be made for more humane treatment and care."

■ "Instead of just locking up [people with drug addiction, a judge in Hawaii is pioneering the idea of dealing with drug offenders by having them] randomly tested for drugs in the community on certain days of the week. If they test positive, they're instantly jailed for between 24 and 48 hours. And then they come back out, and the process starts over again."

■ "We have already pledged to expand the use of alcohol-monitoring tags, which enforce drinking bans for those offenders convicted of alcohol-related crimes. And there is also a huge opportunity presented by new satellite-tracking tags..."

What are your thoughts on this speech?

Are the Prime Minister's observations about prison correct? What do you think about his ideas for change? What needs to happen to turn his words into action? Do you think the general public is supportive of penal reform? If not, why not?

Write us a letter. You don't need a stamp if you use our Freepost address



DAVID CAMERON,
PRIME MINISTER.



[they] could be used so that more prisoners can go out to work in the day and return in the evening. They could help some offenders with a full-time job to keep it, and just spend weekends in custody instead... I especially want to look at how we use these tags for female offenders."

On mothers and babies in prison:

■ "A sad but true fact is that last year there were 100 babies in our country living in a prison. Yes, actually inside the prison. In the prisons's mother and baby unit, to be precise. Prison staff do their best to make these environments pleasant. Some units even have special sensory rooms, so that babies can see colours, sights and sound - even nature - that they wouldn't otherwise see inside the grey walls of a jail. I understand why this happens. But we should ask ourselves: is it right?... So I want us to find alternative

ways of dealing with women offenders with babies, including through tagging, problem-solving courts and alternative resettlement units."

On employment upon release:

■ "[I want us to] help prisoners find work on release... If a conviction is 'unspent', [employers] need to know about it and make the right decision for that business. But here's my question: should offenders have to declare it up-front, before the first sift of CVs - before they've been able to state their case? Or might this be done a bit later, at interview stage or before an actual offer of work is made? They've done it in America - it's called 'ban the box' - and I want to work with businesses, including the many who've already signed up to the Business in the Community campaign, to see if we can do this here."





Knitting your way to better health

Knitting is said to calm the nerves but research is now proving it can also help with overcoming eating disorders, to improve memory, and to aid people trying to give up the ciggies by distracting them. And because you will also have something to show for your labours - a jumper, a scarf or a hat - it can also boost self-esteem.

It's not just knitting - crocheting, quilting and embroidery are all becoming increasingly more popular as therapeutic tools. In Bath, Betsan Corkhill, a wellness coach and author of *Knit for Health & Wellness*, has set up www.stitchlinks.com, a website that is accessible to women in WIP's women's centres. The website encourages "close knit" groups and greater recognition of research on craftwork as therapy.

For her book, Betsan carried out a survey of people who had been diagnosed as being clinically depressed. Just over half - 54% - said knitting had alleviated the depression. In another survey of 60 people who suffered chronic pain, she found that they identified knitting as having helped them to redirect their focus and reduce their awareness of pain.

If you want to put the theory to the test, there is a knitting pattern for a teddy bear on page 28!

STRO UP!

LUCY BALDWIN,
SENIOR LECTURER IN
CRIMINOLOGY

Mothers in prison – can you help make a change?

Hello, my name is Lucy Baldwin. I am a senior lecturer in criminology at De Montfort University and a qualified social worker and probation officer. Over the years, I have supervised and supported many women and I have always been struck by their strength, resilience and courage – often in the face of horrendous circumstances.

I have felt this particularly strongly when working with women who are mothers, or with those who have had less than perfect mothering themselves.

I left home myself at age 15. I had my first child at 16 and I was a single parent of two babies by the age of 18. So, I have some understanding of the obstacles and emotions that come with being a mother in challenging situations.

I strongly believe that there is not enough understanding of the emotional impact that custody and disrupted mothering has on women (and their children) and on how they then go on to live their lives. Many mothers remain trapped in their own prison of guilt.

Mothers' experiences have also not been taken sufficiently into account in successful outcomes. Women can – and do – overcome tough challenges. But what helps? What hinders?

I am undertaking doctoral research – a research project via a university – that will provide a body of evidence, gathered from



the women themselves, that will hopefully inform positive changes for women in prison.

My research is nothing to do with the prison service, social services or the Ministry of Justice. It is confidential, and any material provided by you – the women involved in the project – will be anonymously used to inform policymakers and practitioners about what prison feels like for mothers and grandmothers.

How can the disruption be made more manageable? What kind of support works best on release?

Equally important is that it will give you a “voice”. For this particular research project, I am only able personally to interview women who are no longer under supervision but I am able to accept contributions in written forms – pictures, stories, poems and recollections – from you wherever you are. Lucy

Write to me at:

Lucy Baldwin
C/O De Montfort University
Hawthorn Building
The Gateway
Leicester, LE1 9BH

Please note you can also use the WIP Freepost address and simply mark your submissions ‘For Lucy’ and WIP have very kindly agreed to pass on your contributions or contact details to me.

All letters will be acknowledged. The cost of any postage will be returned to you by postal order if required.

Thank you for reading my request and whether we “meet” via this research project or not, I wish every one of you all good wishes – for your future and the futures of your children.

1 in 3

WOMEN ACROSS THE WORLD EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE IN THEIR LIFETIME
(London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

ONLY **6%**

OF THE ENGINEERING WORKFORCE IN THE UK IS FEMALE
(Women's Engineering Society)

WOMEN MAKE UP **51%**

OF THE POPULATION BUT ONLY **30%** OF THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AT WESTMINSTER
(Fawcett Society)

85,000

WOMEN AGED 16-59 ARE RAPED EACH YEAR IN ENGLAND AND WALES
(Home Office)

WOMEN HOLD **0%**

of the highest three ranks in the army, RAF and navy
(Fawcett Society)

WOMEN
MEN

THE HIGHEST NUMBERS OF WOMEN ARE EMPLOYED IN THE LOWEST PAID SECTORS, INCLUDING CARE AND RETAIL
(Fawcett Society)

GLOBALLY, WOMEN INVEST **90%**

OF THEIR EARNINGS IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES COMPARED WITH **30-40%** INVESTED BY MEN
(World Bank)

THE GAP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN'S EARNINGS WAS 17.4% IN 1997 - IN 2014 IT WAS

9.4%

(BBC)

IN A TYPICAL MONTH,

78%

OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ARE WRITTEN BY MEN
(Fawcett Society)

THERE ARE **130 million**

CHILDREN IN THE WORLD WITH NO ACCESS TO EDUCATION - 70% OF THEM ARE GIRLS
(International Rescue Committee)



ELECTRIC DREAMS

Radio 1 DJ and queen of the dance floor
Annie Mac tells *Tess Reidy* about her secret
for success and her hopes for the future

Annie MacManus, is the best known female DJ in the UK and the undisputed queen of electronic dance music. Also known as Annie Mac, she is Radio 1's champion of new music – the successor to Zane Lowe and John Peel – and the boss of a booming clubbing brand. »

ANNIE MAC

The 37-year-old was born into a large, musical family in Dublin – her brother Rod is a folk musician, her sister Rachel is an artist and another brother, Davey, is the lead singer of indie band, The Crimea.

“As the youngest child, I was left to just get on with stuff. I am quite independent because of this,” she says. Her talented siblings were a huge influence on her in terms of music.

“I learnt about loads of rock and ska and traditional music from my brothers, and more pop and dance from my sister. They also all played loads of musical instruments – saxophone, guitar, banjo, bouzouki piano, accordion... my house was a constant cacophony.”

After studying English literature at

Queen’s University in Belfast, she moved to London where she worked as a “radio plugger” – pushing stations to play certain records – a broadcasting assistant and a presenter for the student radio network SBN. In July 2004 she was given her own show on Radio 1 and has since gone on to present Zane Lowe’s prestigious weeknight slot.

Things seem to have gone pretty smoothly for Annie, but she says her success is down to hard work and working her way up the ladder (she was previously the voice of the Radio 1 jingles). “I guess I was ambitious from a young age – more so at school than at university. I felt a lot of pressure to pass my exams; this was less from my family and more from the school that I went to.”

However, after discovering clubbing at university, Annie realised that late nights and loud music don’t sit very well with academic work. “When I went to university, I began clubbing and fell behind in my work. I got through it, though.”

Despite spending time in her twenties living in Camden and being a “proper indie girl”, Annie is predominantly known for her love of dance music. Replacing the rock-and-indie-loving Lowe last year on the primetime Radio 1 new music show was seen as a real test for her. She felt like she had a lot to prove – that she wasn’t just a “dance girl”; but she could be a taste-maker, too. Rather than trying to be something she wasn’t, Annie has brought her own style and brand to the show.

“I’ve worked with Zane for a



ANNIE MAC IS ON RADIO AND TV AND HAS HER OWN CLOTHING RANGE.

long time and his tip to me was to be yourself. He said: 'Do you.' So I have been doing me," she says, laughing. The show's a huge success and items such as "hottest record in the world" and "the mini mix" are often the making of new bands and artists. "I'm loving my new job so much. It's hard to believe I've been doing it nearly a year. This feels like the fastest year of my life, maybe because it feels like the busiest."

Annie must be one of the hardest working people around. As well as doing the radio show five nights a week, she's a superstar DJ who's helped turn British electronic music into a global phenomenon. She also hosts TV shows, runs her own festival in Malta (Annie Mac Presents), has a range of signature clothing –and has a young child with her partner, fellow Radio 1 DJ, Toddla T.

When she and her partner are working, they have a nanny to help with childcare. "If we both have a gig, she will stay over until 11 or 12 the next day so we can get some sleep before we get into parent mode," she says.

It hasn't all been plain sailing, though Annie believes things have worked out for the best. "There have been some shows that I thought I wanted at Radio 1 that I didn't get but I am very happy with how things have turned out. I guess I have made the most of any of the shows I have got."

Recently, Annie visited HMP Brixton to meet the guys working on the prison radio

station there. She says the experience has made her think about what's wrong with the penal system in the UK.

"It amazes me when I hear the government dehumanise people in prison as useless criminals when it is patently obvious that the reason why some people commit crime is because they are desperately poor, or have grown up in conditions where they are surrounded by it, indoctrinated into it, or feel

they have no other choices to survive," she says.

"Rehabilitation has proven again and again to work. Any human being needs self-esteem, self-worth and education to have a chance at being a useful citizen. Being in a cell is punishment enough."

Annie knows she is fortunate and is thankful for having had a loving family around her. "My mother and father

have both been so very supportive. They have listened and given advice when asked, but they have never really meddled in my life when it comes to career. They have always encouraged me to do whatever I want. I am incredibly lucky to have them."

As for the future, Annie hopes that "in 10 year's time, I will still be broadcasting on the radio in some way. I love radio so much as a medium of communication. It's so intimate and so omnipresent all at the same time. I would like more children, too. To be a parent to some healthy kids and to be on the radio would be the best that I can hope for."

"Any human being needs self-esteem, self-worth and education to have a chance"

SKINNY'S TUMBLEWED JOKE WALL



WHAT DO YOU CALL
SWEETCORN BEHIND BARS?
A CORN-VICT.

WHAT DAY DO EGGS
HATE MOST?
FRYDAY.

SLEPT LIKE A LOG LAST NIGHT -
WOKE UP IN THE FIREPLACE.

MAN GETS RUSHED TO HOSPITAL
WITH A TOY HORSE STUCK IN
HIS RECTUM. THEY HAVE DESCRIBED HIS
CONDITION AS STABLE.

A MONKEY WALKS INTO
A BAR AND ASKS FOR
A PINT OF LAGER.
THAT WILL BE £5 PLEASE,
SAYS THE BARMAN, ADDING,
"BLIMEY, YOU DON'T
SEE MONKEYS ROUND HERE."
"I'M NOT SURPRISED," THE MONKEY
"THE BEER'S NOT CHEAP."



Skinny says,
"If you think
these jokes

are seriously lame and you can
do better, then let's hear them!"

Send your jokes in to:

WOMEN IN PRISON (magazine)
FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT
Unit 10, The Ivories
6 Northampton Street
London N1 2HY

"THE MOST COMMON WAY
PEOPLE GIVE UP THEIR
POWER IS BY THINKING
THEY DON'T HAVE ANY."

ALICE WALKER



KNIT A TEDDY BEAR!

Adapted by Sofia Gullberg, WIP Policy officer

Here is a simple pattern for a knitted teddy. Give to a loved one or keep for yourself!

You will need:

Yarn – any colour, type or size

Straight knitting needles, sized to your yarn (e.g. size 4 needles to DK yarn, size 5 needles to worsted weight yarn or size 7 needles to chunky yarn)

It doesn't matter what type of yarn you use as long as you use the right sized needles to go with the yarn. The bigger the yarn and needles, the bigger the teddy!

Tapestry needle to sew the pieces together

Filling – cotton, scrap yarn, polyfil or similar. If you have something nice smelling like lavender you can mix that in too

Skills needed:

You will need to be able to cast on, knit and cast off as well as stitch pieces together. If you need to learn the basics, try a book from the library or – even better – ask a friend who knows how to knit!

This teddy is made in garter stitch, which means that you knit every row – no purling required. It is made all in one piece and stitched together at the end.

Abbreviations:

CO = cast on

BO = bind off

sts = stitches

k = knit


Instructions:

Making the legs:

- Cast on 8 stitches.
- Knit 16 rows.
- Break off yarn and leave on stitch holder or scrap yarn.
- Repeat for the second leg.
- Join both legs together by knitting across both legs.
- Knit 8 rows.

Shaping the body

- Cast on 8 stitches at the beginning of next 2 rows.
- Work 8 rows.
- Cast off 8 stitches at beginning of next 2 rows.
- Now work 38 rows on these 16 sts.



ONCE YOU HAVE PERFECTED YOUR SKILLS, YOU COULD TRY A MORE ADVANCED BEAR PROJECT LIKE THIS ONE.

- Cast on 8 stitches at beginning of next 2 rows.
- Work 8 rows.
- Cast off 8 stitches at beginning of next 2 rows.
- Work 8 rows.
- Using only first 8 sts, work 16 rows and then cast off.
- Return to remaining 8 stitches and work 16 rows and then cast off.

Making up

- Fold knitted piece in half lengthwise.
- The fold becomes the top of the head.
- Join seam around teddy, leave a small gap for stuffing.

- Turn inside out.
- On the inside, stitch a diagonal line across corner of head to form ears.
- Stuff teddy and then stitch it up.
- Shape the teddy's neck using a needle and double thickness yarn, going in every few stitches and pulling yarn together until it looks good.
- Embroider face on teddy or use buttons for eyes.

Optional scarf

- If you want to make your teddy a scarf, cast on 60 stitches, knit 6 rows, then cast off.



Dub poet **Benjamin Zephaniah** was an angry young man who was in and out of prison, but poetry gave him the voice he so desperately wanted – and helped him to turn his life around

ART SAVED MY LIFE

By **Tess Reidy**

I loved poetry,” writer Benjamin Zephaniah says. “My mum was full of stories that her mother had told her from Jamaica, so I probably got it from her. I used to go up to girls in the playground and I’d think up a poem about them on the spot.”

Now Benjamin, 57, will be curating an exhibition of poems, drawings, paintings and other art forms created by women in prison, in detention or in a secure hospital.

The artworks will be the winning entries in the 2016 Koestler Awards, run by the Koestler Trust. For 50 years, the Trust has been awarding, exhibiting and selling artworks by prisoners, detainees and secure patients. Some winners have their artwork sold and receive 50% of the proceeds – the Koestler Trust and the charity Victim Support share the remaining 50%. Winners

also have the chance of being mentored by a well-known artist. Over 8,000 entries were received last year, including a number from women’s prisons. There were 1,500 prizes awarded, ranging from £25 to £100.

This year, the theme is “comfort” – so anyone who wants to enter should produce a poem, drawing, painting or using any other art form to express their feelings – negative or positive – about “comfort”.

“If someone believes they have messed up, I want to hear them express how they feel through art,” Benjamin says. >>

“Sometimes, this makes for better art than people who are born with a silver spoon in their mouth. We need to listen to art made by prisoners because how else are we going to hear them? My point is that it needs to be beautiful, not just good for someone who’s committed a crime. I want something that speaks to me, that makes me do a double take. Also, obviously, I’m very keen on poetry and I hope some people will incorporate words into their art.”

Benjamin, born in Birmingham and raised in Jamaica and Handsworth, said:

“Art literally saved my life. I had such a bad temper – I wanted to burn down a police station or beat someone up – but art was a way of expressing myself. It’s much more powerful than just making a mess.”

Benjamin’s mother was a nurse and his father a postman and they had eight children. Benjamin is the eldest by a few minutes because he has a twin sister, Veda. When Benjamin was nine, his mother ran away from his father. Benjamin was the only child she took with her. At age 13, he was expelled from school and for the following five years, he was in and out of the prison system in and around Birmingham.

“I didn’t write any poetry in prison. It wasn’t until I was 21 that I really learnt how to read and write properly, so it was all in my head,” he says. “If prison did anything for me, it gave me time to think. When I came out the prison guard said to me,

almost in a teasing kind of way: ‘I give you six months and you’ll be back.’ And I said: ‘I could be back, I might be back, but the next time, it’ll be political.’ I wasn’t being revolutionary when I was stealing cash from people’s houses, but I was angry with the government and society. To do anything about that, I had to be out of prison.”

Benjamin had difficulty reading and writing as he was dyslexic, but he always had a love for the sound of words. He first performed his poetry in church when he was

10-years old. By the time he was 15, he was well known as a

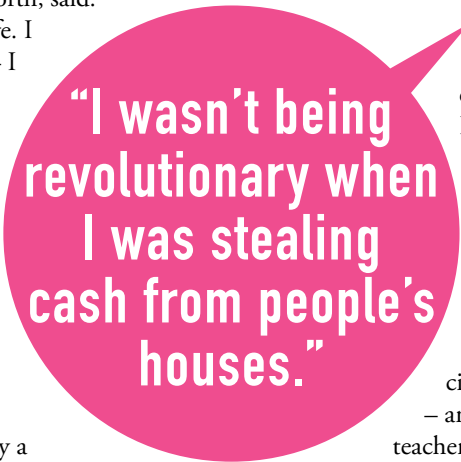
dub poet in Birmingham. “I started ‘toasting’ [which means rapping, commenting] on the lives of local people.”

In prison, Benjamin was bullied and forced to give up his food and cigarettes. This experience – and something one of his teachers had said – provided

him with an incentive to change. “A teacher told me I would end up dead or doing a life sentence. I remember thinking back on this and wanting to prove the teacher wrong,” he explains. “So I went to London and left Birmingham behind me.”

The Seventies were an interesting time to be in the capital. Politics and art were closely linked. “I was going to all these demonstrations – anti-apartheid, anti-racism, troops out of Ireland – there were so many causes. Every week there were two or three demonstrations.”

Benjamin began attending an evening



“I wasn’t being revolutionary when I was stealing cash from people’s houses.”

class for reading and writing that cost £1 a session. “The teacher told me I was dyslexic,” Benjamin says. “Having a word for it was kind of relief.”

When he was 22, he went round the alternative comedy circuit in London, asking comedians, such as Alexei Sayle, if they would read one of his poems as part of their set. His first collection of poetry, *Pen Rhythm*, was published in 1980 and there have been six more since, as well as four novels for teenagers, six albums, numerous recorded readings and radio programmes.

He famously refused an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his services to literature 13 years ago. “I thought OBE, me? Up yours!” he said at the time. “I get angry when I hear the word ‘empire’. It reminds me of slavery... It is because of this idea of empire that black people like myself don’t even know our true names or our true historical culture... Me? OBE?... Why don’t they just give me some of those great African works of art that were taken in the name of the empire and let me return them to their rightful place?” A verse from his poem, *Bought and Sold*, reads:

*Smart big awards and prize money
Is killing off black poetry
It’s not censors or dictators that are
cutting up our art.*

*The lure of meeting royalty
And touching high society
Is damping creativity and eating at our heart.*

Benjamin says he always wanted to reach a wide audience with his poetry. “When I first got published, I walked around my estate, so happy, but I realised that no one had read my book and that books were elitist. It was then that I decided to

concentrate on my spoken performance.”

Looking back at his own experience of prison, Benjamin believes the penal system is a mess. “Punishment is okay but it has limited range. It should be about rehabilitation,” he says. “Judges should look at people’s stories and say okay, this is what’s going to work. So, for instance: ‘We want you to keep your job and family; your problem is the weekends and your drinking; you should do a sentence tailored to you – prison at the weekends.’”

He also believes that if it wasn’t for his poetry, prison would have made him angrier. “Poetry saved me. Prisoners need books. There is so much focus on punishment and trying to please the *Daily Mail* reader but sometimes when you hear the back story of people you think: ‘This person has had a horrific life, this person needs help.’”

Looking back at his own adolescence, his says no one asked or cared about why he behaved the way he did. “[The first time I got into trouble] they sent me to court,” he says. “But no one asked me why I did it. When I left home that morning, my dad had kicked the shit out of my mother. When someone confronted me, I just lashed out. I saw that violence day after day and you expect me to go to school and be a good boy? We are not looking at people as individuals. People that break the law are human beings, too.”

Benjamin has had some difficult times but turned his life around and proved his critics wrong. Writer, poet, author and actor – who knows what he will try next?

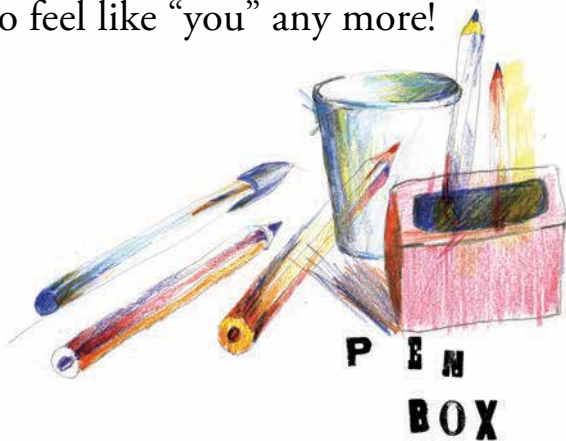
*** The closing date for entries for the Koestler Awards is Friday 15 April 2016. For more details, turn to the inside front cover.**

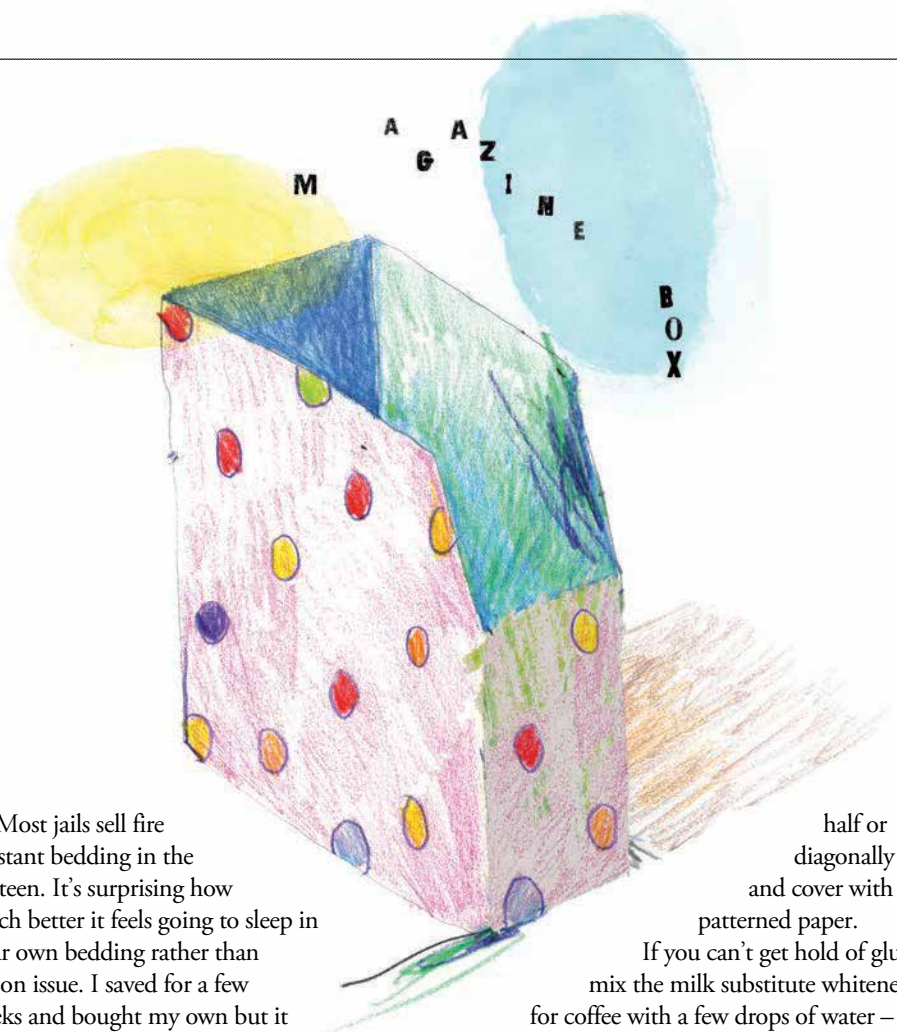
TIPS ON HOW TO GIVE YOUR CELL SOME CHARACTER – YOUR CHARACTER!

By Wendy Illustration by Lucy

How many times have you heard: “I’m just a number in here!”? You may have said it yourself. At first in prison a lot of your identity is stripped away. You may not be allowed to wear the type of clothes you like or the jewellery or footwear. You are deprived of your home comforts and put in a cell, which is identical to all the other cells. It’s easy not to feel like “you” any more!

So how do you hold on to your own sense of individuality, particularly if you are serving a long sentence? Here are some small changes that you can make to hold on to your sense of self and reflect your own personality. OK, the cell is never going to be your home but you can make your cell – your own personal space – as original as possible. Here are some cheap and simple suggestions.





Most jails sell fire resistant bedding in the canteen. It's surprising how much better it feels going to sleep in your own bedding rather than prison issue. I saved for a few weeks and bought my own but it was plain navy blue. I decided to customise it. I had some cross stitch thread so I drew some butterflies on the duvet cover and pillow case and embroidered them in different shades of pink, purple and blue. It made my bedding look original and it gave me something to do in the long hours of bang up.

Not everyone has access to a needle in prison, so here are some alternative ideas:

- An empty Tampax box can make a useful penholder – cover the box in pretty paper.

- A cereal box can be made into a magazine holder. Carefully tear the box in

half or diagonally and cover with patterned paper.

If you can't get hold of glue, mix the milk substitute whiteners for coffee with a few drops of water – it works just as well. If you can't find patterned paper, make your own using coloured papers and pens on plain paper.

■ Finally, why do interior designers make displays in sets of threes? It's because when the eye sees sets of three, it triggers the creative part of the brain, and the display looks more pleasing. Try it!

Once you begin to find ways to adapt your cell, the ideas will flow (send as many as you like via FREEPOST, so we can include them in future issues of the magazine.). What they can't take away from you in prison is your imagination and personality!





H O M E

IS DEFINED IN THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY AS:

“THE PLACE WHERE ONE LIVES, THE MEMBERS OF A FAMILY COLLECTIVELY, FIXED RESIDENCE” <<<

H O M E L E S S

IS DEFINED IN THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY AS:

“LACKING A HOME” <<<

Around 40% of women still leave prison without a home to go to. Many others find themselves in unsafe, insecure, temporary and uncomfortable accommodation or they “sofa surf”, moving from friend to friend.

What’s needed is more stable provision, especially of supported housing; more innovative ideas to provide affordable, good-quality homes with security of tenure; and more opportunities for women to secure a roof over their heads so they can put their families back together, regain their children and lead a better life.

Women in Prison campaigns not only to end the use of prison – except for a minority of women – and replace jail with community alternatives, but also for women affected by the criminal justice system to experience improvements in health, education, training, employment and, crucially, the provision of secure, appropriate housing designed to meet a range of diverse needs.

Britain is in the grip of a housing crisis. Despite the difficult times, WIP has helped women find a roof over their head. Here is our guide to the options that you have on release from prison.

HOW TO SURVIVE IN THE HOUSING JUNGLE

By Ljiv Clark and Nadia Erlam, volunteers at Women in Prison

In 2007, Baroness Jean Corston, now WIP's patron, published a report on the conditions faced by women in prison. She made a long list of recommendations – many have still not been enacted.

In one section of the report, she examined the housing needs of women. She underlined the “Catch 22” situation that many women face: if they do not have their children in their care on release from prison, they are unlikely to be given priority by housing authorities and if they do not have suitable housing, children are unlikely to be returned to their care.

In her report, Baroness Corston quoted from an unpublished paper, “Finding somewhere to live, the resettlement needs of young women leaving prison”, which gave details of a WIP project that ran for three years, ending in 2005. Much of what the paper described then is still happening today. Housing was, and is, a major concern for women leaving prison. Too often, Homeless Persons Units (HPUs) can be unfriendly and unhelpful. Women and their WIP support workers wait for hours and face frustration and rudeness. HPUs experience enormous demand on a daily basis.

Yet, according to a Home Office paper published 12 years ago, “stable accommodation can make a difference

of over 20% in terms of re-offending on release”. The system needs to change.

Uncertainty about where you will live, and for how long, increases stress, damages health and may weaken a resolve to stay away from alcohol and/or drugs. Under Transforming Rehabilitation, the government's re-organisation of the probation service and the introduction of private Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), there is for instance, more support for women on sentences of less than 12 months – but, still, the lack of appropriate housing presents difficulties. Some women, of course, may return to the home they left. For others, the future is less certain.

So, these are the available options and examples of how WIP support workers can help to guide you through the process, whether you are hoping to live in London or if you are planning on living elsewhere in the country.

We cannot guarantee you accommodation on your release but our support staff are here to help you as much as they can. If you are housed and have the time, why not join the WIP campaign to improve the chances of every woman affected by the criminal justice system, so they have the right to a decent home for themselves and their children?



ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

» REHABILITATION

Rehab can be a very positive environment for women who need extra support with drug or alcohol addiction, or for mental health issues. Spaces are rare and getting into a rehabilitation centre can be tricky if you have previously been in rehab but had left prematurely or asked to leave.

DONNA'S STORY

Donna was released from Bronzefield homeless. A WIP support worker contacted her asking if she had any ID, as this was needed at the Homeless Persons Unit (HPU) but she didn't. The WIP worker sent Donna a form to fill in to get a birth certificate. The support worker waiting for Donna when she came out of prison, and they went to the HPU in Croydon together and applied for Donna to receive benefits. The support worker stayed with Donna while she had a meeting with the Vulnerable Adults team. Donna found the meeting very stressful, finding it "very intrusive" and made her "feel very down", because they discussed her criminal history. However she stayed as she had

her support worker with her the whole way through. She was housed in Bromley Road Hospital, a rehabilitation centre for people with mental health issues, where she had her own flat and could come and go as she pleased, which she liked very much. However, Donna decided to leave so she could move in with her partner who she had recently got back together with. Unfortunately, her partner was abusive and although at first she thought this was her fault, the WIP support worker explained to her that she was not to blame for this violence. Donna fell pregnant and was classed as a priority need, and so was very quickly housed in a B&B and eventually found a room in a shared accommodation, where she has kept out of prison and is now making plans for the future.

» BAIL ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SERVICE (BASS)

BASS is a government scheme that can provide accommodation to people who would normally be living in the community on bail or Home Detention Curfew (HDC) but who do not otherwise have a suitable address - or need some extra support during the period of their bail or HDC licence.



» MULTI-AGENCY PUBLIC PROTECTION ARRANGEMENT SCHEME (MAPPA)

Being under MAPPA can give you the option to be housed in Approved Premises. Although spaces are limited, it is worth a try. A probation officer refers you if they think you are eligible. However, if you are experiencing some problems with your probation officer, WIP can help you by, for example, holding a meeting with your probation officer to sort out tensions.

TB'S STORY

TB met a WIP worker in HMP Bronzefield and received what she says was “really good housing advice” which made clear her options. They were limited because of the nature of her crime: TB could not go in to a hostel or, eventually, share a flat. TB said she was relieved that the WIP worker was there to support her. The WIP worker met TB often after her release. The two jointly made a support plan, which helped to manage the stress of sorting out housing, benefits and job search. TB's relationships with her probation officer were not going well, so the WIP worker suggested a three-way meeting. This allowed the WIP worker to mediate and

sort out issues out between TB and her probation officer.

The WIP worker referred TB to supported housing. She will be housed in her own small flat once her Home Detention Curfew ends. “My WIP worker has always been a constant source of strength and support for me and I have always felt I could call her when I was having stressful times and needed help. I am so grateful for everything she and WIP have done for me and hope I can truly now start leading a positive and productive life.”

» PRIVATE RENTAL SECTOR (PR)

Renting a flat from a private landlord is sometimes referred to as accessing the “Private Rental Sector”. You can rent privately even if you are unemployed. This is because some landlords accept housing benefit. Housing benefit can take time to arrange, so begin the process as soon as you can.

It helps to have a good character reference from a previous employer or past landlord.

Local Housing Allowance means that people who are having a difficult time or who are in a vulnerable situation can access some money to help with their rent. You may be eligible for this, as you are leaving prison. LHA encourages landlords to accept tenants who are in all types of situations and diverse backgrounds, so give it a try!

Make sure you inform the council when you are sentenced and/or released. Councils can provide useful lists of private landlords

that you can contact for private rental. The housing benefit department can also help you manage your benefits by paying them directly to the landlord. In private renting, you may be asked for a deposit and/or rent in advance. Plan ahead, if you can, to make sure you have this, if needed.

KAY'S STORY

Kay was released from Holloway and, once in the community, she contacted WIP. She met a support worker and explained that she had rent-free accommodation but felt extremely unsafe and anxious. The WIP worker decided it was a priority to rehouse her, and gave Kay information about renting in the private rental sector. She also suggested that Kay should apply for discretionary housing payments from her local council. This could go towards a deposit or rent in advance. The WIP worker also helped Kay to claim an Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), as well as explaining to her the importance of registering with a GP, who would monitor her mental health needs, as well providing certificates for the ESA claim. The support worker gave Kay the phone number for No Second

Night Out, a government scheme to help homeless people across the country. Kay's boyfriend was in prison and on immigration hold, as he did not have his passport with him to establish his right to remain in the UK.

The police took her phone when she was arrested with her boyfriend. It was considered his property, as it was seized from him. She needed the phone to search for accommodation online, as well as to relieve her anxiety by contacting her support worker. The WIP worker negotiated with the police to return Kay's phone. She also supported Kay through the housing process. A supported housing organisation was able to provide Kay with suitable accommodation.

If you are struggling to find the money, you may receive help with a deposit from the rent deposit scheme. The RENT-In-Advance scheme can help you with rent in advance if you do not have the necessary money. Some boroughs also have Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) schemes in place to help people find extra money to pay the rent.

WARNING! Some private rental schemes claim to have "no deposits" but they instead charge large "administration" fees. As they are not strictly deposits, this money is unprotected and non-refundable. Do not agree to pay an administration fee!

ANN'S STORY

Ann left HMP Bronzefield with nowhere to go and was very frightened. A WIP worker met her two days after her release, and went with her to the local council to see if she could be housed as a priority need. When Ann and the WIP worker got to the council, there was a large amount of confusion as to Ann's position. The WIP worker obtained an appointment for Ann for that afternoon. The WIP worker bought Ann a coffee and something to eat, as well as a warm coat from a nearby charity shop. To prepare for the possibility that she might not receive support from the council, Ann and her WIP worker went to the library to research private rented housing. The support worker also helped Ann to restart her Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) benefit claim, telling the person on the other end of the phone that Ann needed her money sooner than was normal because of her homeless situation. The two returned to the council. They were told at first no housing was available. The support worker argued that Ann was a priority need and the council had a

duty to house her. Ann said: "At times throughout the day, I got emotional but my support worker comforted me." Ann was placed in temporary housing.

» TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

If you tell the local authority about your situation, it can provide you with temporary accommodation until more permanent accommodation is available. In temporary accommodation, your landlord can be the council, a private landlord or a housing association.

» NIGHT SHELTERS AND DIRECT ACCESS HOSTELS

Night shelters and direct access hostels may house you for a night or two. You are given even more help if you are considered someone with "priority" needs. Priority groups include women who are pregnant, who have dependent children, those with mental health problems, disabilities, and those who have substance misuse problems.

» SUPPORTED HOUSING

Supported housing provides short-term accommodation at a hostel, in a flat or a house to those who need extra support. Staff are present to support you. Housing benefit can often cover the cost. Staff have received training to support people to be independent in the future. They assist with practical matters such as managing money, learning to cook and/or cleaning, looking after your emotional health and learning to living with others.



USEFUL CONTACTS

● **Advance** (formerly Guideposts) is a charity that provides supported housing for people with mental health problems.

Advance Housing

Telephone: 0333 012 4307

Address: 1 Cygnet Court, High Street, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 1HT

Email: housing@advanceuk.org

Website: www.advanceuk.org

Advance Support

Telephone: 0333 012 4307

Address: Four Seasons House, 2 Witan Way, Witney, Oxon, OX28 1DZ

Email: support@advanceuk.org

Website: www.advanceuk.org

● **Care UK** has a range of housing services and provides different levels of support, including specialist mental health nursing homes, low secure facilities and community care.



Telephone: 03333210939 (All calls are charged at a local rate. Lines open from 8am to 8pm, seven days per week.)

Address: Connaught House, 850 The Crescent, Colchester Business Park, Colchester, Essex, CO4 9QB

Website: www.careuk.com

● **Community Housing and Therapy** offers long-term housing, a social network, group activities and personal care for people who have experienced mental health problems.

Telephone: 0800 018 1261 (free phone) or 0207 381 5888

Address: Community Housing and Therapy 24/ 5-6 the Coda Centre, 189 Munster Road, London, SW6 6AW.

Email: co@cht.org.uk

Website: www.cht.org.uk

● **MIND** runs services across England. For information on your nearest local Mind, contact the Mind Infoline or search on their website.

Telephone: 0300 1233393

Email: contact@mind.org.uk

Website: www.mind.org.uk

● **Moat Housing Group** (formerly Bailey Housing Association) is a housing association working in the southeast. They offer homes and support services to people who need help to live independently.

Telephone: 0300 323 0011,

Address: Mariner House, Galleon Boulevard, Crossways, Dartford, Kent, DA2 6QE

Email: customer@moat.co.uk

Website: www.moat.co.uk/

● **Riverside** is a large housing association with a range of affordable housing services including sheltered and supported housing services.

Telephone: 0345 111 0000 (24 hour customer service line)

Email: info@riverside.org.uk

Website: www.riverside.org.uk

● **The Salvation Army Housing**

Association runs supported housing across the UK for single, homeless men and women. This often includes people with mental health problems.

Telephone: 0800 970 6363

Email: info@saha.org.uk

Website: www.saha.org.uk

● **Sanctuary Housing Association** is a charity that offers housing services. They can cater for a variety of needs and levels of support, and a number of specialist services are available; move-on, day services, self-contained flats and floating support.

Telephone: 01905 334000

Address: Sanctuary Care Ltd, Cameo House, Chamber Court, Worcester, WR1 3ZQ

Email: care@sanctuary-housing.co.uk

Website: www.sanctuary-group.co.uk

● **Stonham** is a provider of housing, care and support services in England, in order to help people with special needs to live independently.

Telephone: 0345 141 4663 (customer service line open 7am-8pm (Mon-Fri) and 8am-12 noon (Sat)).

Address: Head Office, 2 Gosforth Park



Way, Gosforth Business Park, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8ET

Email: contactus@homegroup.org.uk

Website: <http://www.homegroup.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

● **Together** works in the community, hospitals and prisons supporting people with severe and enduring mental health needs and their carers. Their schemes include supported housing including 24-hour care.

Telephone: 020 7780 7300

Address: 12 Old Street, London, EC1V 9BE

Email: contactus@together-uk.org

Website: www.together-uk.org

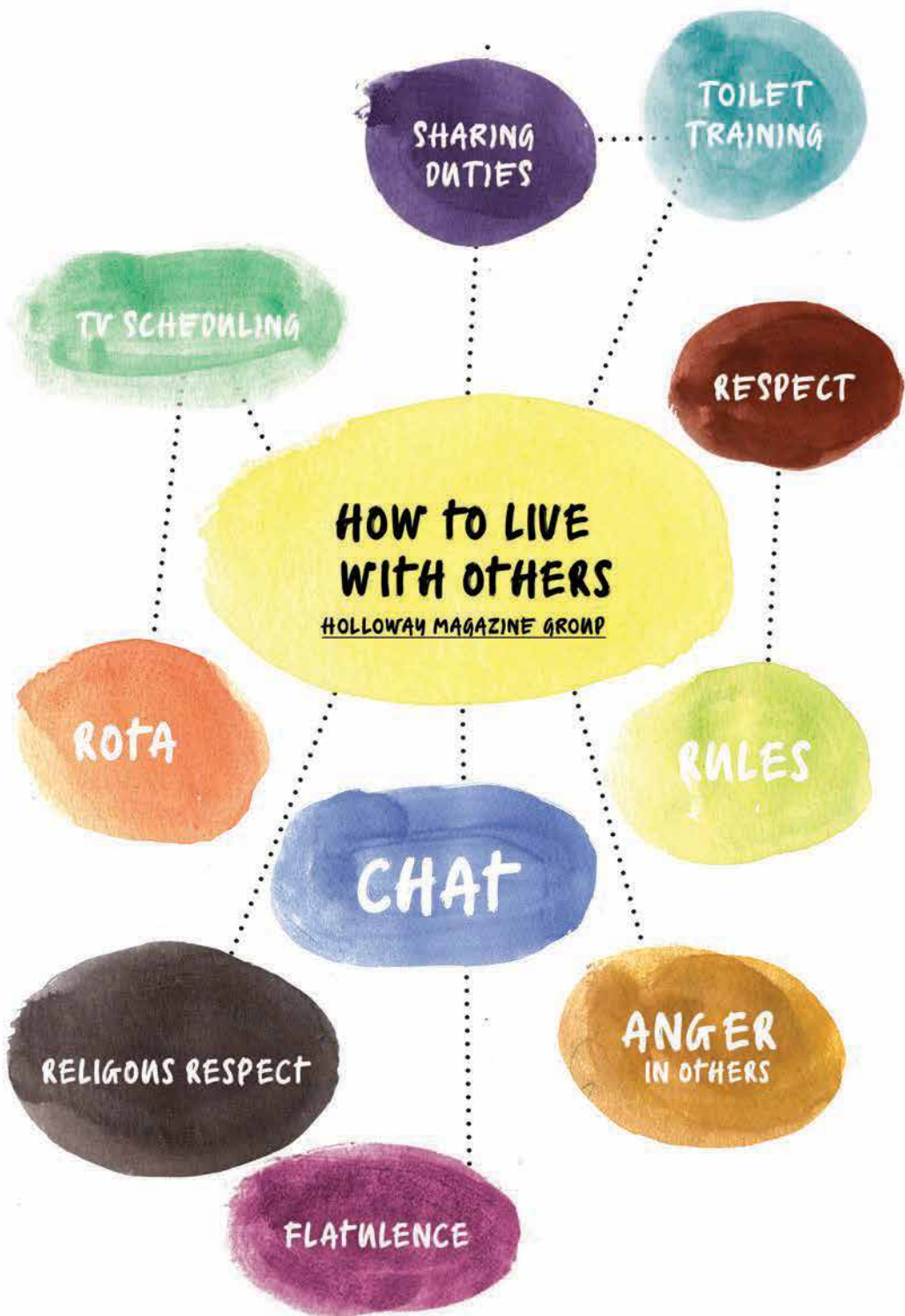
● **Turning Point** offers supported housing for people with complex needs. This includes people with substance misuse issues and mental health problems.

Telephone: 020 7481 7600

Address: Standon House, 21 Mansell Street, London, E1 8AA

Email: info@turning-point.co.uk

Website: www.turning-point.co.uk



ORGANISE SHARED SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE ROOM SUCH AS GAMES NIGHTS AND QUIZZES.

"IF YOU SPRINKLE WHEN YOU TINKLE, PLEASE BE NEAT, BE DISCREET AND WIPE THE SEAT!"

TELEVISION SCHEDULE CAN BE AN ISSUE. WHY NOT PLAN THE NEXT DAY'S TV SCHEDULE THE NIGHT BEFORE, AS A GROUP? TRY TO CHOOSE PROGRAMMES WHERE EVERYONE CAN GET INVOLVED, SUCH AS GAME SHOWS.

RESPECT EACH OTHER'S BELONGINGS.

WHEN YOU COME INTO PRISON, IT CAN BE A CHALLENGE SUDDENLY TO SHARE A ROOM WITH OTHER PEOPLE - ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE BEEN USED TO LIVING ON YOUR OWN. HERE ARE SOME IDEAS AND TIPS ON HOW TO SHARE SUCCESSFULLY.

AGREE AND SET OUT A ROTA ABOUT BUYING SHARED ITEMS FOR THE ROOM, SUCH AS WASHING POWDER AND CONDIMENTS. BE CONSIDERATE ABOUT HOW MUCH DIFFERENT PEOPLE IN YOUR ROOM CAN AFFORD.

AS A GROUP, SET DOWN SOME GROUND RULES EARLY. DECIDE AS A GROUP HOW BEST TO APPROACH THE CLEANING AND WHAT THE RULES ARE ON SMOKING, FOR INSTANCE.

IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM OR ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH ANOTHER PERSON IN YOUR ROOM, IT'S BEST TO BE OPEN ABOUT IT AND CHAT WITH THAT PERSON RATHER THAN LET IT BUILD UP.

LISTEN TO EACH OTHER AND RESPECT EACH OTHER'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES - TAKE TIME TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.

ANGER IN OTHERS OFTEN HIDES FEAR, INSECURITY, PAIN. TRY TO REACH OUT AND UNDERSTAND RATHER THAN BE CRITICAL AND JUDGE A PERSON NEGATIVELY - NOBODY SAID IT WAS EASY!

IF YOUR BOTTOM BURPS IN PUBLIC, TRY TO SAY IN TIME: "GOODNESS GRACIONS, WHAT A WHIFF! IT DOESN'T SMELL LIKE MINE" PLEASE GO INTO THE TOILET TO FART.

A ROOF OVER MY HEAD...

THE MYTHS – AND TRUTHS – OF SECURING HOUSING

MYTH

I have bad anxiety and depression so I will be priority need and get housed.

TRUTH

This is not enough of a priority. Councils have an incredibly high threshold of what makes you a priority and only accept very severe physical or mental health illnesses.

MYTH

I will be getting my kids back once I am released, so the council will house me.

TRUTH

It depends upon the age of the children and any additional needs they have, including where your children are now and how long it will take for you to have the children back as your responsibility.

If the children have been living somewhere else while you have been in prison, they are not considered homeless and so you, as the mother, cannot include them in a homelessness application. You will, therefore, only be housed if you are deemed a priority in your own right, and this has nothing to do with having children.



Illustration by Chenna

MYTH

I am a MAPPA, so probation has to house me.

TRUTH

It depends on the level of MAPPA. Only the highest level of MAPPA usually results in probation making sure you have accommodation. This often is an Approved Premises hostel. The probation service will carry out a risk assessment for you and decide if you should be managed by MAPPA. If they decide that you should be managed by MAPPA, they then choose the level of management you need by other appropriate services. There are three levels and your level of management can change. For example, if you are level 1 MAPPA, you could be managed by one or two agencies. This is the most common arrangement. If you are level 3 MAPPA, you could be managed by a number of senior people from several agencies such as police and probation, who will meet regularly to review your needs. MAPPA can help with

mental illness, drug or alcohol problems and housing issues. MAPPA aims to protect the public and help you to settle into the community.

MYTH

I am fleeing domestic violence, so any council has to house me.

TRUTH

You can apply to any council if fleeing domestic violence but it will still only house you if you are considered a priority need for additional reasons.

MYTH

I won't leave prison without somewhere to live.

TRUTH

It could be that you will have to go to a Homeless Persons Unit to try to get housed on the first day of your release. Only if you are considered in priority need and not intentionally homeless, or you are going to an Approved Premises/Hostel – if this has been arranged previously, will you be housed.

MYTH

I will get housed, as I am priority as I am leaving prison.

TRUTH

Leaving prison does NOT mean you are automatically classed as priority.

MYTH

I will get my own flat.

TRUTH

It will depend on what resettlement plans have been made with you. A local authority will only provide accommodation for priority need, but even this often involves living in a room somewhere for a substantial period of time before being moved somewhere more permanent. If you go into private rental and are 35 or over, then you can look for a one bedroom flat.

MYTH

The hostel I am going to will find me housing.

TRUTH

They may give you advice but it is not their responsibility to find you somewhere to live.



ACQUIRING A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD!

Laura Orger is the Community Care Caseworker who primarily assists prisoners with mental or physical disabilities at the Prisoners' Advice Service (PAS), an independent legal charity which provides free legal advice to prisoners on matters of prison law throughout England and Wales.

HOW WE CAN ASSIST WOMEN PRISONERS OBTAIN SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

As well as advising and assisting prisoners with a wide variety of prison law matters,

PAS sometimes assists women prisoners to obtain support and accommodation upon release, particularly relating to parole hearings where they need suitable accommodation before being released into the community.

For example, I recently acted for a disabled woman whose release on parole had been delayed twice for over a year because no suitable supported accommodation had been identified. We acted for her in her parole case. We sent a pre-action letter to the local authority and the responsible NHS body, threatening a judicial review regarding



the accommodation. We then liaised/ negotiated with the local authority and NHS teams. The NHS body responsible then offered her a place in a therapeutic care home with 24-hour support for the first 18 months, before potentially moving on to more independent living when she's ready. The parole board deemed this accommodation was suitable to meet her complex needs and eventually directed her release.

Last year, our Women Prisoners' Caseworker acted for a prisoner detained in a low secure psychiatric hospital. Eventhough she was considered well enough by a Mental Health Tribunal to be released from hospital, her release needed to be directed by the parole board before she could be discharged into the community. Her local authority rejected the application on the grounds of the cost of her post-release accommodation and care support services in the community. PAS corresponded with the local authority, setting out our client's legal rights and putting it on notice that judicial review proceedings would be instigated if funding was not agreed. The local authority then agreed to provide the funding. This case highlights the difficulties that women prisoners with mental health conditions can face in obtaining the discharge care packages they require upon release.

Also last year, the Women Prisoners' Caseworker took on a case for a woman prisoner with complex learning difficulties, brain damage and schizophrenia. At her automatic release date, she was released to a hostel without appropriate support. Her mental health quickly deteriorated and she relapsed into drug use, leading to her recall to prison. Due to her disabilities, she struggled with the prison regime and was subject to bullying.

She spent the last year on the mental health unit within the prison. Securing appropriate supported accommodation was vital to her chances of re-release and successful rehabilitation.

We attended several multi-agency Care Planning meetings, involving external and internal medical health

professionals and probation officers to devise a plan to progress her release into the community. She had also requested parole board directions to assist with timely release planning and accommodation referrals for her. Following our intervention, the parole board issued detailed directions, setting out a timeframe for actions to be taken by community/forensic mental health teams, as well as prison/probation officers. This ensured that a fully developed release and risk management plan, including "aftercare" accommodation (under section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983), was in place by



“Following our intervention, she was granted release and was successfully housed.”

the time of her oral hearing.

In 2015, PAS assisted a vulnerable woman prisoner suffering from depression, alcoholism and drug abuse, who had previously attempted suicide. She was due to be released and was, therefore, in need of suitable accommodation. Our Women Prisoners' Caseworker helped to ensure that an Approved Premises hostel had a vacancy for her in advance of her release. We persuaded the parole board to grant her release on licence, as her risk was now manageable in the community thanks to the supportive accommodation we had secured for her. We wrote to her Offender Manager and Offender Supervisor to confirm her place at a supportive hostel. Following our intervention, she was granted release on licence and was successfully housed in a special women's hostel that assists ex-prisoners.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE RELEASED BUT HAVE NOWHERE TO LIVE

If you have physical or mental disabilities or a debilitating illness, you should contact your local council's Adult Social Services department. This is usually the local authority where you lived before you were sent to prison. You should ask them to conduct a "community care assessment" of your needs because you believe you have social care needs and will need support on your release. They should assess you in prison. Sometimes, in less severe cases, they will assess you once you have been released. It is a good idea to contact them as much in advance

as possible and to do so in writing. The Care Act 2015 requires local authorities to assess anyone who "may be in need" of their help or in the case of patients or prisoners about to be released "who may be about to be in need".

If you do not have any significant health problems or disabilities, you should contact the Housing Department of your local authority at least 28 days before your release. You should ask them to send you a homelessness application form. You should fill this in and return it to the council 28 days (or as soon as possible) before your release. If you have any vulnerabilities (like having suffered from depression), put those on the form. You should be treated as "in priority need" for housing.

ORGANISATIONS THAT MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST

PAS only deals with helping prisoners to acquire accommodation in very specific circumstances (such as major disability and the prisoner cannot assist themselves). However the following Housing organisations may be able to help you.

HOUSING ORGANISATIONS

Shelter England: 0808 800 4444

Crisis: 0300 636 1967

St Mungo's: 020 8762 5500

St Giles Trust: 020 7708 8000

Emmaus UK: 0300 303 7555

INSIDE OUT

Thoughts and poems about what “home” means to them, contributed by women in several of Britain’s female prisons

- Home is wherever my children and family are.
- Home means being near family. For someone who has been in for seven years and still has six years to go, home keeps that family connection.
- Prison is your home until your release. I always hated my home and coming to prison gave me the opportunity I needed to sell my house so I can start afresh somewhere new.
- Home is more than four walls and a variety of furniture. It is not home if there is no support from family members. Eventhough I am in a difficult situation, my family members are always with me.
- Home to me is safety. I know as soon as I see my mum and my mum’s home, nothing or nobody can hurt me.
- Thinking of being at home reminds me of happy memories.
- I really don’t like being in a prison far from home. The prison I am in is too far for my family to visit. I have been told I cannot go to a prison that is closer until

I have completed a course, which can take up to three years. I am still waiting for a place on the course. I haven’t seen my children for two years. I can’t wait to see them.

- When I am alone, I feel my children around me. I can hear them calling me mummy. Outside in the back garden, my children are playing on the swing, singing, dancing and their dad is also with them. I am laughing because of their antics. My husband often used to buy a bunch of flowers for me.
- In the middle of the night I wake up from nightmares. I always feel my children are cuddling and hugging me. I feel their touch and kisses on my cheek. My husband was my life as well. He has been the only man in my life until now. I feel so peaceful, safe and relaxed when I am with him.
- I miss my home a lot. I love my home and I have never been anywhere else for as long a time, except prison. My home is very bright, colourful, neat and clean. On sunny days, the bright sun comes through into the conservatory. My home gets lighter.
- I cook some special food for my family when my husband has a day off and the children have school holidays. We watch TV, even though my home is noisy, there is a lot of love. Home is my life and breath.



MY HOME

My home, my pad, my nest
My sanctuary, my dream
I'm over the moon when I enter
As it looks like Paris or Rome
I never get worried, stressed or sad
Coz my home is truly home
My jewel-encrusted bed
My long, purple drapes
I've decorated in great style
And all designs are my own
I can lie around for hours
Watching TV or sat talking on the phone
I always cook and clean
I even bake and dream
I could leave washing everywhere
But it still is always pristine
I really love my home
It's my sanctuary and my dream





HOW DOES IT FEEL BEING IN A PRISON FAR FROM HOME?

Lonely
Anxious
Useless
Sad

It's heartbreaking. There is no prison in Wales for women. Isolating, soul destroying. As I am on remand and a quiet person, I'm finding it hard adjusting to prison life.

I am from Wales, so being in England miles away from home is really soul destroying. All I can think of is the long travel home when I eventually do get released from prison. I literally have butterflies every time I think of getting close to the toll bridge that leads back to my great Welsh culture.

HOLLOWAY PRISON 1852-2016

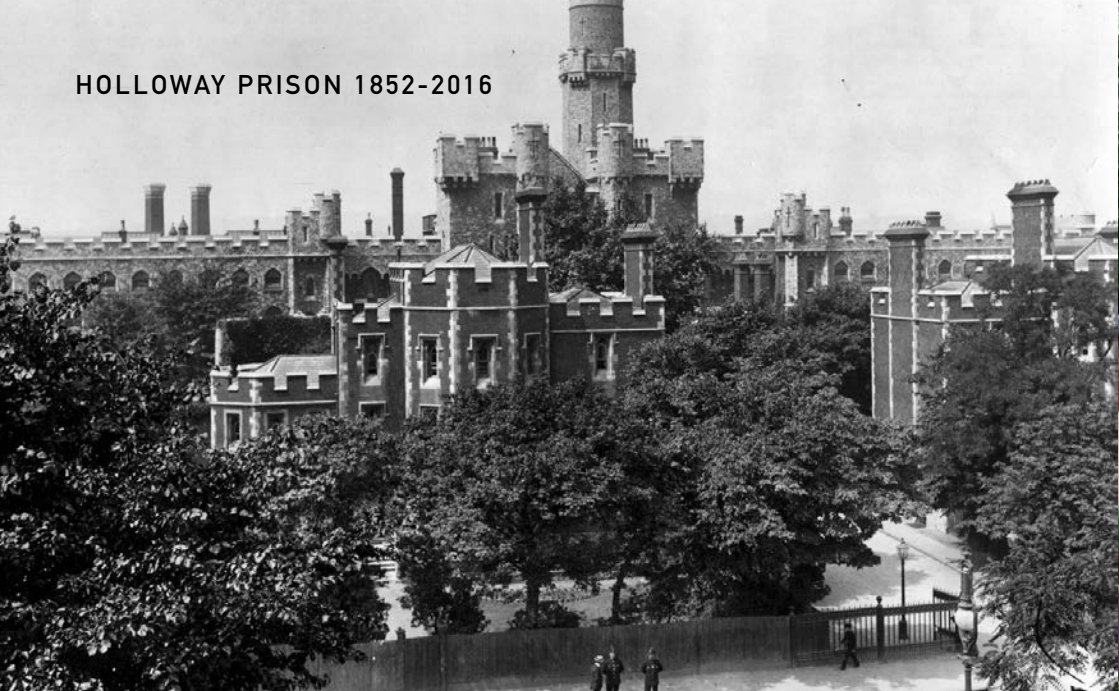
HOLLOWAY THE END OF AN ERA

Suffragettes, campaigners, fascists and the last woman executed – the north London prison has held some of the country's most notorious women prisoners. Now, after 167 years, its closure could be a step toward reform...»





A WOMAN IN
HOLLOWAY PRISON
LOOKS OUT A WINDOW
BROKEN IN AN ATTACK
BY SUFFRAGETTES,
DECEMBER 1913.



This spring HMP Holloway will close. What was Europe’s largest women’s prison – it holds 500 women – will be demolished and 3,000 homes will be built on the site in North London.

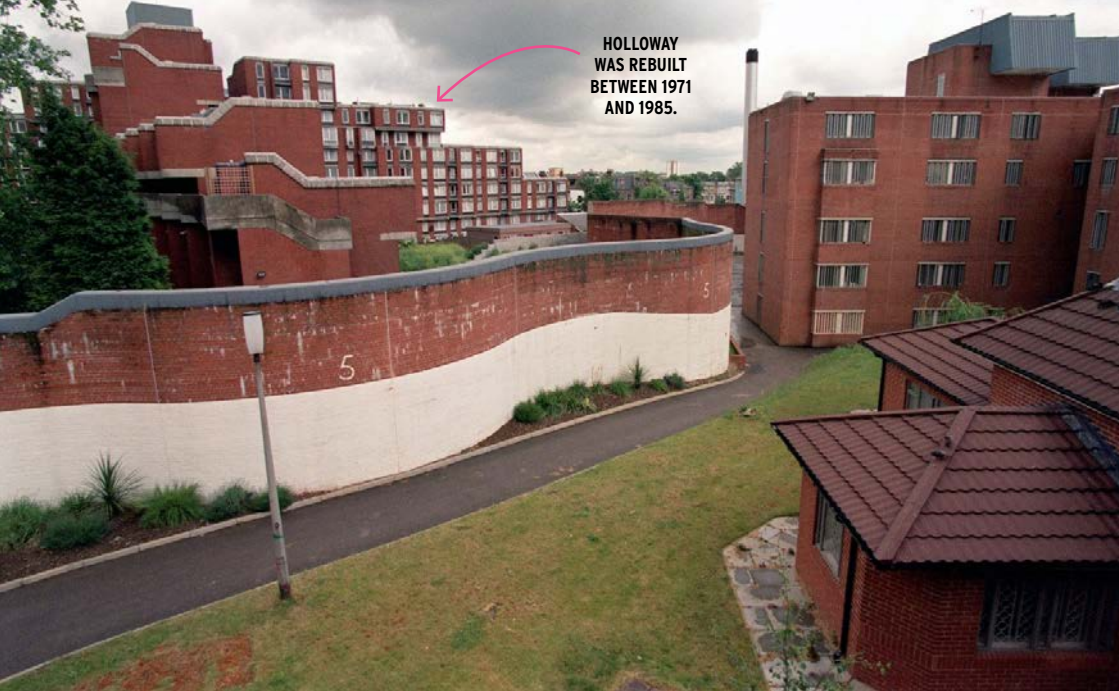
In November 2015, Michael Gove stated that prison was “inadequate... an antiquated” and announced that the women in Holloway would be moved to Bronzefield women’s prison near Heathrow airport and to Downview, a refurbished former men’s prison near Banstead in Surrey.

Holloway opened in 1852 and was first called the New City of London Prison. It was a mixed prison that gained notoriety as “a cesspit of morality” in Victorian society. Then, in 1902, it became the first female-only prison in England.

In 1974, the tragedy of a woman burning to death in her cell, prompted Chris Tchaikovsky, who was also imprisoned at Holloway at the time, to set up the Prisoners

Action Group. She went on to found the charity Women in Prison in 1983. Chris believed that women’s own voices – giving testimony about their lives and treatment – were the most powerful tools to argue for radical reform. She campaigned to expose the terrible experiences of the women. For instance, on C1, the psychiatric ward in Holloway, known as “the Muppet Wing” because of the use of psychotropic drugs to keep women sedated, self-harming was a serious and accelerating problem.

On 11 February 1986, a woman sent a letter from Holloway to Women in Prison. It read: “We have been locked up for twenty-three-and-a-half hours a day, and sometimes for twenty-four hours, even



HOLLOWAY
WAS REBUILT
BETWEEN 1971
AND 1985.

having our meals in the cells. This means, of course, that we do not even get 'association', so we are unable to get a bath, pick up a book or talk to any other inmates."

The degree of isolation suffered by Holloway prisoners came to light when three ex-prisoners reported appalling cases of self-mutilation on C1 Wing. The ex-prisoners believed that C1 women resorted to these acts because of the time they had to spend in solitary confinement.

A report produced after a visit by Members of Parliament in the 1980s, however, blamed the design of the building for the problem. "The design has reduced the level of daylight in cells... drab corridors, low ceilings add little natural light giving a strongly depressing

and claustrophobic atmosphere..." A public outcry resulted in a review of Holloway. The prison was completely rebuilt on its 10-acre site between 1971 and 1985.

Two years ago, prison inspectors praised reforms at the jail, following years of criticisms over the treatment and care of the women held there.

The chief inspector of prisons, Nick Hardwick, said: "More needs to be done to ensure... women's remaining and real anxieties [are] better understood and addressed.

Family support work is surprisingly under-developed and yet it is of critical importance to the women held... Nevertheless, overall, although there is still more to do, this remains the most

"Drab corridors,
low ceilings, little
natural light...
a depressing
atmosphere"



EMILY DAVISON WAS AMONG THE SUFFRAGETTES JAILED IN 1912.



THE SOCIALITE DIANA MOSLEY WAS CONSIDERED A THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY IN 1940.

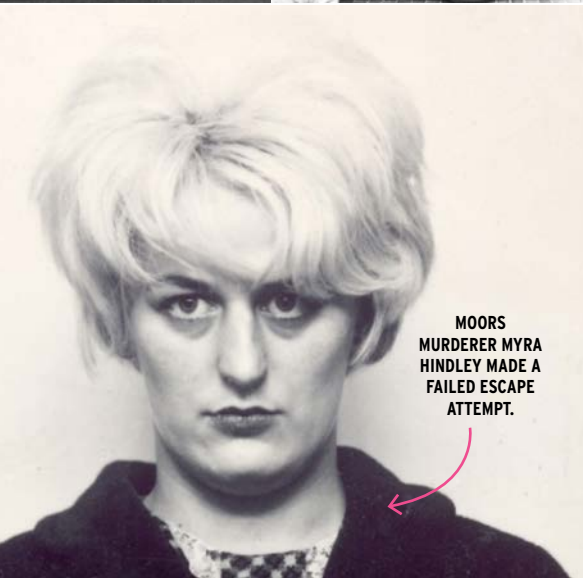
THE HON. LADY MOSLEY



HELEN DUNCAN WAS JAILED FOR 'WITCHCRAFT' IN 1944.



THE CROWD OUTSIDE HOLLOWAY IN 1955, THE DAY KILLER RUTH ELLIS (RIGHT) WAS EXECUTED.



MOORS MURDERER MYRA HINDLEY MADE A FAILED ESCAPE ATTEMPT.



PEACE CAMPAIGNER REBECCA JOHNSON WAS SENT TO HOLLOWAY FOR TWO WEEKS IN 1982.

positive inspection this inspectorate has yet made of HMP Holloway.”

Women in Prison hopes the prison’s closure will be a turning point for reform. Research shows that women released from prison are more likely to re-offend than those serving community sentences. Community support and sentencing must replace prison for all but a minority of women.

Here are some of the milestones in HMP Holloway’s 164-year history:

1912 Emily Davison was among the suffragettes, who fought for votes for women, jailed there. Some of the suffragettes went on hunger strikes and were force-fed.

1940 Diana Mosley, a friend of Hitler’s who called herself “that famous awful person”, and her husband Oswald, the leader of the British Union of Fascists – the only male prisoner in Holloway – were imprisoned in a cottage in the grounds because they were considered a threat to national security. Other prisoners acted as their domestic staff and Diana ordered in chocolate and wine from Harrods.

1944 Helen Duncan, 46, a fake medium, was jailed for 172 days for “witchcraft”. She was the last woman to be tried under the Witchcraft Act of 1735.

During wartime, prisoners were given

voluminous drawers (long-legged knickers), a calico chemise and knitted black stockings which, without garters, dropped down constantly. Cells then measured 13ft by 7ft and had a barred window and armoured door – and a pail as a toilet.

1955 Ruth Ellis, 28, a nightclub hostess, was hanged at Holloway – she was the last woman to be executed in England. She had shot her

lover, racing driver David Blakely, who had allegedly beaten and abused her – punching her in the stomach and causing her to suffer a miscarriage. Ellis gave herself up to the police immediately after the shooting. At her trial, she said, “It’s obvious when I shot him I intended to kill him.”

1966 Myra Hindley was jailed here for her role in the sadistic Moors Murders. She and Ian Brady killed four children and a teenager. Hindley made a failed attempt to escape.

1982 Rebecca Johnson, who had lived at Greenham Common peace camp for five years, was imprisoned at Holloway. The peace camp was set up by Welsh women in 1981 to protest at the deployment of a new generation of nuclear weapons at RAF Greenham Common, near Newbury in England. Johnson, like a number of protestors, was sent to Holloway for two weeks for “breach of the peace”.

“Helen Duncan, was the last woman to be tried under the Witchcraft Act of 1735”

WOMEN IN PRISON: HOW WE ARE FIGHTING TO ACHIEVE REAL CHANGE

Claire Cain, WIP's Campaigns and Policy Manager,
outlines WIP's major campaigns and how you can help

Women in Prison believes that too many women are needlessly in jail. We want to see sustained and properly funded community-based specialist support for women to provide alternatives to prison. If locking women up is to be reduced to a minimum, then together we have to influence and convince those with decision-making power that there are more effective and cheaper alternatives in the community that can – and do – work to reduce re-offending, prevent crime and help women to turn their lives around.

We can't do this alone. We need to speak out and encourage others to make a stand against the present system and take a stance alongside us (power in numbers!). We need to be smart. We need to present evidence and sound arguments that show the value of constructive, radical change. Putting women behind bars pays too little attention to the circumstances in which many women have found themselves – including difficult childhoods, lack of in-

come and damaging relationships. Prison destroys families and, too often, perpetuates crime through the generations.

Women in Prison has two major campaigns planned for the next year that need your input. We are asking for your views and suggestions about these proposals and any ideas of your own that may help to accelerate change. Currently, we are focusing on two key areas. >>

SOCIAL

JUSTICE

NOT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

CAMPAIGN 1 – 20/50

The change we want to see:

A significant reduction in the number of women in prison – we are aiming for 50% fewer women in prison by 2020.

What does this look like?

- An abolition of short prison sentences.
- An end to women being held in prison on remand, except where a woman is a danger to others.
- Reducing and restructuring the female prison estate so it only consists of small specialist units spread across the country – where the wellbeing of individual women is paramount and where they receive the practical support required to make the most of their assets and capabilities.
- A greater use of diversion from police custody and courts to community support services.

Who has the power to make change happen?

- Ministers/MPs.
- Police and crime commissioners.
- Judges/magistrates.
- Sentencing council.
- Public opinion.
- The media.

How will we encourage change?

- By ensuring that women affected by the criminal justice system have their voices heard and have access to as many different platforms as possible – in the media, at conferences,

before select committees etc. By enabling women to share their experience with politicians, the public and potential supporters, their testimony of the criminal justice system and life after that involvement will be properly understood – and its lack of effectiveness made clear.

- To use creative ways to attract attention to the campaign and educate the public – plays, artwork, stories, poems etc.
- To demonstrate the extent of the public's support for the campaign, using, for instance, petitions and social media.
- To communicate with Ministers and MPs – letter writing, meetings, events.
- To contribute to WIP's responses to consultations from the government and other bodies.
- To create links with academics to bring together evidence and research to support the campaign.
- To innovate, monitor and evaluate, so that WIP can show what kind of support works best, gathering evidence from the women with whom it works.

CAMPAIGN 2

The change we want to see:

Women-specialist support, accessible for all women in every community.

What does this look like?

- A women's centre in every local authority to provide access to services and “women only” space.
- A sustained network of women-specialist community services that



WOMEN PROTEST FOR THEIR RIGHTS OUTSIDE THE ROYALS COURTS OF JUSTICE IN LONDON

can be used as an alternative to custody (to support women in the areas of mental health, addiction, emergency supported housing, domestic violence).

Who has the power to make change happen?

- Ministers/MPs.
- Local authorities.
- Police and crime commissioners.
- Public opinion – particularly women's groups.
- Judges/magistrates.
- The media.

How will we effect the change?

- Promote stories from women affected by the criminal justice system on how community support services made a positive difference and helped women turn their lives around.
- Unite women's groups and show the call from women for the need to protect our community support services.
- Use the police and crime commissioner elections and local authority elections to lobby for commitments for change.
- Train and inform magistrates and judges about the availability of women's services that could be used as part of a community sentence instead of prison.
- Work with other agencies – public health, mental health charities, the police, local authorities – to pilot and improve the



“Ensure women affected by the criminal justice system have their voices heard”

services offered, focusing especially on early intervention and wellbeing and the assets and capabilities that every woman has and can exercise if given the right kind of support accessed at the right time.

What you can do to help

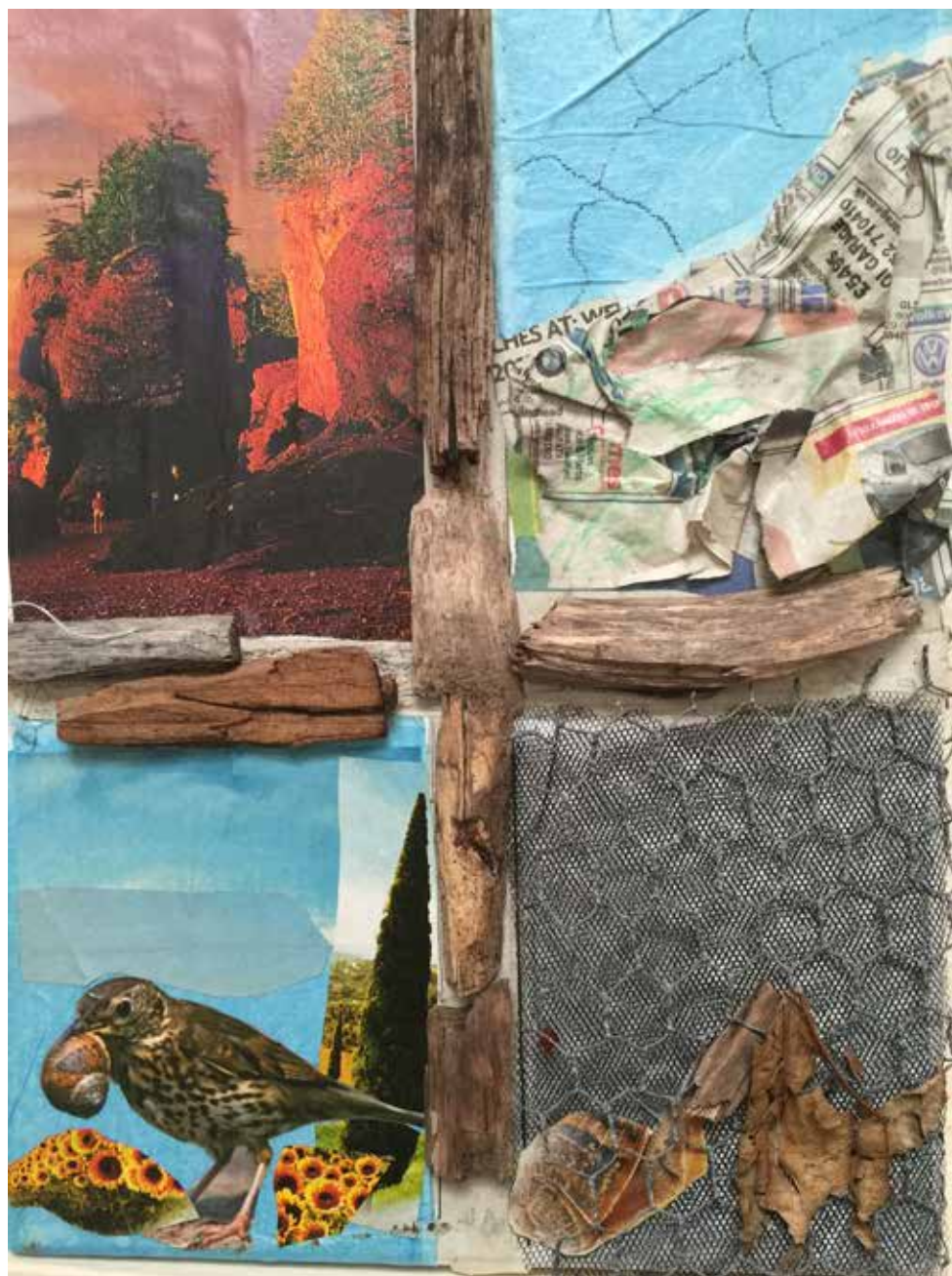
- Send us your comments, suggestions, personal stories and ideas.
- Join a magazine group and volunteer for WIP.
- Write to your MP.
- Support any actions organised by WIP.
- Make your voice and your experiences heard.

ALL YOURS!

PAINTINGS, POEMS,
STORIES & MORE
— ALL BY YOU



















ARE YOU A REAL MAN?

BY SHAUNNA

When you attack me
You're like a vulture
Nowadays it's the culture

When you punch me
Feels like I've been hit by a lorry
Even then you never say sorry

You say you love me but in the next breath you shove me

Thinking you're above me
Does all this make you feel like a big man?
When you're putting a knife to your woman
Forcing her to go down low for another man

You got me chasing the dragon
While you go round to ya mates bragging
How you got me rattling

Now you've got me in jail
I never even got bail
Through the whole of our relationship
I felt like I should've felt frail
Even now I still feel frail

Why don't you ever attack a real man
No, because men like you are cowards

Women like us deserve a better chance in life
We don't want to be living just to survive
We want to feel alive and strive

Away from the life that is a bad dive

Ask yourself this: are you a real man?

We are human. Not Punch-Bags.



LIFE'S JOURNEY

BY LLATOYA-JADE

Life is like a game of chess,
One wrong move and your life is a mess.

Like a seed that turns into a flower,
Life can be sweet but also be sour.

Young and old gather in unity,
A newborn child full of innocence and purity.

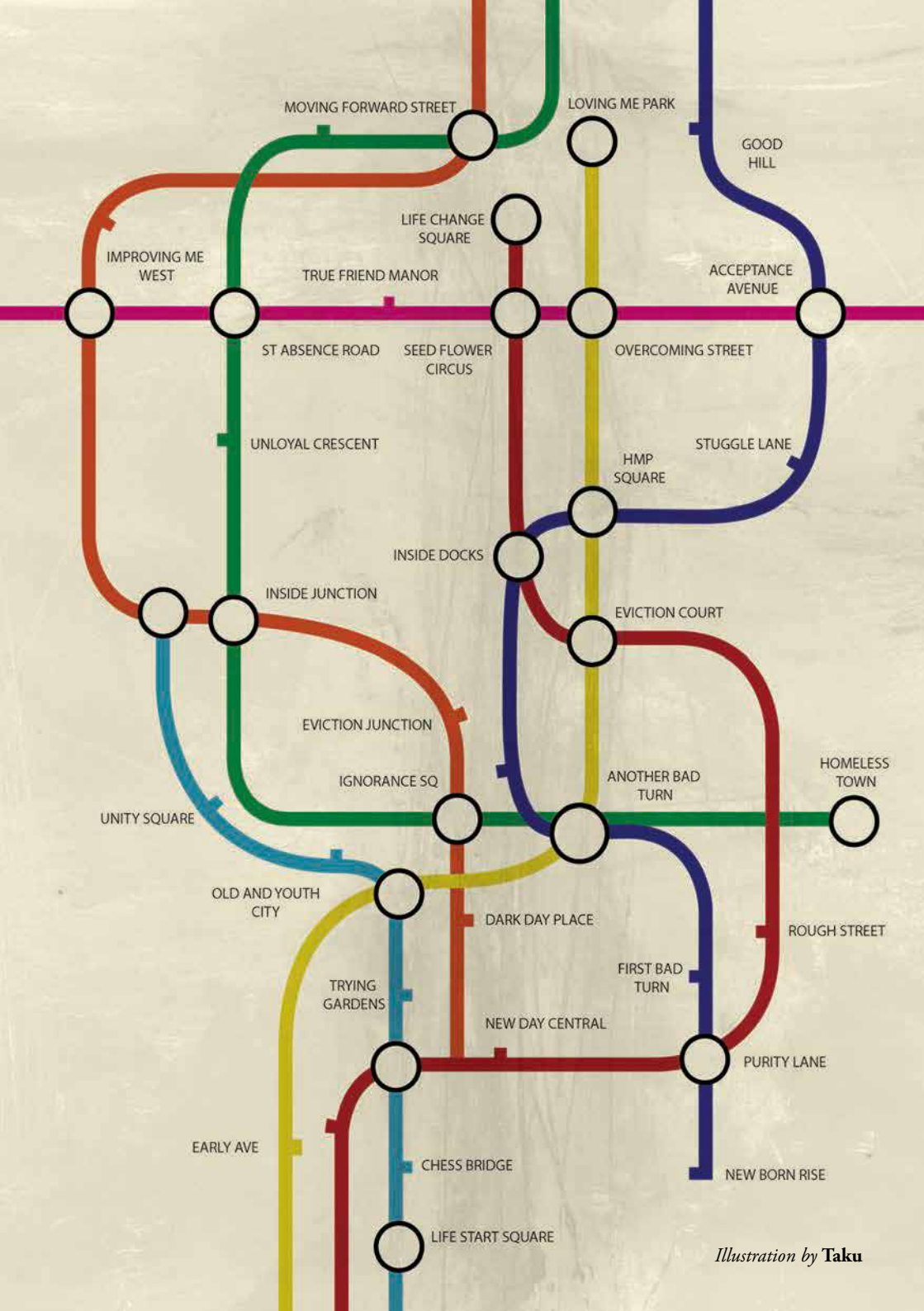
The belief and acceptance of life is hard to comprehend,
To fight and stand up for what you believe in - in the hope it doesn't offend.

Life isn't a bed of roses where you come up smelling sweet,
You never spared a thought for me when I was homeless on the street.

You said you were a true friend now why don't I agree,
I haven't heard from you since, now my address is HMP.

So excuse me for my ignorance and my blasé attitude,
You're probably thinking at this point: damn this girl is rude.

So take a good look in the mirror and tell me do you like who you see,
Just remember how you misjudged a loyal and trustworthy friend that you once had in me.



Hannah Morowa

A day in the life

of the manager of WomenMATTAs, WIP's community project in Manchester and Trafford

Illustration by Ulla

I will admit what gets me out of bed each morning is the thought of breakfast! I'm obsessed with blueberries at the minute so today it was blueberry porridge - but of course not before I fed my cats, Albus and Elvis. Both ginger and both very naughty, but cute enough to get away with it!

I leave the house at about 8.30am. I live close enough to be able to walk to work and I find this is great for preparing me for the day ahead in the morning and clearing my head in the evening.

It's a privilege for me that I'm the WomenMATTAs Manager as I really love my job. Feminism has always been very important to me and I feel fortunate to work for a charity that shares my values and ethics. My whole career has focused on supporting vulnerable women - first in supported housing and later at a sexual assault centre and a rape crisis charity.

I began to work for Women in Prison in 2010 when it launched the WomenMATTAs project. I was a Project Worker on the team for a few years and then decided to go back to university to do a social work Masters qualification. Not long after I finished, I got the job as

WomenMATTAs manager - it's like it was meant to be!

WomenMATTAs is a community project for women involved in the criminal justice system in Manchester and Trafford. We work with women who are referred by the police at point of arrest, women serving community orders with the Community Rehabilitation Company and National Probation Service, and women who are leaving prison. We also support any woman who needs some practical or emotional support, as we believe this is the best way of preventing women ending up in the criminal justice system. I manage four brilliant Project Workers who provide one-to-one support and drop-in sessions - both from St Wilfrid's where we are based and other community locations in Manchester and Trafford.

Once I've opened the office and got everything turned on and ready, my first task is always checking my emails. This can take anywhere from five minutes to a few hours. Typical emails I receive are new referrals for us from other services, updates from Project Workers about women they're supporting, other agencies wanting information about us, information about possible funding,

invitations to meetings, information about training - the list goes on!

At 10am today I have supervision with one of the Project Workers. Supervising staff is a big part of my job as manager. This involves spending a few hours a month with each member of staff, checking how they are, supporting them with their work, helping with any work-related problems they may be having, linking them in with training, and feeding back to them what a great job they're doing!

My next meeting is the Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group, so I put on my raincoat and walk for 15 minutes to the Town Hall, grabbing some lunch on the way. This meeting involves senior representatives from all organisations related to the criminal justice system working together to ensure everything is being done to support both victims and perpetrators of crime and to try to reduce offending in Manchester. I attend lots of meetings like this to make sure that women's needs and experiences are always considered and to make sure that agencies, such as probation and the police, are providing the best service they can for women.

My first task when I get back in the office is a much needed cup of tea! I check in with staff and have a quick chat with one of the Project Workers who's really worried about one of the women she's supporting. We put together a plan of action and as she implements it.

I then sit down to start writing a "monitoring report" for WomenMATTA. This is definitely not an exciting element of my job but it's really important. These reports go to our funders to demonstrate what we've been doing over the past few months - recording aspects such as how many women we've supported and the outcomes of that support. Without this information we wouldn't receive funds, so this always has to be a priority for me.

Tomorrow we have a Team Meeting, so the last thing I do is put together the meeting agenda to ensure I'm prepared. I check that I've returned any calls and

important emails and check that all the Project Workers have "logged out" so I know that everyone is safe and well.

Before leaving I turn off my work phone. As much as I love my job, it can be very stressful and it's important to "switch off" once I leave the office.

The most important event of every evening for me is always dinner! I love cooking so am already planning the Thai curry I'm going to make as I walk home. My evenings are very varied: if I'm feeling active, I might do some yoga or I might catch up with some friends or go to the cinema. Tonight it's too cold and rainy to leave the house, so it's a cosy night in and catching up with some rubbish TV. Then it's off to bed, ready for whatever tomorrow will bring.





SAUSAGE COOK UP IN A CELL

Here's a recipe for a super-easy, but tasty, snack. Enjoy!

By **Emily** Illustrated by **Magenda**

Method

- 1 Chop the peppers into thin slices.
- 2 Slice two or three chicken sausages.
- 3 Break up the noodles into a container.
- 4 Add sliced chicken sausage and peppers to the container.
- 5 Pour in enough boiling water to cover ingredients.
- 6 Add sweetcorn and stir.
- 7 Add more boiling water.
- 8 Leave for five minutes until noodles are soft.
- 9 Re-drain - leave some hot water to make juicy gravy and to ensure not too dry.
- 10 Add flavoured salt from noodles & other spices of your choice (salt, chilli flakes, black pepper).



Ingredients

- Serves 4

Cooked chicken sausages (£1.09)

Ko-Lee beef noodles (35p)

Tin of sweetcorn (75p)

Mixed peppers (£1.49)

A large container 5pk £2.99

Total cost: £3.68 without containers; **£6.67** with containers.

Bon appétit!

Please
send us your
favourite recipe

We would love to publish your recipes. Please send yours in to the Freepost address at the back of the magazine



**MEET
THE
AGONY
AUNTS**

~~~~~  
MEET THE AGONY  
AUNTS, WHO  
CAN GIVE YOU  
INFORMATION  
AND ADVICE ON  
THE ISSUES THAT  
MATTER TO YOU  
~~~~~

CLEM ON
LEGAL RIGHTS

MARTINE ON
EDUCATION,
TRAINING &
EMPLOYMENT

CLAIRE ON
HOUSING
~~~~~

# LEGAL RIGHTS

*By Clem, the Centre for Criminal Appeals Illustrations by Robin and FP Studio*

**Dear RSG,**  
**I am currently serving a 12-week sentence for obtaining housing benefit by false representation - I had not told the authorities that my partner had moved in with me. But because he was not there all of the time, I did not think that I had to. My partner did not contribute anything to household expenses or rent and I had asked him to leave on a number of occasions. I did not want to get my partner into trouble, so did not mention the pressure he put me under. In court, my solicitor did not make clear to the magistrates that my children could not go to live with their dad and would have to stay with my mum who is elderly and does not have the space to care for them. She also lives a good distance from my home and their schools. The solicitor told me there was no way of appealing. I've never been in trouble before so I am very confused. Is there anything I can do now?**  
**Yours, Sadie**

Dear Sadie,  
You do not say in your letter the amount of the fraud and this is going to be relevant as to whether the sentence you received was a legally fair one. However, the sentence that you received is at the top end of what is allowed for benefit fraud where there has been no dishonesty but, rather, a mistake. Generally, you automatically have the right to appeal against your sentence if you think that

the magistrates got something wrong. Often short sentences are passed which are simply wrong in law, and people end up in prison when they should be serving a sentence in the community instead. For example, the magistrates do not appear to have fully taken into account that you have no previous convictions or the effect on your children, which they should have done. It is possible that, in taking into account all these factors, your sentence is what is known as “manifestly excessive” - i.e. too harsh - and should be reduced or substituted for a community sentence. It may be that the court should have considered the exact nature of your partner’s behaviour and whether you were actually guilty of the offence at all.

You can make an application for an appeal to the Crown Court. Usually there is a time limit of 21 days - from the date that the sentence was passed - for you to lodge an appeal. If you are serving a short sentence, it is also possible to get the court to list your case quickly. It is important to get legal advice, as the Crown Court can also increase the sentence if the appeal is not well founded and you may have to pay costs.

.....

**Dear RSG,**  
**I have been given a sentence of 90 days for a failure to pay my council tax. I was represented by a solicitor but had no idea that I could be going to prison when I turned up at the Magistrates Court.**





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## ADVICE

I offered to pay £20 per week off the debt but the magistrate said that this would not pay it off at a fast-enough rate. I filled out a means form at court but no one seemed interested in how much I would struggle with making larger payments. After I separated from my partner, I found it really difficult to make ends meet and I just cannot believe that I am now stuck in here separated from my children - and have no idea what I can do, if anything.

Yours, Laura

Dear Laura,

There is a good chance, depending on the exact circumstances of your case, that your imprisonment is legally wrong. Because you have been imprisoned for failure to pay a civil debt, you cannot appeal in the usual way through the Crown Court. An application for the decision to be reviewed has to be made to the High Court and an application for you to be released immediately on bail while a final decision is made can also be pursued.

You have said that, other than having to fill in a standard means form at court, you were not asked anything more about your financial circumstances and obligations. The court should have done this and if it did not, the decision to imprison you was wrong. This is just one of the many factors, including why your tax was not paid and whether the court considered your child-care responsibilities, that can mean a decision to imprison was wrong.

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Dear RSG,

I am serving an 18-week sentence for growing cannabis in my home. It is not the first time I have been in trouble for this offence. The only reason my partner and I grew the cannabis was because we were being threatened by the man who owned

the plants. He had had my partner beaten up before. We did not feel like we had a choice. I admit that I used to be a drug addict but I have worked hard to become drug free over the last few years and my bi-polar condition has also been more stable. However, since I came to prison I have been really struggling. I have a learning disability that was diagnosed when I was at school and I struggle with following all of the rules and my mood has become much less stable. The probation officer told the court that I wasn't a risk to the public and didn't need to be locked up. Is there any way for me to go home sooner?

Yours, Farah

Dear Farah,

I am sorry to hear that you are finding things so tough. You will see from the answer to my letter to Sadie above that you can automatically appeal a sentence passed in the Magistrates Court or, where you are sentenced in the Crown Court, you must ask for permission to appeal. There are time limits on when this must be done.

The size of the cannabis growing operation is relevant and I don't have that information. In deciding whether the sentence was appropriate, it is possible for the court to see fresh evidence of your bi-polar disorder and learning difficulties - if this wasn't done at the time of the sentence - to help it decide if, considering all of your circumstances and that of the offence, the sentence you received was too harsh. You should ask your solicitors to confirm whether an appeal against your sentence is possible and you should not delay in doing this. Please also see the advice given to Sadie in the letter above about the possible risks of appealing a sentence.





# EDUCATION, TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

*By Martine Illustrations by Robin and Chioma*

**Dear RSG,**  
**I have been told that instead of searching for a job on release, I should first look for a volunteer position. Is this right? What is the point of voluntary work?**  
**Yours, Mary**

Dear Mary,  
 Thank you for your letter. The advice you have been given is sound, particularly if you have been away from a work place for a long time or if you will be looking for your first paid job.

If you were in paid employment, you will be asked by potential employers what you have done since you left your last job. Listing your voluntary placement will demonstrate your willingness to work rather than watch daytime television and will enable you to mention the skills you have used and your achievements in the role. This is crucial.

If you have never held a paid job, you may be rejected on the grounds that you have no experience. If you have volunteered, you will have experience of working in a team, meeting deadlines, communicating with colleagues or clients, structuring your day, overcoming difficulties and enjoying success.

**By volunteering, you will gain:**

- a chance to develop existing skills or to gain new ones;
- the opportunity to learn more about yourself and your capabilities, and improve your self-confidence;

- the potential for relevant vocational training, which could lead to a recognised qualification;
- the chance to develop your networking skills by making new friends and developing contacts;
- the satisfaction of contributing to something you feel is worthwhile and which will be valued;
- material for your CV and future job applications.
- Most importantly, you will get a reference which you will need to get a job.

I would suggest that on release you access the Do-It website <https://do-it.org/> or <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering> By entering the sector you wish to work in, the type of job you wish to do and your postcode, you will find a huge number of opportunities... and will probably end up feeling good about yourself and what you are bringing to others.  
 Happy volunteering!

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**Dear RSG,**  
**I need some books to help me with writing essays. It's been so long since I was at school and I don't have much confidence in my abilities now that I have seen the course materials.**  
**Yours, A**



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## ADVICE

Dear A,

Thank you for your letter. Please do not worry! All adults returning to learning after a long period away from study find it difficult – and the most demanding aspect of return to study is ALWAYS essay writing. Because this is a common challenge, there is a lot of help at hand in the form of truly effective – and enjoyable – books. Here are a few recommendations:

■ **How to Write Better Essays**

**(Palgrave Study Skills) by Bryan Greetham**

This book is a delight to read. Extremely well written, interesting and engaging, it shows you where you might go wrong! It breaks down the process of essay writing into steps, starting from how to think about essay questions, how to make notes and read background material, right through to writing style and proofreading. It also provides advice on how to think more creatively. So stimulating!

■ **Writing Essays For Dummies (UK Edition)**  
**by Mary Page and Carrie Winstanley**

We are all “dummies” in some field or another. The “For Dummies” series takes complicated topics or activities and breaks them down so they are easier to understand.

■ **How to Write an Essay in Five Easy Steps**  
**(Paperback) by Scribendi**

This is a clear and concise manual on writing an effective essay. It covers the four major types of essays: persuasive, expository, narrative, and argumentative. It explains how to compose a clear thesis (ie the point of your essay) – which is a key piece often lacking in students’ essays. It also provides examples of what an essay should look like.

Also ask the librarian and the Education Department if they have one of these books for you to borrow. If not, talk to your WIP advisor about getting one bought – I would recommend the first one in this case. You are on the right road, anyway. You have identified a difficulty and a way to address it – this is the road to success. Happy studies!

WRITING ESSAYS





# HOUSING

*Claire Cain, WIP's campaigns and policy manager, examines the growing concern around the use of prison in response to non-payment of council tax. Illustration by FP Studio*

## NO ONE SHOULD BE IN PRISON BECAUSE THEY OWE COUNCIL TAX.

Every year, around 40 women are sentenced to prison for non-payment of council tax. All adults with a roof over their heads have to pay council tax. If you do not pay and fall into debt, the council can take you to court - where the magistrate will decide whether or not you are guilty of not paying because of "wilful refusal" or "culpable neglect".

If you are found guilty, the magistrate has the power to order you to pay the money you owe. The magistrate can order that the money be paid in stages, directly from any earnings or benefits. If you do not have any income, the magistrate can order that the council tax you owe be paid out of your savings. This is the power of the court - to order and find a way of acquiring the money that you could have paid (and can now pay) but didn't.

Magistrates do not have the power to send you to prison, since owing council tax is a civil debt, and not a crime. Imprisonment should always be used as a last resort, and may only be imposed if there is no alternative to recovering the money that you owe. If there is an alternative (for example, passing an order so that the money is paid by being automatically taken from benefits, a pay

cheque or savings), you should not be sent to prison.

If, on the other hand, you genuinely do not (and did not) have any way of paying the council tax, you cannot be found guilty of "wilful refusal" or "culpable neglect", as you would have paid the money if you had been able to do so. In those circumstances, the court has the power to cancel the debt.

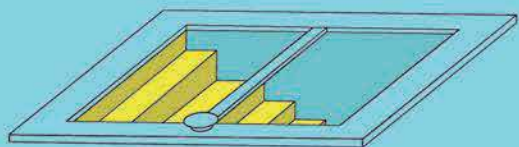
If you are in prison now, or know of someone in prison for non-payment of the council tax, please contact Women in Prison to discuss your options.

Please note that there are some situations in which the magistrate is lawfully allowed to send you to prison. For instance, if you have been found guilty and have the means to pay, and imprisonment is used to force payment. Please, still contact Women in Prison, so we can put you in touch with free legal advice to review your case.

### **Please write to:**

Claire Cain  
Women in Prison  
FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT  
Unit 10, the Ivories  
6 Northampton Street  
London  
N1 2HY





### Useful contacts

#### WOMEN IN PRISON

FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT  
Unit 10, The Ivories  
6 Northampton Street  
London  
N1 2HY  
Freephone: 0800 953 0125  
info@womeninprison.org.uk

#### HOUSING

**Shelter Helpline:**  
0808 800 4444

**NACRO Helpline:**  
0300 123 1999

#### LEGAL & GENERAL ADVICE

**Prisoners' Advice Service  
(PAS):**  
Prisoners' Advice Service,  
PO Box 46199, London,  
EC1M 4XA  
0845 430 8923

**PACT (Prison Advice & Care  
Trust) Helpline:**  
0808 808 3444

**Prison Reform Trust Advice  
and Information Service  
Advice Line:**  
0808 802 0060

#### SOMEONE TO TALK TO

**Samaritans Freephone:**  
Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK,  
PO Box 9090, STIRLING,  
FK8 2SA  
Freephone: 116 123

#### MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

**MIND:**  
Mind Infoline, Unit 9,  
Cefn Coed Parc, Nantgarw,  
Cardiff, CF15 7QQ  
0300 123 3393

#### SUBSTANCE MISUSE SUPPORT

**Frank Helpline:**  
0300 123 6600

**Phoenix Futures Advice  
Line:** 0845 600 7227

**Action on Addiction Helpline:**  
0300 330 0659

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Women's Aid Helpline:**  
0808 2000 247

**Rape & Sexual Abuse  
Support Centre  
(Rape Crisis)  
Helpline:** 0808 802 9999

#### WOMEN'S CENTRES

**Women's Breakout:**  
Upon release please go to the  
online directory run by  
Women's Breakout to find  
the nearest specialist  
women's centre to where  
you are based.  
[www.womensbreakout.org.uk/  
projects/](http://www.womensbreakout.org.uk/projects/)

#### FAMILY SUPPORT

**National Offenders' Families  
Helpline:** 0808 808 2003



*Illustration by* **Chenna**

# LET'S GET QUIZ-ICAL

Ready Steady Go! will now feature in every issue a MEGA quiz that you can do in association time or in your cell with your pad mate.

*If you have a quiz to share with our readers, please send it to us. Our address is on the back cover page.*

## LAW AND ORDER

- 1) How many HM Prisons are within Greater London and the M25?

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- 2) Who is currently the Justice Secretary for the UK?

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- 3) Which of the following celebrities has not been imprisoned?

- a) Boy George b) George Michael  
c) Colin Farrell d) Bobby Brown  
e) Kanye West

---

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

- 4) What is the first line of the Prime Minister's official address and which member of his Parliament takes residency next door?

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- 5) Which river runs through London?

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- 6) List the Queen's children from oldest to youngest.

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- 7) a) Name the furthest planet from the sun.

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b) How many years does it take for sunlight to reach the Earth?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) The film Total Recall, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, was set on which planet in our solar system?

\_\_\_\_\_

## WHERE ON EARTH IS THIS?

8) Name two African countries whose name begins with the letter M.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9) List the Earth's seven continents.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10) In which countries can you spend the following currencies?

a) Rupees

\_\_\_\_\_

b) Yen

\_\_\_\_\_

11) Match the city/town to their relevant county

**Towns:** Cleethorpes, Maidstone, Windermere, Billericay, Newquay, St. Albans, Norwich

**Counties:** Cumbria, Essex, Cornwall, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Hertfordshire, Kent

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12) a) How many states make up the USA?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) Which one is known as the Sunshine State?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) The federal capital of the USA is... ?

\_\_\_\_\_

13) Earthquake tremors are measured on the \_\_\_\_\_ scale.

## QUIZ

14) a) What is the highest mountain in the world?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) In which two countries is it located?

\_\_\_\_\_

## CLASS CLOWN or TEACHER'S PET? Were you awake in class that day?

15) Where in the body would you find the following bones?

a) the femur

\_\_\_\_\_

b) the sternum

\_\_\_\_\_

c) the radius

\_\_\_\_\_

16) What is the main function of white blood cells?

\_\_\_\_\_

17) Which elements do the following chemical symbols represent?

a) O b) Ca c) Fe d) Ag

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

18) The Law of Gravity was formulated by which scientist?

\_\_\_\_\_

19) Electricity is measured in...

\_\_\_\_\_

## HOLLYWOOD OR BUST?

20) What do the letters in MGM stand for?

\_\_\_\_\_

21) How many times did Marilyn Monroe marry?

\_\_\_\_\_

22) a) Who directed Jurassic Park?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) In which year was it released?  
1993, 1996, 1997 or 1998?

\_\_\_\_\_

23) Name the child actors who starred in the following films:

a) ET

\_\_\_\_\_

b) The Parent Trap

\_\_\_\_\_





# WORDSEARCH

Find the words – time yourself!

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | B | N | C | B | K | Q | X | D | V |
| L | A | N | D | L | O | R | D | E | I |
| Q | E | U | P | B | D | S | U | P | A |
| G | R | U | B | S | R | E | S | O | S |
| W | I | P | C | K | E | E | X | S | L |
| R | O | O | M | J | R | L | N | I | F |
| C | F | T | E | N | A | N | T | T | O |
| V | A | P | A | R | T | M | E | N | T |
| M | O | R | T | G | A | G | E | J | Q |
| X | S | E | V | I | C | T | I | O | N |

APARTMENT

LANDLORD

ROOM

TENANT

DEPOSIT

MORTGAGE

RENT

EVICION





## Have you been moved or transferred?

We know women are often moved or transferred from prison to prison without any warning. You might have been working with Women in Prison in one prison and then are moved to another.

It is important for you to let us know if you have been transferred, so we can continue to give you support. We are not given information about where you are or whether you have been moved, and we don't have access to this information because we are independent from the CJS/Prison.

Please use this sheet to let us know if you have been moved and that you want to keep working with us. Tear it out and post it to:  
Women in Prison Freepost RSLB-UABE-TYRT  
Unit 10, The Ivories, 6 Northampton Street, London N1 2HY

Name:

Prison No:

Where you were:

Where you are now:

Your worker:

What we were supporting you with, if anything:

# WHAT DOES WOMEN IN PRISON BELIEVE?

# HOW DOES THAT INFLUENCE HOW WE WORK?

**Chris Tchaikovsky set up Women in Prison (WIP) over 30 years ago, after she had served a sentence in HMP Holloway. She lobbied tirelessly to improve conditions inside prison, to widen the knowledge and understanding of the judiciary about women affected by the criminal justice system, and to end the use of prison for all but a tiny minority of women.**

Chris said: "Taking the most hurt people out of society and punishing them in order to teach them how to live within society is, at best, futile. Whatever else a prisoner knows, she knows everything there is to know about punishment – because that is exactly what she has grown up with. Childhood sexual abuse, indifference, neglect – punishment is most familiar to her."

■ **Women in Prison** continues to campaign for a radical overhaul of female imprisonment. WIP aims to convince and demonstrate to policymakers that the majority of convicted women should serve sentences not behind bars, but in the community. They should remain close to home where their, often complex, needs can be properly addressed; recidivism ended and the connection with their children maintained.

■ **Women in Prison** recognises that every woman has her own assets and capabilities. These are valuable tools in making real and lasting changes to their lives, but they are too often undermined by the experience of prison.

■ **Women in Prison** is a women-only

organisation. It believes that the male and female experience of the criminal justice system has some similarities, but many more differences. Too often these differences, such as being a single parent and primary carer, fail to be properly acknowledged and understood, which adds to the punishment already exacted.

■ **Women in Prison** workers, inside and outside prison, endeavour to offer individual women a consistently professional relationship based on trust and mutual respect and kept within appropriate boundaries. Their aim is to work with women affected by the criminal justice system, so they can achieve the change they choose to make.

■ **Women in Prison** believes that most women pose no risk to the public and should not be incarcerated. For the very few who do, the design, location and regimes of our prisons are totally inadequate.

■ **Women in Prison** knows, from both research and experience, that prison is expensive and ineffective in breaking the cycle of crime.

■ **Women in Prison** believes that the most effective way to reduce women's offending is to deal with its root causes – which generally rest with gender inequalities and social injustice – in community alternatives.

**Women who come to WIP do so voluntarily. WIP is not part of the punitive system.**

# Got something to say?

If you need help, please contact us.  
We can visit you in prison or write to you, or meet up if you are released.

WRITE OR CALL FREE

Women in Prison

FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT

Unit 10, The Ivories

6 Northampton Street

London N1 2HY

National freephone advice line

0800 953 0125

[info@womeninprison.org.uk](mailto:info@womeninprison.org.uk)



Annie Mac

Benjamin Zephaniah

Feeling Good

HOME

HMP Holloway

WIP Campaigns

All Yours: Art & Stories

Stir It Up!

The Agony Aunts

Knitting

Jokes

Wordsearch

**WHAT YOU TELL US COUNTS!**

YOUR SAY IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO TELL US ABOUT WHAT YOU LIKE OR WHAT YOU DON'T LIKE; SUBJECTS, INTERVIEWS AND IDEAS YOU WANT TO SUGGEST; OR IF YOU'D LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAGAZINE, PLEASE WRITE TO:

**WOMEN IN PRISON**  
FREEPOST RSLB-UABE-TYRT  
UNIT 10, THE IVORIES,  
6 NORTHAMPTON ST,  
LONDON N1 2HY

**Coming in  
the next issue**

- Here's to your good health!

Tips, advice and an inside look at how to keep yourself together plus all RSG's regular features and your poetry, art and stories

+

**Interviews, Advice,  
Recipes, Jokes**

and all your own work