

# READY STEADY GO!

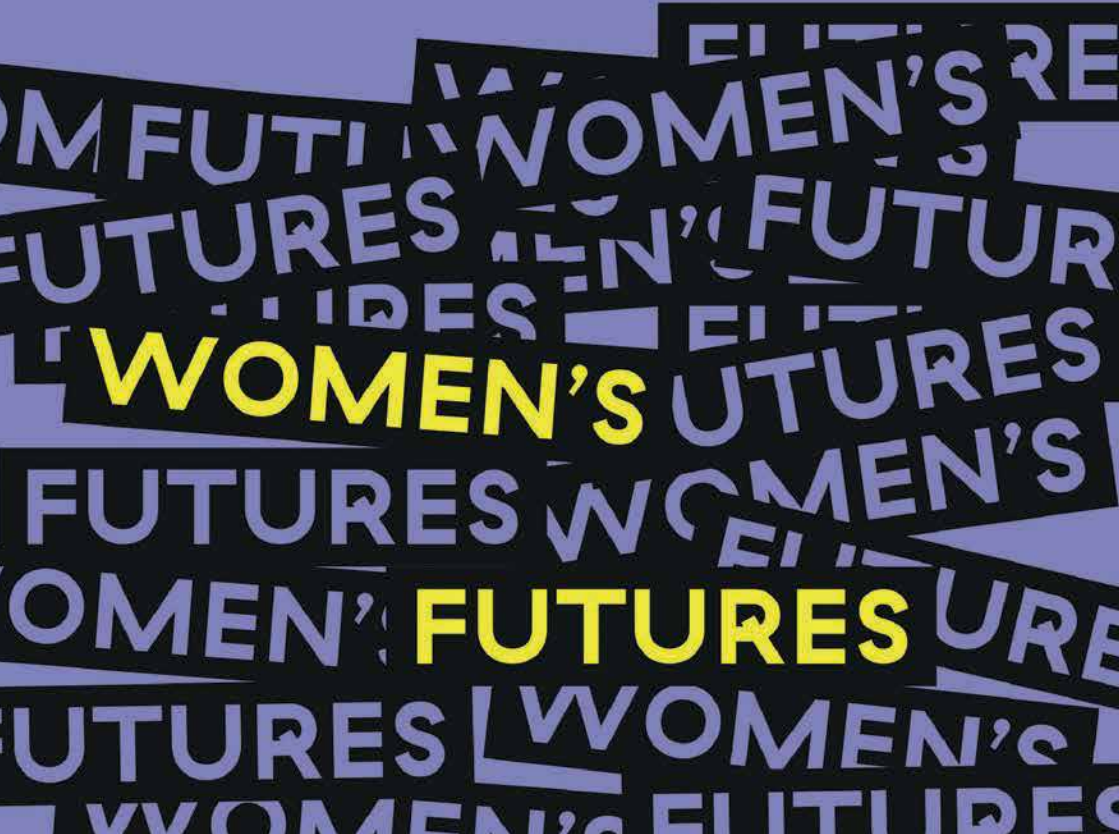
**WOMEN STUCK IN  
PRISON ON IPP  
SPEAK OUT!**

Actor Maxine Peake  
talks to WIP about activism  
and creating change

Top tips from women in  
HMP Styal on creating your  
own in-prison magazine

Know your rights!  
Using the appeals system

# #OPENUP



# Got something to say?

We want to hear from you and would love to publish your letters, opinions, articles, poems and artwork in this magazine.

Send your work to us for free.

On the envelope write:

**freepost WOMEN IN PRISON**

(In capitals - no need for a stamp)

Don't forget, to publish your work we also need you to complete and include a consent form – see page 65

# INSIDE

*Summer 2019 • Issue 13*

## MAIN FEATURES:

- 16 **Maxine Peake**
- 28 Clean Break Podcast
- 32 ***How To... Start A Magazine***
- 36 Peer Support & Focus Groups
- 40 *IPP - Women Speak Out!*
- 44 Influencing in prison
- 46 **Protest At Holloway**
- 54 Using Appeals
- 58 ***Council Tax***

## REGULARS:

- 5 Letter From Kate
- 10 ***Str8 Up!*** The news that matters to you
- 20 **All Yours**
- 62 *Wordsearch*
- 65 **Consent Form**
- 66 What WIP believes

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# About Women in Prison

Women in Prison (WIP) is a national charity founded by a former prisoner, Chris Tchaikovsky in 1983. Today, we provide support and advice in prisons and run three community women's centres - the Beth Centre in Lambeth, London, the Women's Support Centre in Woking, Surrey and WomenMATTA in Manchester.

WIP campaigns to reduce the number of women in prison and for the greater use of sentencing in the community alongside significant investment in support services for women so they can address issues such as trauma, addiction, mental health, substance misuse, domestic

violence, debt and homelessness. These are factors that are often the reasons why women come into contact with the criminal justice system in the first place.

WIP's services are by and for women. The support available varies from prison to prison and depends on where a woman lives in the community. If WIP can't help because of a constraint on its resources, it endeavours to direct women to other charities and organisations that can. WIP believes that a national network of women's centres, properly funded, that provide holistic support, is the most effective and just way to reduce the numbers of women coming before the courts and re-offending.

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## WIP's services include...

- Visits in some women's prisons
- Targeted "through the gate" support for women about to be released from prison
- Support for women in the community via our women's centres in London, Woking and Manchester

- A Freephone line and Freepost address for women who wish to contact Women in Prison

- Magazine groups in several women's prisons, with plans to expand further in order to provide women with a channel for their opinions, a way to exercise their rights as active citizens, and an outlet for their creativity.

- RSG! A magazine written by and for women affected by the criminal justice system

- 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.

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## Got something to say?

Please contact Women in Prison at the FREEPOST address below. Please also send a consent form turn to P65 for details

### Write or call free:

Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON  
National freephone line  
0800 953 0125  
info@wipuk.org

WOMEN IN PRISON  
2ND FLOOR,  
ELMFIELD HOUSE  
5 STOCKWELL MEWS  
LONDON  
SW9 9GX  
TEL: 0207 359 6674.

### 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.



# T

his magazine is the first of two special editions dedicated to the ways that you are making change happen - not only in your own lives but in the whole system of justice. Some highlights include an interview with the brilliant actor Maxine Peake and an article based on the words of women in important research from the Griffins Society on those serving Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPP). We also celebrate the incredible success of 'Off the Cuff' the new prison magazine from Styal and the talent and hard work of all in-prison magazine and newsletter groups. You can read about WIP's new campaign #OPENUP Women's Futures which calls for a reduction in the number of women in prison and for more investment in Women's Centres and other community support services. Women in Prison was founded 35 years ago by Chris Tchaikovsky, who had spent time in HMP Holloway, and also by Professor Pat Carlen. Since then one of our core beliefs is that real change will only come when women who have experienced the system lead the calls for a different way. This is more important now than ever before, because - as this edition shows - it is your experiences, ideas and energy which will shape a new system of justice that works for everyone.



Kate

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WOMEN IN PRISON

The magazine you are reading is free for all women affected by the criminal justice system in the UK. We send copies 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 at [Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON info@wipuk.org](mailto:Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON info@wipuk.org)

Editor Claire Cain Art direction & production Henry Obasi & Russell Moorcroft @PPaint

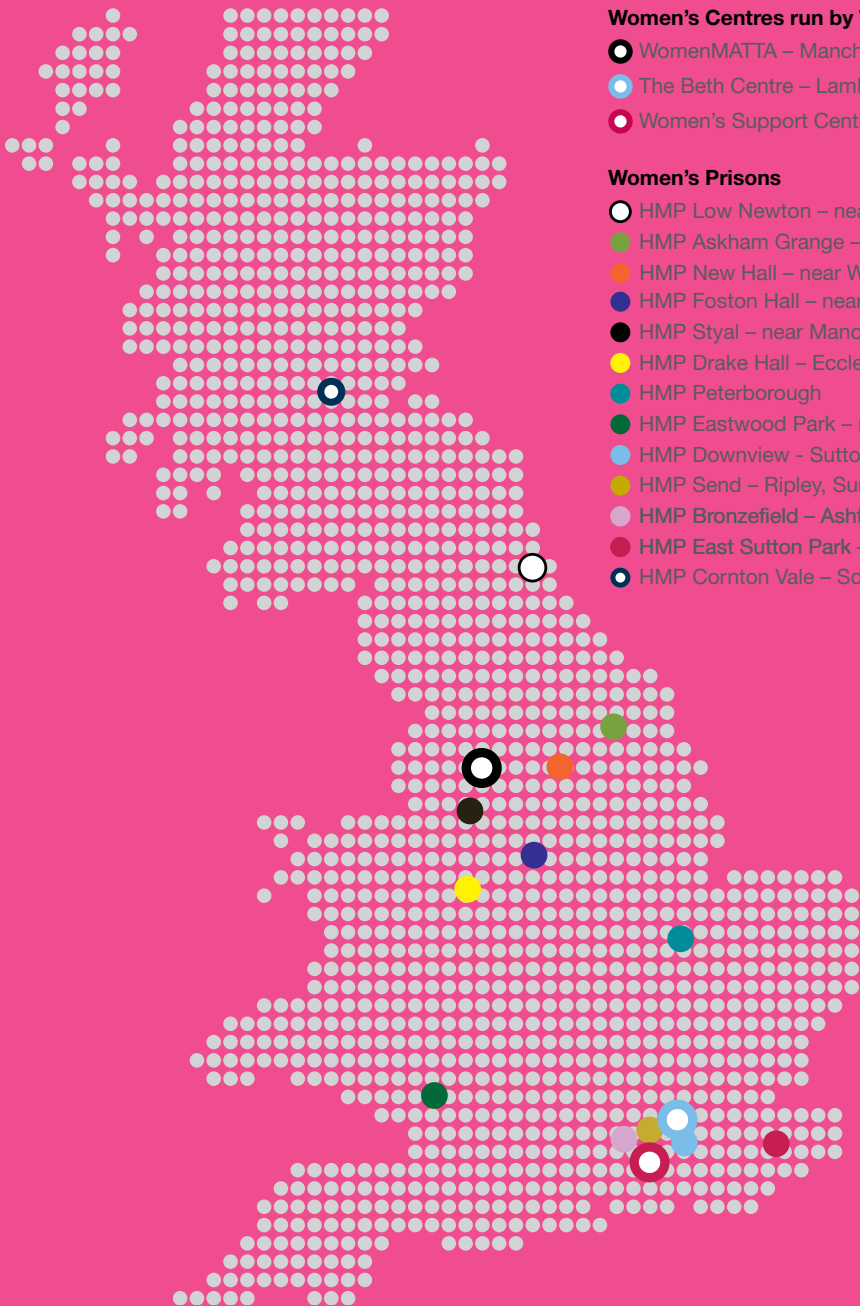
Chief sub-editor Martine Lignon Production Advisor Yvonne Roberts

#### Funding



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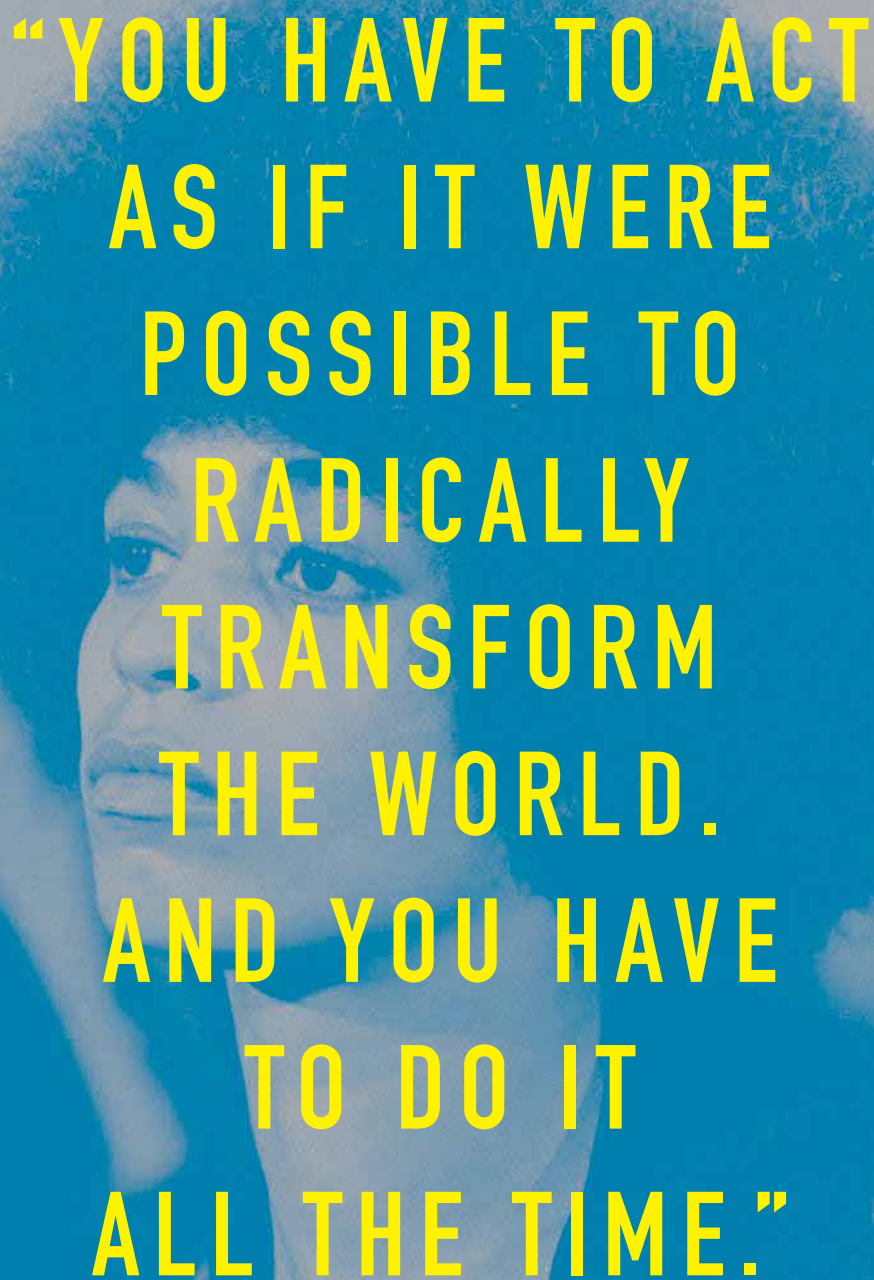


### Women's Centres run by WIP

- WomenMATTA – Manchester
- The Beth Centre – Lambeth, London
- Women's Support Centre – Woking, Surrey

### Women's Prisons

- HMP Low Newton – near 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 Downview - Sutton Surrey
- HMP Send – Ripley, Surrey
- HMP Bronzefield – Ashford, Surrey
- HMP East Sutton Park – Maidstone, Kent
- HMP Cornton Vale – Scotland



**“YOU HAVE TO ACT  
AS IF IT WERE  
POSSIBLE TO  
RADICALLY  
TRANSFORM  
THE WORLD.  
AND YOU HAVE  
TO DO IT  
ALL THE TIME.”**

**ANGELA DAVIS**

In February 2019,  
inspired by 16-year-old  
activist Greta Thunberg, more  
than **10,000 school children** across  
the UK went on strike to protest  
lack of government action to  
combat our climate crisis and  
over 50,000 participated  
again in March.

After mounting  
pressure from campaigners  
like 19-year-old **Amika George**,  
the UK Government announced  
its plans to introduce free  
sanitary products in all  
secondary schools and  
colleges in England!



In March this year, **Sisters Uncut** took to the London Underground and posted poems by women and non-binary people who have experienced the brunt of government cuts and hostile environment policies. The group distributed over 300 in total!

In 2018, the Mayor of London unveiled the first and only statue of a female leader outside Parliament following a successful campaign by feminist activist and writer **Caroline Criado Perez**! The statue of the Suffragist Millicent Fawcett features her holding a banner with the words "Courage Calls To Courage Everywhere" and marks 100 years since the first women won the right to vote in the UK.

# STR8 UP!

NEWS AND VIEWS

THIS ISSUE

- #OPENUP CAMPAIGN LAUNCH
- THE NEW MANIFESTO
- QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK

#OPENUP

MANIFESTO



# New Campaign Launch

**W**omen in Prison's Campaigns & Public Affairs Manager Claire Cain introduces our new campaign branding, which was developed alongside women affected by the criminal justice system in prison and in Women's Centres.

Over several months Women in Prison has been developing new branding for our core campaign to significantly reduce the women's prison population and for investment in Women's Centres and other community-based support services.

Last year marked 100 years since the first women won the right to vote, after an incredible campaign led by the Suffragettes. WIP was involved in lots of events to celebrate this anniversary and we all learned a lot about the campaigning strategy and tactics of the Suffragettes. They were the absolute experts on branding - the green, white and violet colours and slogans such as 'Deeds Not Words' were everywhere and instantly recognisable as the campaign for votes for women. Inspired by these pioneering campaigners we decided to 'up our game' and strengthen the look of our campaign to raise its profile so we can be as successful in our ambition to reduce the women's prison population.

To create this branding, we held a series of workshops in prisons and in Women's Centres to discuss ideas for a title, logo, the colours and overall style. We listed the words and images that we liked, and words and images that we didn't think sent the right message and wouldn't encourage new supporters to join our campaign. We worked with the feminist design agency Taking Up Space to create this new identity and they taught us about the process of developing a brand. We learnt how to think about branding as a personality type. This involves thinking about a personality that matches with the audience you want to reach, thinking about what that 'person' likes to do, likes to wear, which colours they like, and then applying those ideas to your branding. For example, Nike has the personality type of someone who is young, athletic, full of energy, competitive, cool which is reflected in their slogan 'Just Do It' and the sweeping tick logo. The soap Dove has a brand personality-type of someone pure and wholesome - think Julie Andrews. A woman over 25 who is ethical and likes simplicity, which again is reflected in their logo, choice of colours, packaging and advertising strategy.

So how did our #OPENUP Women's Futures campaign branding come about? We decided our personality type was a politically engaged feminist woman who was hopeful and believed in the possibility of change. We decided to create something that would work well on social media, would be attention grabbing not too over complicated, included repetition, focused on action and had bold, bright colours. The focus is on alternatives to prison and we thought about words such as open, free, potential, future, change, justice, transformation.

The #OPENUP campaign is about women opening up, speaking out and having our voices heard, it's about opening up potential, opportunities, the support services women need, new Women's Centres and Women's Futures.

On the next page you can find our new Manifesto for this campaign which includes our top 10 solutions which the government, local authorities and other power holders need to act on in order to reduce the women's prison population.

We want to hear from you - what do you think about the branding, do you support the #OPENUP Women's Futures campaign. What do you think about the Manifesto?

**Write to us: Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON**

## WHO IS TAKING UP SPACE?

■ Taking Up Space use design to transform society, so that it works for all women. We run design-based projects with women's organisations, and directly with women and girls across London with the aim of building a fairer, better connected society that meets the needs of all women. We are a not-for-profit, women-led organisation. Find out more: [www.takingupspace.org](http://www.takingupspace.org)

**STR8 UP!**

# Together we can

**#OPENUP women's futures in every community. Become global leaders and set an international example in how to reduce the human and financial cost of imprisonment and create healthier, safer communities.**

**#OPENUP pathways away from criminal justice interventions. Prevent women affected by abuse, childhood trauma, mental ill-health, addiction, poverty, homelessness and inequality from entering the criminal justice system.**

**#OPENUP the support services women need. Invest and grow the UK's unique network of specialist women's centres that are proven to be more effective than prison at addressing the root causes of offending.**

**#OPENUP opportunities for women and their children. Build a system enabling those who have experienced the harm of prison to have access to housing and support to rebuild and move forward with their lives.**

# 10 SOLUTIONS TO #OPENUP WOMEN'S FUTURES

**1** Use the **£80m** received by HM Treasury from the sale of Holloway prison to deliver the Ministry of Justice's women's strategy.

**2** For every local authority area to have a **women's centre**.

**3** A **trauma-informed diversion programme** in every police force so women can be referred into community support.

**4** Significantly **reduce the use of remand** in prison.

**5** An end to prison sentences relating to the punishment of debt including **non-payment of council tax and TV license**.

**6** A legal presumption against **short prison sentences**.

**7** When sentencing primary carers ensure alternatives to custody are used to **minimise the harm to children**.

**8** All those serving **indeterminate sentences of imprisonment for public protection (IPP)** (abolished in 2012) are given a release date and intensive support to rebuild their lives.

**9** For every women's prison to have **'Women's Centre Link Workers'** so that women can build trusting relationships to prepare for life after release.

**10** An end to **'Post Sentence Supervision'** to reduce recall to prison and shift the focus from supervision to support.

# Have Your Say! Feedback and your ideas for this magazine.

BY CLAIRE CAIN, WIP'S CAMPAIGNS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER

In the previous edition of this magazine we invited you to have your say and give us your ideas and feedback about what you like or don't like about this magazine and how we can improve it. Thank you to all of you who completed the questionnaire. Here is a round-up of some of your ideas.

## THIS IS WHAT WE LEARNED:

Most of you find the magazine in the library. In some prisons this is the only place the magazine is available, which is a problem as not everyone goes to the library. Some prisons seem to be placing the magazine in education too.

Overall you would like the magazine to be published more regularly and to know the publication date. You think the magazine needs to be better promoted around the prison and on the wings.

Overall you were really positive about the magazine and felt there was a good variety of articles and activities.

You would like to see many more real life stories written by women themselves. This was feedback from most of you.

Our readers really enjoy the poems and crafting ideas and tips. You would like there to be more of this. You would like more craft ideas for prison rooms, and hair and beauty ideas.

A few of you mentioned that you would like there to be more puzzles and other interactive activities e.g. writing and artwork competitions that you can enter.

Some topics you would like us to cover included information about older women, Women's Centres, and employment for wom-

What would you like to see in future editions of the magazine?

1 2 3 4

How

Do you  
advise

We would  
please

Please  
design

34 READY STEADY GO!

# HAVE YOUR SAY!

Complete this pull-out questionnaire and return to Women in Prison before Friday 14th December 2018 for your chance to win a prize and to help shape this magazine.

READY STEADY GO! 31

...of the magazine which was a health and well-being special and also a few questions from our friends. The Reading Agency, on reading and using the library.

All respondents will be entered into a prize draw with one 1st place winner receiving £20 and three runners up receiving an adult colouring book. We must receive your questionnaire by Friday 14th December in order to be entered into the draw (the four prizes will be sent out in January 2019).

32 READY STEADY GO!

Did you find out how/wh

1 2 3 4

Did it make you feel em  
about your health?

1 2 3 4

Was there anything you

...naire pages from the

otions and have your say complete every answer details below – this issuers are still really contact details but we you into the prize draw on

and send to Women in st address (see below) the WIP team. Prison for free write **IN PRISON** on the ed a stamp.

hout these details we ou into the prize draw)

if relevant):

READY STEADY GO! 31

WOMEN CENTRE (if relevant):

CONTACT EMAIL or PHONE NUMBER (if you are in the community or being released before 14th December 2018):

Please note we may use some of your comments in funding bids and our Annual Report to help us keep the magazine going. Please tick here if you DO NOT want us to publish your comments – we will not use your name, just the comment.

didn't like? Please explain:



FIND YOUR COPY IN THE PRISON LIBRARY

# STR8 UP!



READY STEADY GO! 35

en affected by the criminal justice system.

Many of you liked having updates about changes to the prison and criminal justice system. You think there could be more articles about knowing your rights and the rules around IEP and ROTL for instance. You also wanted tips on other aspects of prison life such as living with others in a shared room.

You found that the information and contact details for different support services and advice given in the magazine was helpful.

There was a mixed opinion about the title of the magazine, either people thought it was OK or they strongly disliked it. You felt it didn't really relate to people in prison. In terms of ideas for a new magazine title, you suggested something positive and the word 'voices' came up a lot - especially 'women's voices'.

You all seemed to really like the look and style of the magazine, the colours and design. You thought we should think more carefully about the cover - something bold or maybe using more of your artwork to help attract attention and showcase the great content inside. There was positive feedback about the current size and shape of the magazine.

### WE WILL CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR FUNDING FOR THE MAGAZINE, BUT IN THE MEANTIME:

- We will aim to have a more regular publication date. We are only able to deliver three editions a year but we will work on them arriving more consistently.
- We will work on promotion in the prisons and try to ensure the magazine is available in more places than the library. You can help us with this by asking staff to place the magazine around the prison. We are considering supplying posters too, with each delivery, to be put up in the wings to let you know the magazine is in.
- We will definitely publish more real life stories and interviews with women about their experiences, challenges and success stories.
- We will include more puzzles, crafting and other activities for you to do including ideas for your rooms, hair and beauty.
- We will continue to publish updates on changes to the prison and criminal justice system. We will look into more guidance on specific areas of the prison system, such as accessing ROTL and a feature on 'knowing your rights'.
- We will give more thought to the cover design. We had considered putting the magazine back to A4 size (it used to be this size), but in response to your feedback we will keep to this size.
- We will consider options for changing the name of the magazine so do send any ideas to our FREEPOST address by the end of July.

“IF YOU CAN SAY SOMETHING THAT STRIKES A CHORD WITH SOMEBODY, IT GETS PEOPLE TO ENGAGE”

WIP staff members [Jodie Beck](#) and [Hareem Ghani](#) sit down with renowned actor and political activist [Maxine Peake](#). Among her many roles are Twinkle in *Dinnerladies* and Veronica Ball in *Shameless*. She reflects on her transformation from a dungaree-wearing misfit in working class Bolton to one of Britain’s most distinguished actors.





**I** DON'T THINK I WAS EVER interested in acting," Maxine Peake says surprisingly, "I was just interested in showing off." And she laughs. "I grew up in..." she hesitates, "Can I say single parent family? My dad left my mum, my mum worked in a clothes shop, my dad was a lorry driver. My parents split up when I was eight." Maxine moved from Bolton to London at 21 to become an actor. "I think my mum was worried. Nobody knew anyone in the business and everybody tells you how risky it is [as a career]."

Maxine recounts an early memory from when she auditioned for Richard Eyre, the film, theatre and television director. He was responsible for awarding an annual scholarship to a working-class student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA). "I remember him saying to me, "If you don't get awarded the scholarship, what will you do?" and I remember retorting "I guess I'll have to rob a bank." The following afternoon, Maxine received a call from Eyre to tell her that she had been awarded the scholarship beating 20 other students. "My mum cried for days", Maxine remembers fondly, "She kept saying, "I'm just going to go for a walk" and then she'd come back crying. I didn't think she was that bothered, you know, we never really talked about these things."

Maxine is a breath of fresh air for someone in a high-profile position in that she speaks to the political realities and the prejudice faced by many growing up in working class families across the country. "People tend to hear your northern accent, see that you're a woman and expect you're very limited in what you can do" she says with contempt. "People would be quite rude to me and say, "You know the

character in this script is quite educated so she wouldn't talk like you." I'd reply, "That's nonsense!" Asked how she navigates stereotypes in the industry, Maxine replies, "I was determined to show I could do other things...so that shaped my career. I think, I've always gone "I've done that role before, so I don't really want to go back and do that same part again." Recently, the 44-year-old actor was lauded for her powerful performance in Julia Leigh's adaptation of her powerful memoir, *Avalanche: A Love Story*. In an excerpt from the Barbican website, the actor was described as "Constantly looking for new challenges and surprising audiences... [with] a range of provocative and award-winning characters."

Maxine doesn't like to allude to her celebrity status. A quick glance at her social media, for example, shows her retweeting a Labour Party councillor, the Working Class Movement Library and, surprise surprise, Women in Prison (for which Maxine is an ambassador). Maxine is an activist who spends much of her days campaigning for different charities or walking her dog Castro (yes, named after the Cuban revolutionary Fidel Castro). She is determined to use her popularity to advance conversations addressing crippling injustices. "This country is riddled with inequality", she says, "Especially in my profession, it's riddled with classists, it's ridiculous." "Don't get me wrong," she laughs, "it's great to do my job; you get to kiss good-looking boys and get paid for it, can't complain. But you do sometimes go, why, what is this role saying to people?" When Jodie presses her on the role of television in modern society, Maxine is quick to suggest the media can act as a means for

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political education. “We desperately need to change the narrative on screen”, she remarks, “it has such an influence on people, tele and film... the more you go to people’s homes with stories [that explore] gender, diversity, the more you can open people’s eyes to a different narrative.”

In 2013, the actor did exactly that with her dramatic re-telling of Annie Scargill’s attempt to occupy a coal mine during the 1980s Miners’ Strike, along with three other women. In a comment to the Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre some years later, she said that Queens of the Coal Age was an attempt to shine a light on the bravery and determination of these women. “Protest is more potent than ever” she argued, “It’s about getting out there and facing your oppressors, being visible. It’s not always about winning the struggle, but it’s about stemming the flow. We need to show them that we are still here. We still have a fight in us and we won’t roll over”.

It’s no surprise then that the actor is so popular amongst individuals like Jodie who grew up in former-industrial communities. “I’d say my grandfather was very active - always in meetings, demos, strike action, supporting the miners. So we had people from all round coming to the house.” She speaks of her grandfather with great-affection and credits him for opening her eyes, “He was my step grandad...but I had this amazing bond with him and when I was in my mid-teens, like 14, 15, I went to live with him for a little

bit. “My dad was the opposite side of the political spectrum” she says, “We had many arguments but I’m very blessed to have my grandfather.” She recounts an early memory, “He was a bit worried about me. He said, whatever you do, don’t mention your politics else you won’t get very far with acting.”


Asked about the complexities that might arise from her public persona as an actor and her private persona as a political organiser, she says, “It’s who I am! If I wasn’t acting, I’d still be as engaged. I know some people say actors

should just keep their mouth shut [and]... I do get criticised but we’re allowed our opinion”. “It’s so tough,” she adds. “They keep saying we’re living in the best times, crime’s down, that’s down, this is down, but it doesn’t feel like that to me when I walk around the streets of Manchester and see

homelessness. People are struggling and life is very difficult and sometimes you can close yourself off

and become very closed off to what is happening around you. So if you can say something that strikes a chord with somebody, at least it gets people to engage.”

So what prompted Maxine to become an ambassador for Women in Prison? “I remember years ago seeing a documentary on Holloway,” she replies. “I remember being so moved. The criminal justice system has always been stacked against women. I just want these women to know that you aren’t being judged in the way the media often judges. There are people out there who care.”



**“This country is riddled with inequality.”**

# ALL YOURS!

PAINTINGS, POEMS,  
STORIES & MORE  
— ALL BY YOU

---

**“ANY  
FORM OF  
ART IS A  
FORM OF  
POWER;  
IT HAS  
IMPACT,  
IT CAN  
AFFECT  
CHANGE  
– IT CAN  
NOT ONLY  
MOVE US,  
IT MAKES  
US MOVE.”**

**OSSIE  
DAVIS**

---

## I WAS A CHILD A WHILE AGO

By Leanne,  
Women's Support Centre (Woking)

I was a child a while ago  
If you can call it that anyway  
Everyone's brought up  
Different I know  
I wasn't happy or was I?  
I don't even know  
But I was a child a while ago

Mummy I wasn't blind  
I saw them needles  
Above your bed  
Where you always laid your head  
You took a bath for hours  
We never did go swimming..  
It's okay Mummy  
Daddy does it too  
I just really miss you  
And I hate your lies  
Please get help Mum  
You're going to lose

I was an addict a while ago  
I thought it would help take my tears away  
I thought it made things easy  
And I forgot the day  
I thought wrong but..  
I was an addict a while ago

If I don't attend SMART religiously  
I slip back to the old me  
I don't like her much  
I don't like her at all  
I have the Women's Centre by my side

And that helps me achieve and  
Stay the Mum I wanna be  
Everyone's different but it's up to you  
And what you want to do  
You have a choice like I do  
I like being sober because  
That's truly me

I was a parent a while ago  
That makes me happy  
That makes me glow  
My boys needs me  
They are my drug now  
I chose you over everything  
that makes me down  
I am a parent and  
I stand strong

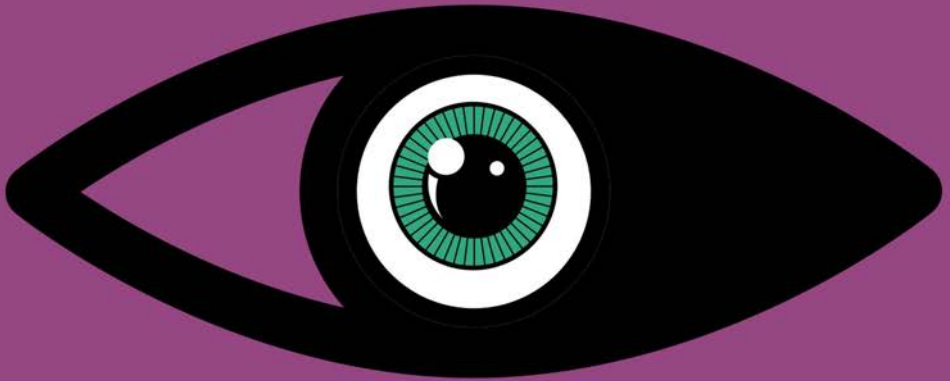
Don't be an addict  
It is so wrong  
It hurts your children more than you know  
When they're sitting in their room  
To never know  
What's behind the door  
What's behind the cough  
Please be happiness Mummy  
I don't want you to have an ouch  
I love you deeply and I need  
You too  
Please don't be selfish  
I know you need me too  
Don't lose me it will destroy you more  
Don't forget I need my Mummy more.

---

## THE NARCISSIST

*By Marlene, Women's Support Centre (Woking)*

Hey hey look at me  
My life is so perfect  
Oh can't you see??  
Behind my perfect white teeth,  
Lies nothing but deception,  
EVIL, Jealousy & GREEN!!  
I Am No follower,  
I Am No sheep,  
My power games do not stop,  
In my dreams, when i sleep!!



I PREY on MY Victims  
Usually gentle at heart,  
With no suspicion, i step forward,  
Unguarded, defenceless  
I RIP them Apart!!  
Slowly i watch  
What once was a queen  
With so many dreams,  
LOSE EVERYTHING she loves,  
To MY ABUSE & GASLIGHTING!!  
She WILL bend to my rules,  
She WILL do as she's told,  
For I am the groomer  
& Her 'My jelly mould!!'  
Occasionally I'll "love" her  
Buy her flowers and "Stuff"  
She is playing my game,  
In which she is the pawn,  
For I Am the NARCISSIST,  
& this is "MY NORM"



## SORRY!

*By Nessa, Women's Support Centre (Woking)*

Sorry!

I can't carry on, my heart has stopped  
Where my heart should be, there's a hole  
The more I love, the more I hurt  
I'm sorry I can't feel love anymore  
I hurt the ones, I love the most  
Thinking of dying is the only way, I feel.  
It'll stop the pain I'm feeling now  
And in time the ones that love me  
Won't hurt as much when I'm gone  
As I'd be happy looking down  
Caring from above, away from pain  
As up above pain's not there  
I just don't want to hurt no-more  
Sorry is such a short word  
But that is the only one I think of now  
As life down here has sorrow and pain  
And up above is love and joy  
Be happy for me and not sorrow  
As I'll be with you in your heart  
Where I will be in your memories  
I will see you one day, free of all negatives  
I'm sorry again that it went this way  
But I did this for a reason, and that's me  
Sorry I couldn't stay  
Sorry again for all the pain  
Love you more than words can say  
Your mum, sister, daughter, lover and friend  
SORRY



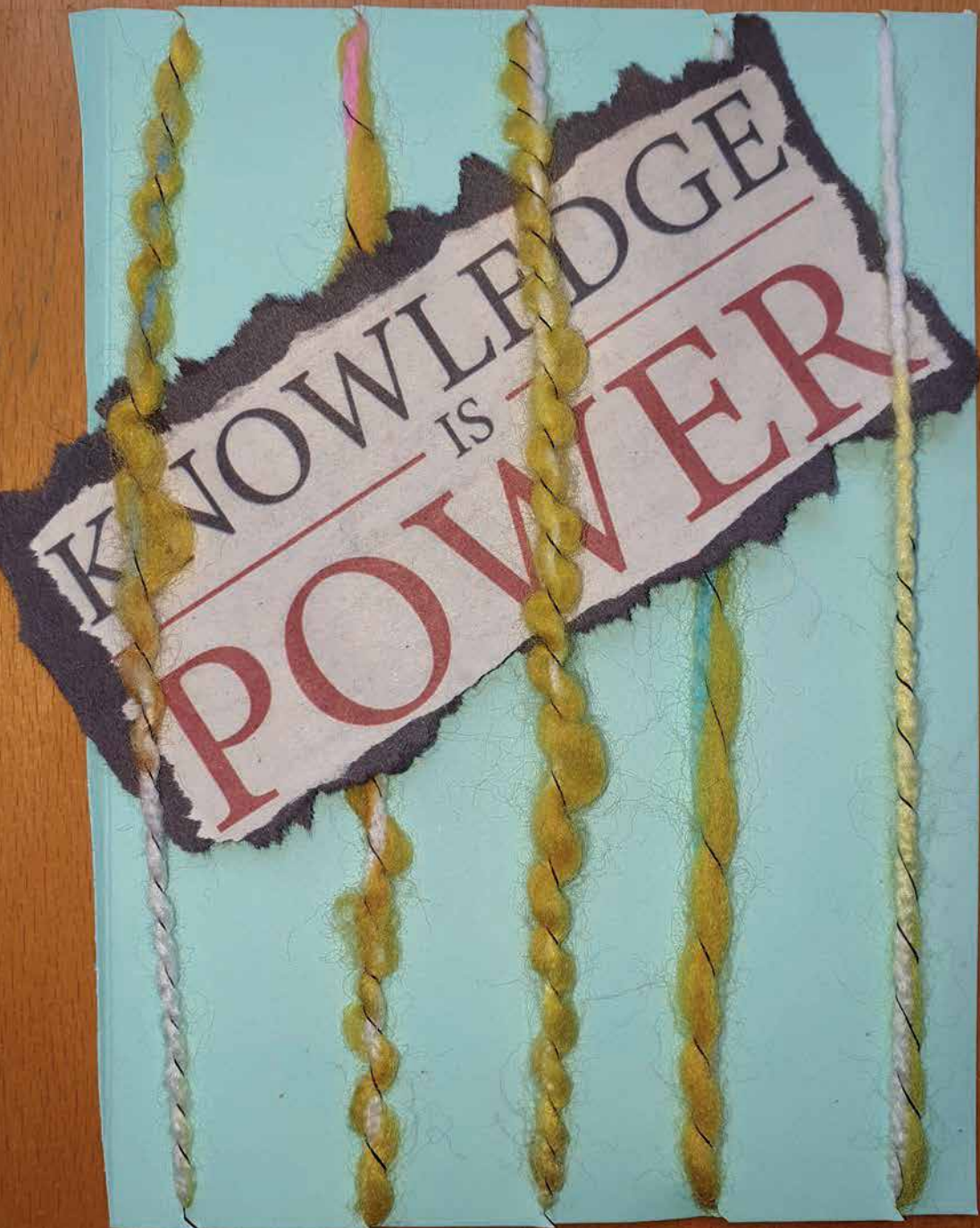
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## NEXT CHAPTER

*By Nessa, Women's Support Centre (Woking)*

I can carry on, my heart is still beating  
Where my heart is, there are some scars  
The more I feel the love, more positive I become  
You get hurt in love sometimes, it's a learning curve  
You still hurt the ones you love,  
they forgive and you move on  
Thinking of dying now is NOT on the cards.  
My feelings are true and still hurt  
These make me who I am now.  
If I'm gone I know it's not just me  
Life is teaching me for others.  
I'm on this earth to help people  
Understand mental health is REAL.  
Life on earth still has pain and sorrow  
The scars are healing and start to feel.  
I'm happy for me as sorrow will not have the winning hand  
As I have fight in my heart, from the memories I stored.  
I will say hi to you one day up there above  
My Mum, Nan, friend & foe.  
More positive this time round,  
My negatives are a stepping stone  
Freedom to live life, knowing I'm no way perfect.  
To learn and grow with wisdom  
And not turning back and to explore with wiser views  
I'm sorry I never listened more  
I'm happier that I'm not alone.





KNOWLEDGE  
IS  
POWER

“They cannot annihilate what we carry in our hearts and minds: This vision of an elsewhere, or the memory of a bird. How many poets and revolutionaries discovered freedom in a cell?”

**Jackie Wang**

# CLEAN BREAK LAUNCH FIRST PODCAST SERIES

**T**HE NEW PODCAST HAS BEEN CREATED AND recorded by Clean Break members and delves deeper into the themes from their production *Thick As Thieves* – a tense, revealing play which explores what it means to care for one another and asks who, in a time of increasing disconnect, we expect to look after us.

The podcasts were created after a week of intensive workshops hosted by digital artist and podcast producer Milly Chowles and theatre artist Rania Jumaily. During this week Clean Break members delved deeper into the issues which arose from *Thick As Thieves* and also learned recording and producing skills.

There are three episodes which follow the themes of *Sisterhood, Damage and Blood*, each of which is comprised of poetry, personal writing, interviews and discussion. All episodes are now available for download.

Clean Break is a women's theatre company changing lives and changing minds – on stage, in prison and in the community. [www.cleanbreak.org.uk](http://www.cleanbreak.org.uk)



# Clean Break Member Natasha shares her experience of producing a podcast.

**J**UST WANT TO START BY SAYING hello to whoever is reading this and that I don't really know what I'm gonna write or what you're gonna end up reading if I'm honest!

I've been asked by Clean Break to write about my experience of making the podcast, which I was excited about when I was first asked but now I've just sat down to write it (I have to hand it in today) and I'm thinking... AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! I can't write it! What am I gonna write? How will I ever write

400 words? Do I have to count every word?

Will they count every word? Why have they even asked me?

AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

I feel vulnerable,

**"It's been  
a journey I've  
learnt loads from  
and feel really  
proud of."**



knowing this is going to be read. Feelings of being unworthy and not good enough are coming to the surface and I'm imagining scenarios in my mind where I write something and then everyone hates me for it and they highlight the errors of my life and my spellings .....FYI I have an inner drama queen who loves to tell me how bad I am and all the things that could possibly go wrong and the only way I've learnt to calm her down is by sharing what's going on in my mind with others so I hope you don't mind me sharing it with you!

And you know, I felt exactly the same when making the podcast. I'd listened to podcasts before and knew the basics: people talk and then people listen. But that was the problem. I get scared of being heard and I find it hard to listen. So I really didn't think the podcast thing was gonna be for me. But actually I'm really grateful to have been able to take part and it's been a journey I learnt loads from and feel really proud of.

I think what I enjoyed most was getting to know the women I was working with better. I interviewed Diana for the podcast (which you can listen to on episode 3) and it was such a privilege to just sit down with this fascinating woman and ask her about her life, her passions, her dreams. I'm so happy Diana's 'Art in Your Blood' interview has been captured, she has a truly compelling voice and I'm so proud to have been part of the process in

having her voice heard.

I also want to mention Milly the amazing broadcaster, producer, DJ that guided us through this project. This podcast was her idea and the passion she had for her craft was truly inspiring as were the empathy and patience she had when working with us.

I really hope you listen to the podcast and maybe you might be inspired to make one of your own one day? If you did want to make one I'm gonna give you a quick step by step guide line on how to make one...

## WHAT IS A PODCAST?

Podcasts are everywhere, on every topic available. There is something for everyone, from politics or mental health to history, comedy or life coaching. Podcasts are like radio but open to anyone to create, say what you want and put up on the internet for people to hear. They are a true form of freedom of speech and a great way to gain support for your campaign or for issues not being talked about in the mainstream media.

- Find a topic you would like to discuss.
- Find others who would like to go on this journey with you.
- Choose a name for your show.
- Decide who you would like to host it.... maybe it's you?
- Record you podcast.
- Edit your podcast.
- Send your podcast, your voice, your opinions, your laughter, your tears, your love into the world. We need you.



# HOW TO... START A MAGAZINE IN PRISON

**H**ello from the editorial team at OFF THE CUFF – HMP Styal’s very own magazine, written by women in prison for women in prison. An officer recently advised, ‘It’s not up to us to provide you with information, it’s up to you to find it out.’ So, we’ve decided to do just that: creating from scratch a beautiful magazine that brings together voices from across our community to inspire, entertain and inform.

Over the last 10 months we’ve worked hard to make our vision a reality. Our second issue is about to go to print and the next one is almost full. How did we do it? Good question. We’re not sure ourselves but we’re here to share what we’ve learnt on the way.

## First Steps First

Eventually, you’re going to need support and interest from all parts of your prison’s

community. But get started by discussing the idea with your friends, people on the wing, and in your workplace. The first and most important step is to find a group of like-minded women who care about the project.

Once you’ve got a team together, you’ll need to reach out to an organisation or individuals who can give you space and time to meet regularly. This might be Women In Prison or a similar organisation that works in your prison.

## Eyes On The Prize

Ideally, the team can start meeting once a week to start discussing the magazine and bringing a first issue together. In the early stages, it’s worth asking yourselves some crucial questions:

- What are you aiming to achieve with a magazine?
- How can your magazine help your readers?
- What are your strengths

as a group (forget any weaknesses for now!)?

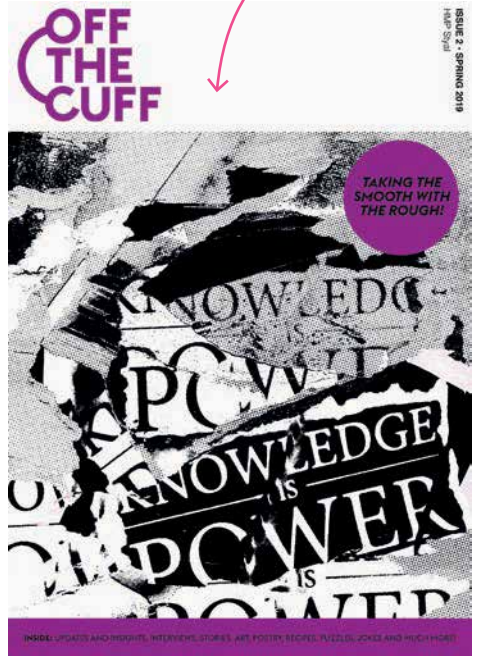
- Where do you see the project in a year’s time? In five year’s time?
- Who are your supporters: colleagues, staff, volunteers?

Answering these questions will help you decide on how to organise things going forward and help see you through any difficulties. Write up your answers as a Mission Statement – you can use this when approaching staff and organisations for support.

## And Ears To The Ground

Now you’d better start gathering material for your first issue. Keep searching for current issues and hot topics in the community, as well as for anyone you think could contribute writing or art. The Education department, especially >>





OFF CUFF #1 | SUCCESS STORIES FROM 17/18

## Self Esteem and Confidence Course a Big Success!

Here at HMP Stylal a new course has been developed and successfully run. Laura Emsley, Achieve community case manager, created the Self-Esteem and Confidence course and with the support of Joanne Hughes, custody case manager at Stylal, the course has now been running for the past 4 months.



The course lasts for five weeks and each week covers a different topic with a range of exercises and discussions for the women to engage in. The sessions are for two hours, split into two sections. Each hour we work through workbooks and the second hour we complete a creative exercise related to the course.

The sessions develop understanding of self-esteem, what impacts our self-esteem, mental health, body image and the media. It also looks at assertiveness and how to improve self-esteem and confidence. The creative exercises consist of decorating gratitude journals, painting your own positive affirmation canvases and making bracelets. We end the course with a self-care party, where the women can paint their nails and they each get presented with a certificate.

We asked some of the women for each what they learnt about the course, asking what they enjoyed or took with them:

*"The course helped me to open my eyes and realise I'm amazing. I'm just like everyone else I'm a unique person too. I came into the course self-hating to how being me for me."*

*"I have really enjoyed the Achieve self-esteem art group. It is very difficult to keep up morale in prison and this course is really helpful. I have learnt loads in this course and would definitely do it again."*

*"I've found this course really helpful. I've gained confidence, received helpful advice. Really good! I attended it. I will use all the info I have gained. Thank you for the opportunity."*

**For more information please speak to Jo Hughes in the Women's Centre.**




English and Art classes, plus any creative workshops that run in your prison, are excellent places to start. We've been amazed by how many incredible people have been ready to share extraordinary stories with us.

You might find people willing and able to write their own pieces for your magazine, but it's also important to keep in mind those who aren't confident expressing themselves on the page for whatever reason. If they want to share their story then it's up to you to make that happen. Note down what they want to say and help them shape this into a piece. There are masterpieces out there - you just need to find them!

## Raise Your Profile

The magazine needs to become a visible part of your community. Get posters up around the prison promoting the project and set up a drop-in point or a box where people can leave contributions.

The most important thing is mentioning the project to everybody you meet – staff, prisoners, visitors. You never know who might be able to help out.

## The Practicalities

Essential electronic tools are, of course, subject to strict security restrictions in our backward little 'village'. Hopefully you'll have found a staff member who is

able to support the project in some way – or knows somebody who could.

If they can help you put together the material you've been gathering, a first issue will gradually take shape. You can start thinking about the design, about what you want the magazine to look and feel like, as well as what you want it to say.

With these steps taken care of, you'll be well on your way to a first issue. It's not easy, but if we could do it, then you can too! And remember – a project like this isn't about being 'perfect' from the start. It's about being honest, insightful, generous, driven and creative.

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### WHY DID WE JOIN THE OFF THE CUFF TEAM?

**Karine:** I am an addict! A workaholic with 40 years history. Really. When I first 'landed' in Styal, I threw myself into all sorts of jobs and courses that helped me cope. I was rattling for something challenging and

meaningful to consume me. 'Start a prison magazine!' said an officer - it was the answer to my prayers and I approached Women In Prison about launching one in Styal.

**Maria:** Why did I join the magazine? Pure accident. A friend of mine was keen to join but didn't want to go

to the first meeting on her own. I stuck with it, in part, because of the supportive, chatty people and the positive vibes, in part because in an already largely invisible population, women prisoners seem to be particularly voiceless. They need to start telling their own story - loudly and confidently. A magazine

is as good a place as any to start that process.

**Sarah Jane:** Since coming to Styal, I was at an all time low and you could say I wasn't the best behaved prisoner - walking round like I had a point to prove with a huge chip on my shoulder. When I stumbled across the



OFF CUFF #2 | WHAT ART MEANS TO ME

# WHAT ART MEANS TO ME

When I first came to prison, I had very bad mental health and was suicidal. I didn't want to do anything but was pushed into art class and I am thankful for that. I am glad I started art and that it was available for me. I am a self-harmer and suffer a lot with mental health but art has helped me so much - my self-harm has massively reduced and I even spend my own time doing art. I am currently working on a level 1 certificate and I even have the potential to go on and complete level 2. I have already completed the level 1 award. I really enjoy what I'm doing and feel that art is an important part of my recovery and my life. Thanks to art!

**CLAIRE**

When I started in art my mental health was really bad. Just being in a room was making my anxiety really high, I couldn't talk anymore and my drawing skills were very poor. Over some weeks of working, I found I could do art, which is something I hadn't done for many years. I now am the art orderly and I've worked through all levels in art. Art in prisons can and does improve your mental health. For many women in jail, it gives you something that you can see and be proud of.

**BARBARA**

*It breaks our hearts to tell you the news about the virtual closure of our fantastic art class and several other classes due to the restructuring of prison education funding. We will keep you posted about the affects this development will have on women in Styal.*

**Art in prisons can and does improve your mental health**

magazine group, it made me open my eyes and ears to a different world inside this prison. It inspires me to be a better person now I've got something I believe in. It's important to me, as it gives women prisoners a voice and a chance to show their hidden talents.

**Cathy:** Why join the

magazine group? After arriving here and feeling as though my brains cells were dying off one by one each day, I needed something to exercise my brain. What better than to join up with like-minded, creative people.

**Becky:** I recollect, in the haze of the first night centre, that I

had seen and picked up a copy of 'Off the Cuff' magazine, remembering it looked really fresh and interesting - I loved the poetry and I thought 'I could do that' but I never thought I'd ever have anything published. Now here I am on the team, waiting for my poem to be published. I'm making

my voice heard and the voices of other women in the jail heard. I never thought I had anything to say but, the more I speak, the more I want to be heard. I find myself looking forward to our next meeting. I feel really proud to be doing something positive in an often negative place.

# PEER SUPPORT & FOCUS GROUPS IN PRISON

By Lauren, HMP Foston Hall

## The Story on The Out

At home, it is very healthy and positive to seek out :

### Special interest groups –

- Hobbies
- Sports
- Religious activities
- Meditation groups
- Charities

### Support groups for -

- Medical conditions
- Mental health
- Learning difficulties
- Disabilities
- Charities

These might be very specific, or have a general focus.

### At groups you can:

- Meet your peers
- Gain a better understanding of yourself
- Realise that there are other people with the same interests, quirks or difficulties
- Benefit from helping others as well as receiving support

### It:

- Is very positive and pro-social behaviour
- Improves integration into society
- Provides new options for a life beyond reoffending

You don't need a diagnosis or referral to go to groups like these; it's entirely up to you.

## The Story when you're Inside

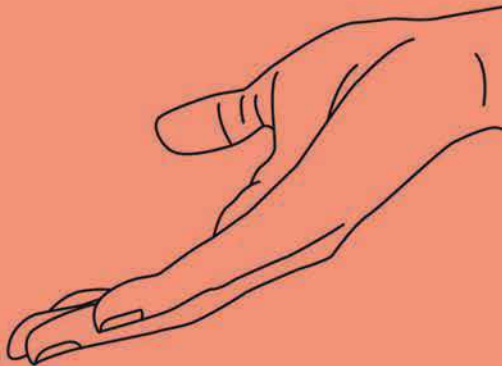
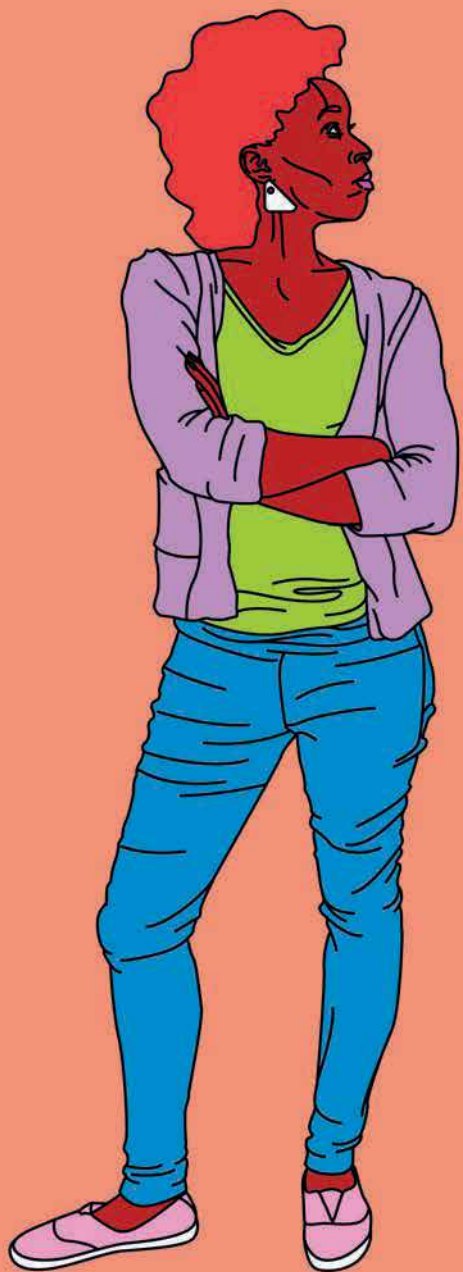
Things are a bit different in prison.

- You can't just go to groups.
- You can't just organise groups.
- There is a culture that sees this kind of activity as a luxury, perhaps one that prisoners do not deserve, rather than as a key way to prevent reoffending by encouraging self-development and integration into society.
- Prisoners have learned to have low expectations.
- Many prisoners are not in the habit of choosing to go to groups, either in prison or at home.
- As a fairly typical example, our chaplaincy, although well placed to organise such events, has been of limited help due to staff vacancies.

## What we offer

As part of my job as Equality and Diversity Advisor, I wanted to promote friendly peer support groups, and luckily I work with an Equality and Diversity Officer who supports this approach.

Focus groups are supposed to be carried out a few times a year to get feedback from the various equality and diversity categories. These can be very dry and formal events. All too often, it feels like the agenda is to prove there is no need to do anything. It is easy to reinforce this belief, as prisoners have such low expectations and not much idea what might >>



be possible anyway. It does not help when seemingly reasonable requests – such as for a product or a PAKS order to be sorted out – go unmet time after time.

We wanted to give people more of a friendly space, with refreshments and other activities. A break from the wing and a chance to relax give people an important boost. An officer (or other staff member) facilitates the meeting, but often sits back and lets the prisoners manage proceedings. They may move to an adjacent room to encourage feedback from those reluctant to talk in front of officers.

A staff member had stepped down from running an LGBT Group, so we took over this meeting, as well as continuing transgender support as and when it is needed. There are meetings for BAME (Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities) and a separate Gypsy/Traveller meeting. Foreign nationals have had a support meeting for some time, with expert advice about immigration. Another peer advisor had always run the foreign nationals meeting, and has now extended her role to further Equality and Diversity strands.

Ours are not the only peer supported meetings; there had been an over-40s/50s social club once a week, although not everyone was able to attend, and this meeting has stopped running. Meaningful activity for older prisoners is something to be worked on here. There have also been singing and guitar sessions, and more recently a choir, with tutors funded by charities. These music groups have been amazing and have provided an outlet



**“When they go right our meetings are fantastic”**

for many prisoners who struggle in jail.

I have a particular interest in autism spectrum conditions, and support many prisoners here with either an autism diagnosis, or clear traits of it, or any other support needs relating to dyslexia and learning difficulties. We have created NEUROVERSE, which is named for the idea of neurodiversity.

### **Neurodiversity means that:**

**Our brains are all wired differently, giving us different needs, strengths and weaknesses. Some people are undermined by environments (too noisy, too busy) or behaviour expectations (they can't act or relate to others the way that is 'normally' expected). This makes it difficult for them to take part in everyday life. Even if they can cope and manage to appear 'normal' for a while, they will often find this very tiring.**

The group is open to anyone showing traits of autism, learning difficulties, or those who are very socially isolated. ADHD poses a problem, as we would like to include this, but noisy and busy people can be very challenging for those with autism, which could stop it being a safe space. Those with ADHD would benefit from their own group, or from being included in other suitable activities. It is also important to stress that autism and ADHD are underdiagnosed in women, and the presentation in most adult women do not fit with the expectations of clinicians or the general public.

Common feedback is that officers frequently misunderstand the behaviour of

---

prisoners with autism or ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), resulting in them being unfairly given negative IEPs or seen as troublemakers. We aim to improve awareness among prisoners and staff, while maintaining the message that prisoners won't be allowed to break the rules and blame it on their condition. A healthy approach is to work together on a plan about what is expected of the prisoner; flexibility and time-outs are important, as well as clear goals.

## How well does it work – the good side

- When they go right, our meetings are fantastic.
- A core set of regulars get a huge boost from attending.
- Vulnerable people get some quality time with peers, myself, and our very understanding Equality and Diversity Officer.
- Activities such as quizzes, card making and DVD nights have gone down well. At weekends, we have been to visit the bunnies at the animal sanctuary in prison.
- We have asked kitchens for special menu options for St Patrick's day and Black History Month, following on from the international-themed food they have regularly done.
- Concerns and ideas for improvements are logged, minuted, and put into action when we can.

## Problems in a prison environment

1. Prison regime, and a reluctance to allow people time out of work
2. Setting up regular times and dates for meetings (made worse by point 1) and trying to fit meetings into association time.

3. Building up regular attendance (made worse by point 2). There are also people who would only come to get out of work.
4. Limited funding for activities or resources.

## A Tribal Mentality?

This is a common criticism, claiming that everyone should be treated the same. This is not at all fair – vulnerable and quiet people are left at the mercy of wing hierarchies and dynamics, and access to activities and resources is easier for some than for others.

We are not all the same, and People from all kinds of backgrounds and religions and a variety of interests should be supported as much as we can. We should cater for the needs of differently-abled people, some with obvious needs or disabilities, and some less obvious. As part of my job role, I am able to advise and assist almost anyone here, and can help people overcome the invisible hurdles that hold them back.

## Conclusion

Our meetings have an enormous positive impact for women who would otherwise be left out. I am happy we have managed so much within a prison setting, yet a little frustrated at the things that don't get done. I'd love more of our meetings to be weekly, which would have to be during work hours.

There could be many more healthy activities and wellbeing groups if it was easier to have prisoner-run sessions, and if there was a greater ethos of wellbeing activities for all. This would replicate the way outside society works, and aid rehabilitation by encouraging people to find a healthy place within it.

*Many thank to St Giles Trust, who support the peer advisors here, to my co-advisor, and the Equality and Diversity Officer.*

# TOO MANY TWISTS

WOMEN SERVING INDETERMINATE SENTENCES OF IMPRISONMENT FOR PUBLIC PROTECTION (IPP) – NEW RESEARCH BY THE GRIFFINS SOCIETY

## IN THE SYSTEM?

Sarah Smart outlines her research into the experiences for women in prison on an IPP sentence.

**M**y Griffins Society research on women still in custody serving IPP sentences was recently published. I would like to thank the amazing women who took part, speaking so articulately and courageously to share their story of serving this soul-destroying sentence. The desperate plight of those on IPP remains a key campaign for WIP and a matter of personal and academic passion for me. You are not forgotten!

The women I interviewed had all served at least twice their tariff, with the most extreme case being a 14 month 3 day tariff that had been served 11 times over. All of the women said that the interview was the first time in their sentence that they had spoken specifically

### IPP – THE FACTS

- IPPs were introduced in 2005, enabling Judges to set a minimum time to serve (the tariff) but no maximum term.
- After the minimum term was spent in prison, you had to apply for release from the Parole Board.
- The sentence was meant to be reserved for the most extreme and serious offences but instead were over-used and handed out to too many people.
- The sentence was abolished in 2012 and deemed a mistake by its creator, the former Home Secretary Lord David Blunkett.
- There are around 46 women still in prison serving IPP sentences (and around 2,400 men)

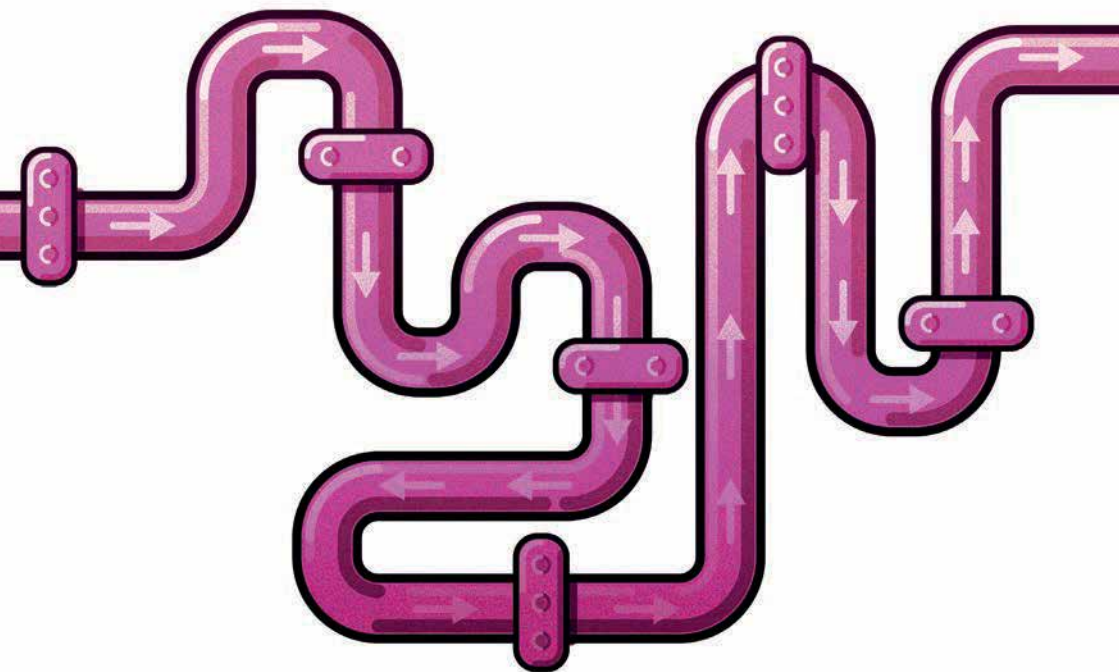
about the lived reality of IPP and its impact upon them.

*“I’m doing this because it’s not just about me, there have been several women that have taken their own lives because of this sentence... So, it’s not just about benefitting me, it’s about changing the whole system because it’s not fair.”* - Jane

All of the women interviewed had varying experiences of childhood trauma leading to alcohol and substance abuse, learning disabilities, language difficulties, autism, psychiatric diagnoses, including personality disorders, which had all played a role in their contact with the criminal justice system.

*“If they understood, like, why we did it – all the stuff we’ve been through.”* Lucy





All of them struggled to understand the sentence when they first received it, and their families continued to struggle:

*"It's difficult for them to understand the IPP sentence – they can't get their heads around how I've been in prison all these years and I haven't killed anyone."* Jane

The women were all able to speak about how the sentence made them feel and the way it affected their mental health:

*"Very angry, frustrated, I just feel let down by the system."* Janet

*"Soul-destroying. A lot lonely. Hopelessness."* Kel

*"You give up, because you think you're never going to get out."* Collette

They spoke about the injustice of the

sentence, particularly as IPP has now been abolished, but they are still in custody:

*"When they stopped giving the death penalty, they didn't then kill all the people that were awaiting death."* Jane

Being given responsibility was also something that had brought meaning and progress for those that had experienced it:

*"You need people to trust you. Being believed in was the most powerful thing that's happened to me – you need people not to judge you, to help you."* Pebs

This study provided strong, narrative evidence that women on IPP sentences suffer injustice and profound institutionalisation. The system that manages them needs to change. The most significant change has to come through revising the legislative



framework of IPP through Parliament, but in the meantime I made the following recommendations.

■ Each prison should have a designated IPP Caseworker, with a protected caseload solely of IPP prisoners, in recognition of the complex needs and peculiar pains of this group of prisoner and to provide specialist, meaningful support to IPP prisoners and their families.

■ Professionals who work with IPP prisoners should talk with them specifically about the lived reality of serving an IPP sentence and consider their feelings and experiences in their casework. IPP prisoners deserve to be heard, having experienced the “deep injustice” of IPP which they so often feel is ignored.

■ Specific training for professionals supporting IPP prisoners around the pains of indeterminacy, and the importance for sentence progression of being given positions of trust and responsibility, should be developed in collaboration with IPP prisoners and their families. This will raise awareness and sharpen expertise.

■ Expectations of Offender Managers working with IPP prisoners should be strengthened to hold them accountable for exploring avenues of progression and support in a timely manner.

■ The Parole Board, in the interest of fairness, should monitor the number of IPP prisoners choosing paper parole decisions, (in

light of the findings that three of the women had had a majority of paper hearings) and ensure they are receiving strong advice that is in their best interests.

■ HMPPS should ensure that IPP prisoners over tariff who have been reviewed at national level are informed of this fact and updated about progress and additional reviews. In particular, support and sentence planning to be examined of those IPP women over tariff with diagnoses of autism or learning disabilities and specialist provision from Mental Health In-Reach teams to be funded and put in place to guard against discrimination.

■ Other avenues of robust support should be investigated by prisons in recognition that Offending Behaviour Programmes may not necessarily, or solely, remove barriers to release.

■ Mental health and offending risk needs should be integrated into programmes of help that can be evaluated and rolled out in joint work between NOMS and health providers in prisons. There should no longer be a split between offending risk and mental health.

*To read this report: [www.thegriffinsociety.org](http://www.thegriffinsociety.org)*

**“Prisoners deserve to be heard, having experienced the “deep injustice” of IPP.”**

**Women in Prison**, as part of the #OPENUP Women's Futures Campaign, is calling for all those in prison on an IPP sentence to be given a release date and intensive one-to-one support in prison which is continued into the community after release.

# Speaking Out and Creating Change

By WIP's Campaigns  
& Public Affairs Manager  
Claire Cain

Central to Women in Prison's mission is to provide opportunities, training and support for women affected by the criminal justice system to speak out and lead the campaign for change. This might include speaking to journalists or MPs, being interviewed for radio or contributing to research by a university. I'm sure many of you will have been asked to take part in this type of activity at some point. For those that have I hope it was a really empowering experience because it is certainly an extremely powerful and effective way to create change. However we believe there are certain things that journalists, MPs and researchers need to think about when asking someone they've never met before to tell their story and share personal details that might be from a painful experience. We are, therefore, developing a series of guidelines and top tips for academics, journalists, TV producers, politicians, authors and for participants themselves on how to ensure that any work you do together is an empowering and positive experience. We want to hear from you, about your experiences, good and bad to help us shape these guidelines.

To kick us off Sarah Smart, the researcher and author behind the IPP report on page 41, shares her top tips for academics when speaking with women affected by the criminal justice system.

**1** Ask participants to choose their own pseudonym (made up name) maybe one that has personal meaning. This preserves anonymity, but also dignity (rather than using numbers etc.) Participants will also then be able to recognise themselves in any quotes that are used in the report.

**2** Write and thank participants immediately after the interview and give them some idea of when they will be able to read the final report and when it will be published.

**3** Write to participants with their own copy of the final report once it is published to thank them again and remind them of the pseudonym they chose to use.

**4** Once you have your questions that you want to ask carry out a test interview with someone without gathering any data. They can give you feedback on how useful the questions are, whether they were all appropriate, the overall shape of the interview, as well as pointing out any questions you might have missed.

**5** Shape the interview carefully to minimise distress/potential triggers and leave enough time and space to support and offer a 'breather' if participants become upset. Finish with positive questions to end on a note of hope.

**6** Continually make it clear throughout that participants do not have to answer any question they are unhappy with.

**7** Check before you start that participants know where to access support following the interview.

**8** Have bottles of water and tissues readily available for participants.

What do you think about these guidelines? Are there any other pieces of advice for academics that have been missed? Do you have any experiences of being interviewed by a journalist, academic, or MP or maybe you took part in a 'focus group' that was positive or negative that you could share with us to help shape our guidelines.

**Please write to us:**

Freepost  
WOMEN IN PRISON  
(no stamp required)

1

MOST PEOPLE GO IN  
ALL GUNS BLAZING.  
'I WANT THIS'  
'I WANT THAT'.

## HOW TO ASK FOR THINGS YOU WOULD LIKE IN THE RIGHT WAY WHEN IN PRISON

SHE, HMP FOSTON HALL

8

IF IT COMES BACK A 'YES',  
THAT'S GREAT!  
BUT REMEMBER THIS IS JAIL AND  
QUITE OFTEN THE ANSWER WILL BE  
'NO'. AT LEAST WILL YOU KNOW  
YOU HAVE TRIED!

7

IF IT IS A 'NO' AND YOU  
FEEL YOU HAVE A VALID ISSUE,  
THEN TAKE IT THROUGH THE  
COMPLAINT SYSTEM AND GOVERNOR.  
AGAIN, KEEP THESE SHORT AND  
TO THE POINT.

2  
THIS IS JAIL, AND  
IT HAS TO BE DONE  
THE RIGHT WAY.

3  
RESEARCH THE ISSUE  
SO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU  
ARE TALKING ABOUT.

4  
BULLET-POINT WHAT YOU NEED;  
INCLUDE ANY IMPORTANT DETAILS,  
AND THE REASONS YOU THINK YOU  
SHOULD BE ALLOWED IT.

5  
MAKE THE APP  
SHORT & SWEET - KEEP IT TO THE POINT.

6  
TRY TO GET IT THROUGH THE  
PRISONER COUNCIL FIRST;  
THE COUNCIL WILL EITHER LOOK  
INTO IT, OR SAY NO AND GIVE REASONS.  
EITHER WAY IT WILL BE  
PUT IN THE MINUTES.

# HOLLOWAY & PROTEST: A HISTORY

*At the heart of every protest is a grievance.* People protest about inequality, unfairness or circumstances they feel are morally wrong. Prison is by its nature unequal. Prisoners have limited power to make changes. Prisoner protests at Holloway include acts of self-harm such as hunger-strikes, destruction of property or even just refusing to engage with the system. Conditions in prisons have spurred former prisoners to protest and campaign for change in prison and in the wider criminal justice system. Others have gone to prison as a result of protests which broke the law.



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Jeanette Primus lights a bundle of letters high on the roof of Holloway Picture

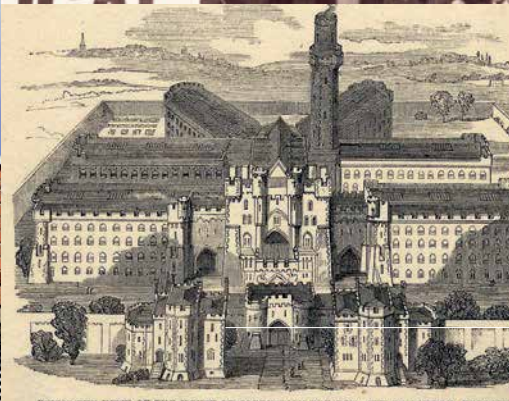


**NATIONAL WOMEN'S  
SOCIAL**  
AND  
ICAL

Oct. 1908



**SISTERS UN-CUT HAVE  
RECLAIMED THIS  
SPACE FOR THE  
COMMUNITY OF  
HOLLOWAY**



## Protest! At Holloway Prison by Roz Currie, Islington Museum

### Holloway Prison

■ Holloway Prison opened in 1852 to hold 400 prisoners. At that time it held men, women and children over the age of eight. It was built as a 'Terror to Evil Doers' with six wings radiating from a central point, so prisoners could be watched at all times.

■ Holloway became a women-only prison in 1902. At that time most of the women held there were serving short sentences for drunkenness, vagrancy or prostitution. Rehabilitation of prisoners became more of a focus from the 1920s and the Victorian prison was no longer seen as fit for purpose. However, it was not until the 1970s that it was completely demolished and rebuilt.

The new prison was intended to be a place of healing although it often was far from that. Over time a network of support grew in the new prison space including many charities. By the time it closed in June 2016, thousands of women had passed through its doors.

### Protest at Holloway

■ There has been a long history of protest at Holloway Prison from its early years to the present day. Protests have ranged from the personal, to wider protests inside and outside the prison, to campaigns about the prison itself or the idea of prison. Campaigns at

Holloway have often become part of the broader fight for change on women's rights, health and social status.

■ Many campaigners or protesters have been held at Holloway including the suffragettes, the 1920s Poplar Councillors, pacifists in both world wars and women from Greenham Common. The prison entrance has been a site of protest from the early days of the suffragettes, during the demolition and rebuild of the prison, and for campaigns protesting about deaths in custody.

■ Since the closure, the Reclaim Holloway coalition has been campaigning for what happens to the site next. The campaign group would like a Woman's Building as a tribute to the struggles and experiences of women at Holloway Prison.

"Many protesters have been held at Holloway - the suffragettes, pacifists and women from Greenham Common."

### Various protest stories:

#### Suffragettes (1906-1914)

■ Hundreds of suffragettes were imprisoned at Holloway Prison, arrested as they fought for the right for women to vote. Many were force-fed following hunger strikes.

#### Poplar Councillors (1919)

■ Six Poplar councillors were imprisoned at Holloway. They refused to set local taxes as the way these were set up meant that rich households in Westminster paid far less than the poorer people in Poplar. The councillors argued that the taxes forced the poor to pay for the rich but were sent to prison for



contempt of court. Ultimately the government passed a law equalising the taxes.

### **Pacifist in Prison (1944)**

■ Pacifist and research scientist Kathleen Lonsdale was imprisoned for a month during the Second World War for refusing to register for civil defence duties. She was horrified by conditions at the prison and wrote a report criticising hygiene, medical care and the lack of re-education.

### **A Personal Protest (1971)**

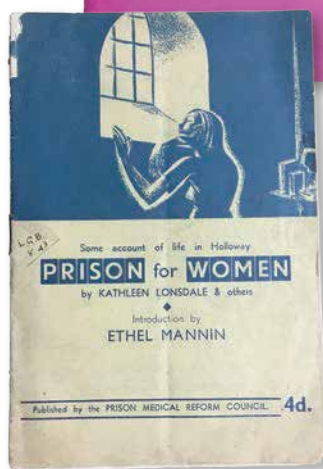
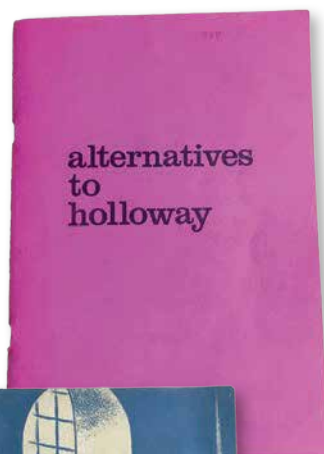
■ Jeanette Primus climbed barefoot up to the top of the chimneys of the old Holloway Prison as a personal protest. She was just 16 and was protesting against being put into solitary confinement and alleged abuse by officers.

### **Alternatives to Holloway (1970)**

■ When the new prison was proposed, Radical Alternatives to Prison (RAP) led a campaign against what they called a 'folly'. They felt that women needed care, not punishment and that the prison system was broken.

### **Women from Greenham Common (1981-2000)**

■ A women's peace movement grew up around the RAF base at Greenham Common.



Women lived at the camps, blocked roads and gates to missiles and organised a sit-down protest in parliament. Many were held at Holloway Prison and were horrified at conditions there. They published a 'Holloway for beginners' guide to support other women going in.

### **Following the Closure (2016 to present)**

■ The last prisoner ever to be held at Holloway Prison left on Friday 17 June 2016. Since the closure, the local community, ex-prisoners and local activists have formed a coalition called 'Reclaim Holloway' which has been fighting for social housing and a women's building to be built on the site of the prison. On International Women's Day 2019 it was announced that the site had been bought. The developers aim to build genuinely affordable housing, green spaces, places to play, local shops and a women's centre. The campaign for a women's building continues.

### **Echoes of Holloway Prison**

■ Until summer 2016 Holloway Prison was the largest women's prison in Britain. Many well-known prisoners have passed through the prison since it opened in 1852, but there remain diverse voices unknown and unrecorded. Echoes of Holloway Prison has been a year-long project led by Islington Museum to record, explore and understand these stories. Find out more on our website [www.echoesofhollowayprison.com](http://www.echoesofhollowayprison.com) or get in

The government has received £80m from the sale of Holloway prison.  
Tell us - in words or by drawing - how you think that money should be  
best spent to transform our communities and #OPENUP Women's Futures.

DATE 2019

PAY TO #OPENUP

**WOMEN'S FUTURES**

Eighty Million Pounds only

£ 80m

Her Majesty's Treasury  
Sale of HMP Holloway

*Chancellor of the Exchequer*

Cheque no. 000107 Branch Sort Code 08-0319 Account no. 80 000000

@WIP\_live

## Campaign Action: Answers on a postcard!

**O**n 8th March 2019 - International Women's Day - HMP Holloway was finally sold, three years after it was closed.

The prison was sold for around £80m to the Peabody Trust Housing Association with help from a loan given by the Mayor of London. Following three years of campaigning, the Peabody Trust has committed to building genuinely affordable housing to buy and rent on the site alongside support services and facilities for women. This campaign continues and we will share a more in-depth update in the next edition of this magazine.

There is, however, another side to this campaign, the question of what happens now with the £80m that Her Majesty's Treasury has received from the sale of the prison. The closure of the only women's prison in London has had a big impact on women affected by the criminal justice system, families and the rest of the women's prison estate. There is no clearer case for the money from the sale of the prison site to be spent improving the lives of women and their families. WIP would like the money to be used to grow the network of

Women's Centres across the country, which can be used as part of community alternatives to prison, provide the support women need and help reduce the women's prison population.

But what do you think? How should the £80m be spent? Write or draw your ideas on the postcard.

It won't be easy ensuring that this money is spent in the right way. We need to campaign and make our voices heard, which is where the campaign postcard comes in. A big thank you to WIP's magazine groups in HMP Downview, HMP Foston Hall and HMP Styal who came up with this idea and in particular Becky in Styal who created the cheque design - we love it!

We want to hear from you! Please look out for these postcards in prison libraries or in your women's centre. Write to us Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON or email [info@wipuk.org](mailto:info@wipuk.org) to request a pile of postcards, write or draw your ideas and send back to us. We will collect the cards together and look for opportunities to display them and promote your suggestions on social media.

# #OPENUP Flower Meadow

Thank you to everyone who has helped our flower meadow to grow by sending us your crafted flowers. You can still send us your flowers – we want the meadow to be as big as we can so that it can really have an impact when we put it on display to raise the profile of our campaign to reduce women’s imprisonment.

## Why a crafted flower meadow?

We want to celebrate your talent and individuality. Flowers all have different meanings to people and the meadow represents the many stories and journeys that women affected by the criminal justice system

experience. We know that crafting and knitting is a popular social and often therapeutic activity in prison and in Women’s Centres. At WIP we also believe in the power of craft and art to influence and create change in what is called ‘craftivism’.

## Get involved

Send us your flowers to

Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON

If you would like to hold a workshop to

make flowers then we can send

you a booklet with crafting

techniques and ideas

(unfortunately we are

unable to supply

crafting materials).

FLOWERS MADE BY  
KATH, HMP LOW  
NEWTON

FLOWERS MADE BY WOMEN  
IN THE BETH CENTRE -  
A WOMEN'S CENTRE  
RUN BY WIP



# BENT BARS PROJECT



The Bent Bars Project is a prisoner solidarity letter writing project for LGBTQ+ prisoners. The project is open to anyone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer or gender non-conforming.

We match LGBTQ people inside prison with LGBTQ people outside prison so they can write to each other. The aim of the project is to support each other and to help break the added isolation that LGBTQ prisoners often feel.

If you think this project is for you and would like a penpal, write to us and we will send you more information.

Bent Bars Project, P.O. Box 66754, London. WC1A 9BF

(if you cannot write to P.O. box addresses please write to Women in Prison using their freepost address and they can forward it on to us)

*We look forward to hearing from you!*

# WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS USING THE CRIMINAL APPEAL SYSTEM

By Naima Sakande, Women's Justice Advocate, Centre for Criminal Appeals

I sat across from Cookie in her cramped kitchen, balancing my laptop on my knees. I was trying to work out how this careful woman with wiry black hair and a love for drawing and crafts had ended up serving 14 years in prison for the murder of her baby son. Cookie is a client of ours under the Women's Justice Initiative at the Centre for Criminal Appeals and vehemently maintains her innocence.

Cookie's case is shocking in its tragedy. Her 12-week-old baby son passed away suddenly one sunny afternoon after suffering a nosebleed at home. Cookie was told by the hospital that they suspected Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). But a few weeks later, the police arrested her for the murder of her son and, after a lengthy trial, she was convicted of smothering

him to death.

We represent Cookie because, after careful analysis of her case, we believe her to be innocent. But through my interactions with her, I began to be curious about the role

womanhood played in her wrongful conviction.

The mechanisms by which women and men come to be wrongly convicted differ significantly. The National Registry of Exonerations in the US shows that 63% of exonerated women were convicted in cases in which no crime in fact occurred (compared with 21%

of male exonerees). 40% of female exonerees were wrongly convicted of harming children or loved ones in their care. Statistics on exoneration are not kept in the UK, but we remember with horror cases like those

**"The mechanisms which wrongly convict women and men differ significantly."**





## USING APPEALS

of Sally Clark and Angela Cannings, mothers accused of killing their children, who were exonerated when it was revealed the scientific evidence that had convicted them was suspect.

We also know that there are too many women in prison who don't need or deserve to be there. More than 80% of the women in prison are there for low level, non-violent offences (about 50% for theft). Most women prisoners are given destructive short sentences – with nearly 70% serving six months or less. Women's crimes are often linked to a domestic abuser or to mental illness, and this is often not properly explored in court. Along with wrongful conviction, we need to challenge the inappropriate prison sentences given to women.

Yet there's been a dramatic decline of 27% in applications to the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) since 2010. We know that women are less likely than men to complain of poor treatment. According to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, women account for only 2% of the complaints they receive. There is a real risk that if women do not use the criminal appeals

system, they won't be able to have wrongful convictions or excessive sentences overturned in court.

This is why the Women's Justice Initiative is committed to using impact litigation to challenge these injustices. We fight for women experiencing multiple and severe disadvantage

through criminal appeals of convictions and sentences. We know that navigating the justice system is a daunting and difficult process, which is why we try to take on cases which might have a ripple effect for other women in a similar position. If you feel you have been wrongfully convicted or excessively sentenced and fit the criteria of the Women's Justice Initiative outlined in the poster, please write to us in case we can help.

Sitting in Cookie's kitchen, I was struck by her extraordinary composure and resilience in the face of such massive trauma. I asked her if she could have three wishes, what would they be. She told me: "I wish that my son had peace. I wish that my other children were happy. I wish that nobody else was where I am. It would be great to wave a wand and stop wrongful conviction."

### RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY: MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

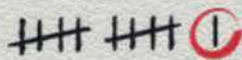
The Women's Justice Initiative is doing a research project looking into what the barriers are for women seeking to appeal convictions and sentences in order to make suggestions for improvement. We hope this project will make the advice of Appeal more accessible to women hoping to appeal. We would like to find out:

- Whether or not you have ever considered appealing, why or why not
- Your experience of trial, conviction and the advice you received from your lawyers regarding an appeal
- What your understanding of the appeals process is, and what you believe would improve it

If you are interested in participating in this research project, please write to: Naima Sakande, Room 29, 2-10 Princeton Street, London, WC1R 4BH (or you can use Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON and WIP will forward on). Please include your name, prison and prisoner number, and I will write to you with more information. Please note that if you choose to participate, nothing you say will be reported to your lawyer or the prison and all your answers will be recorded anonymously.

We hope you will take up this opportunity to make suggestions for reform and have your voice heard!





# CENTRE for CRIMINAL APPEALS

## WOMEN'S JUSTICE INITIATIVE

HAVE YOU BEEN WRONGFULLY CONVICTED OR  
SENTENCED?

We are a charity law practice. We challenge miscarriages of justice arising out of the courts of England and Wales. We do not charge our clients for legal representation.

We support **women** who:

Want to appeal a sentence  
for a **minor, non-**  
**violent** crime.

Have been convicted of  
harming or killing  
someone who **abused** them.

Maintain that they are  
**innocent**.

Didn't have their **mental**  
**health** properly considered  
when sentenced.

We are a small charity with limited resources, so will not be able to take on every case. However, we will read and respond to every letter that comes to us.



**contact us**

2-10 Princeton  
St, London,  
WC1R 4BH



**include**

crime and sentence,  
outline of your case,  
a **copy** of  
any documents you  
have relating to your  
case



**remember**

mark the envelope  
with "Rule 39" so it  
remains  
confidential

# IN PRISON FOR OWING COUNCIL TAX – NO WAY!

Rona Epstein explains the law on council tax debt

**I**N JANUARY 2017 A HIGH COURT JUDGE ruled that the magistrates who had sentenced a woman to 81 days in prison for failure to pay her council tax had made an unlawful decision. Her sentence was quashed. The woman is a single mother who has two part-time jobs, working hard to provide for herself and her son. She has never committed a crime. She should never have been jailed. Why did this happen?

Melanie, who lives in Wales, worked part-time and cared for her son and an elderly neighbour, then had a period of unemployment. She failed to pay her council tax; so magistrates ordered that she be sent to prison for 81 days. They suspended the imprisonment on condition that Melanie paid £10 every week towards the debt. She suffered some health problems and, again, failed to keep up with the payments. In August 2016, she realised that she had fallen behind in her payments and made a lump sum payment of £100. The next day, she was arrested by bailiffs and taken to prison. She was told she had to serve the sentence as ordered by the magistrates.

People sent to prison for not paying

council tax are given very little help. They never imagine that it is an error in law that has put them in a prison cell, as owing money is not a crime. No one tells them they can apply for bail and that the decision to send them to prison can be challenged. They receive no advice. They do their time.

Some time ago, I wrote an article on council tax debt for this magazine in which I explained the law about owing council tax and what should happen if someone has difficulty in paying the tax they owe.

Melanie, while in prison, read the article and then wrote to Women in Prison asking for advice. Women in Prison put Melanie in touch with the Centre for Criminal Appeals. The Centre arranged

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for a lawyer to take on Melanie's case. He acted for Melanie and got her out of prison on bail. At the subsequent court hearing, the judge declared that sending Melanie to prison because she owed council tax was an unlawful decision. The magistrates had made a number of serious mistakes. They had failed to assess Melanie's financial means and had no basis for concluding her failure to pay was because of 'culpable neglect'.

Melanie was interviewed by BBC Wales. She spoke about how hard it was for her to serve a prison sentence when she had committed no crime. She said 'I won't ever recover from the experience'. Still, she's back at home and, once again, running her household and caring for her child.

Then in June 2018 the Welsh government announced a consultation with the aim of abolishing imprisonment for council tax debt. This is a huge step forward!

Each year, around 100 people are imprisoned for non-payment of the council tax. In the vast majority of cases, the magistrates' decision to order them to prison goes unchallenged because those sentenced don't know how to challenge it and don't get help. Yet, the decision to send someone to prison for owing tax can and should be challenged.

We all have to pay council tax. The council requires this money to carry out services we all need: dealing with rubbish, providing schools and care homes for the disabled and the elderly, fixing roads and pavements, running parks, leisure centres and libraries... the list goes on. If you owe some of the tax, the council may order you to appear before the magistrates because of the debt.

The magistrates must make an enquiry into your finances (income, outgoings, dependants). They then make a decision:

are you guilty of 'wilful refusal to pay' or 'culpable neglect to pay'? If they find you are guilty of wilful refusal or culpable neglect to pay – this means that you have the money to pay but have refused to use that money to pay your council tax – the magistrates have options. One is to impose a prison sentence of up to three months.

However, imprisonment should be a last resort. There should be no jail sentence if there is an alternative way to recover the money you owe. If there is an alternative, for example ordering that an amount be deducted each week from your benefits or from your wages or salary, then you should NOT be sent to prison. You cannot be found guilty of wilful refusal or culpable neglect if you are simply unable to pay. In such a case, the council has the power to cancel all, or part, of the debt.

In Council Tax cases, the magistrates have no power to punish anyone. Judges have said this many times, first when people were sent to prison twenty years ago when the poll tax was introduced, and more recently when a few people in prison for owing council tax have had their cases looked at by the High Court.

If you or someone you know is in prison for owing council tax, please get in touch. Expert legal advice could make all the difference.

**Please write to:**

**Rona Epstein**

**Freepost**

**WOMEN IN PRISON (no stamp required)**

**Or email:**

**info@wipuk.org**

**Rona Epstein is Honorary Research Fellow at  
Coventry Law School, Coventry University.**

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# WHAT'S THE POINT OF PRISON?

By Maria in HMP Styal.

First published in HMP Styal's magazine OFF THE CUFF – Winter 2018  
(see the article in this magazine on p32 about setting up your own in-prison magazine)

**R**ecently the Ministry of Justice released the Female Offender Strategy which explores the future role of the female prison estate and argues for an eventual large-scale reduction in the female prison population. In response to this, this article provides one view on that future.

In the first issue of a new magazine, it seems reasonable to spend some time thinking about what we are all doing here. What exactly is the purpose of prison? I have heard a lot of women say simply, 'I did something wrong, so I deserve to be punished.' Quite a large section of the general public are on board with that message. Which is why politicians get a cold shiver down their spine at the thought of being seen to be 'soft on crime'.

Putting political need and individual guilt aside, any sane society needs to consider the value and purpose of its institutions. The weight of evidence suggests that prison is high on the list of institutions which need to be checked out! Did you know that prisons were first introduced in the nineteenth century as a 'social experiment'? Did you know that the 'prison experiment' failed? You could probably

have guessed that last bit. Yet, here we are, in the 21st century, vainly still hoping that prisons are going to be the antidote to the complex problem of crime.

In the nineteenth century, the purpose of prison was presented quite simply. Prisons were designed to contain an inconvenient and often unruly section of the population. To "keep them off the streets" and "out from under the wheels of Gentlemen's carriages". In the 21st century, the party line on why we have prisons is more complex, but perhaps also less convincing. Prisons are supposed to achieve the following goals:

- Punishment
- Deterrence
- Crime reduction
- Rehabilitation (reform)
- Public Protection
- Reparation to Victim (Restorative Justice)

So, the obvious questions are: does putting people in prison achieve these goals? Are all of the goals in themselves worthwhile? More broadly, does prison 'solve' the problem of crime? A quick trawl through the vast

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amount of evidence available (much of it commissioned by the Ministry of Justice itself) casts substantial doubt on the merits of prison.

Few here will question the idea that prison is punishment. But the problem is that much of the 'punishment' is both accidental and costly to society – poor healthcare, lack of employment, children taken into care. In terms of deterrence, prison is known to increase rather than decrease future offending. Rehabilitation, meanwhile, remains a lofty

goal very rarely achieved. Estimates suggest that the number of people, in particular women, who actually need to be kept behind bars to secure public protection is in fact very small. Restorative Justice has been shown to be of benefit to both victims and offenders, but there is no indication that it needs to take place in the prison setting.

So – do the GeoAmev vans need to keep rolling, or should we park them and find a better solution to crime? What do you think?

**What are your thoughts on Maria's essay? Do you agree? What do you think is the point of prison? Do prisons 'work' or do you think there is a better system, a more fair and humane way of doing things?**

David Scott from The Open University in Milton Keynes is putting together a book of chapters on the abolition of prisons.\*\*\* The book is titled, The Routledge International Handbook of Penal Abolitionism, and will be published next year.

The book will include chapters from people all around the world and it is really important that it also includes thoughts and writings from people who are currently in prison.

David is accepting articles exploring your thoughts on prison, does prison work? And if not what would be a better system? Write from what you know. This can be anywhere between 2 to 5 pages of A4.

If you do not have access to a computer or a typewriter to write a typed essay, you could handwrite. Any handwritten essays will

be typed up, and sent back to you for any changes you would like to make.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTER/ESSAY TO THIS POSTAL ADDRESS:**

The Editors, The Routledge International Handbook of Penal Abolitionism

CARE OF: Dr David Scott

Dept of Social Policy and Criminology, FASS, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, Buckingham MK7 6AA

Your postage costs will be refunded if the regulations at your prison allow it. Please include in your letter whether you would like your postage to be refunded. The deadline for submissions is the end of August 2019.

Or you can send to freepost WOMEN IN PRISON and we will forward on.

**\*\*\*WHAT IS PRISON ABOLITION?**

*Essentially abolitionists believe prison sentences cause harm to individuals, their families and our communities. Abolitionists believe that prison is not a solution to reducing crime or creating safer communities. They support policies which reduce prison populations and create a fairer, more humane system in which focus is not on punishment but on people having access to opportunities and support in their communities to lead healthy and happy lives.*



# WORDSEARCH

Find the words – time yourself!

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

PROTEST  
LETTER

CRAFT  
VOICE

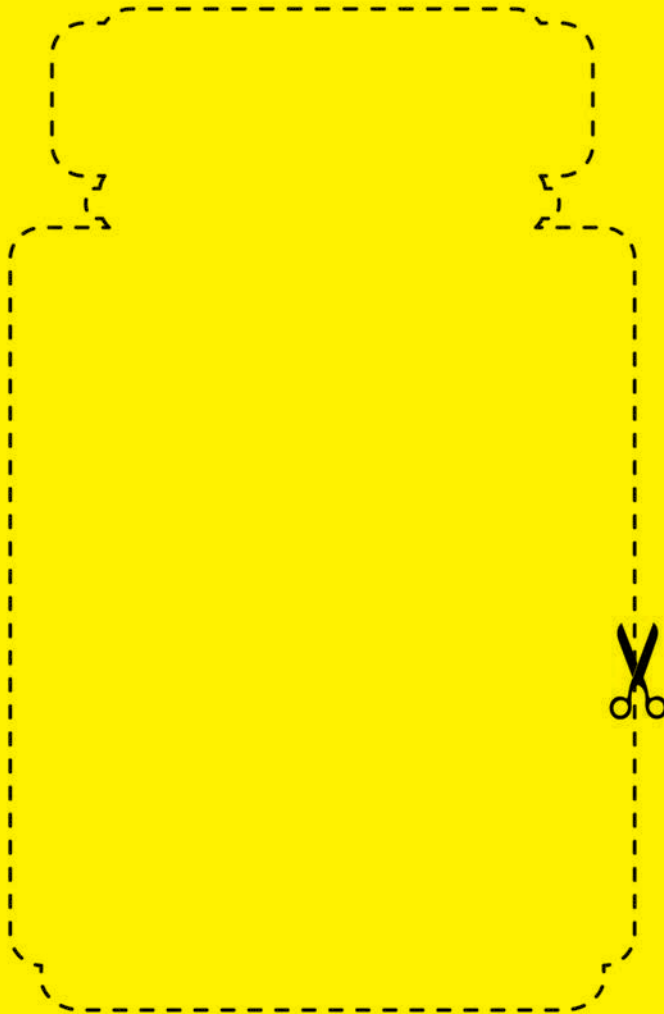
CHANGE  
EMPOWER

QUESTION  
RIGHTS

TACTICS  
KNOWLEDGE

# POSITIVITY JAR

Capture your hopes and dreams in this positivity jar! Think small or big - whatever makes you feel good. You can use your positivity jar for goal setting or to simply feel uplifted. Write directly on the jar or stick things on it. That way you can look at your ideas whenever you need some inspiration!



# EPIC Peer Mentor Scheme

Enabling Positive Individual Change



The Beth Centre EPIC Peer Mentor scheme is seeking new recruits! This opportunity will enhance self-confidence, self-esteem and can be empowering on many levels.

## Are you...

- Interested in becoming a peer mentor?
- Returning to the borough of Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Croydon, Wandsworth or Sutton?
- Willing to commit to a training programme while working towards an accredited qualification?

**If you answered yes to all the above, we want to hear from you!**

**\*YOU DO NOT NEED PRIOR EXPERIENCE OF MENTORING**

**\*\*YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF HAVING BEEN FREE FROM OFFENDING AND SUBSTANCE / ALCOHOL ADDICTION FOR AT LEAST 6 MONTHS**

**FIONA SHAW – PEER MENTOR & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

**PHONE:** 020 3869 2170  
**FREEPOST:** write 'Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON' on the envelope  
**ADDRESS:** The Beth Centre, Hudson House,  
1 Stockwell Green, SW9 9JF.

Enabling  
Positive  
Individual  
Change





# WOMEN IN PRISON (WIP) CONSENT FORM

We love to receive artwork, poetry, stories, articles, letters, knitting patterns, recipes, craft ideas, etc etc for publication in the magazine from women affected by the criminal justice system in prison or the community.

Anything you send to us, please also tear out, complete and send us this page along with your piece so that we know for sure that you are happy for us to publish and what name you would like to use.

Please note that we are unable to return to you any of the written pieces or artwork that you send to us for publication.

Thank you for your contribution! All the best, The Women in Prison Team.

Please use CAPITAL letters to complete please

TEAR HERE

<b>First Name</b>		<b>Surname</b>	
<b>Prison or Women Centre (if applicable)</b>		<b>Prison No. (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Any Contact Details (email, address, phone)</b>			
<b>Title of your piece (if relevant)</b>			
<b>Basic description (ie A letter in response to... or a poem or an article on...)</b>			
<b>I give permission for my work to be used by Women in Prison (PLEASE TICK):</b>			
<b>WIP's magazine (Ready Steady Go)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>WIP's Website <a href="http://www.womeninprison.org.uk">www.womeninprison.org.uk</a> and Twitter Feed @WIP_live</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>WIP's Publication &amp; Promotional Material (ie Reports, leaflets)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>Please note we only publish first names (no surnames) and the name of the prison or Women's Centre only in the magazine (we don't publish prison name in other publications or online). You can of course choose to be Anonymous (no name used) or write a nickname or made up name.</b>			
<b>I am happy for my first name to be published</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
<b>Please write exactly what name you would like to be used:</b>			

Freepost - WOMEN IN PRISON (in capitals)  
 (no stamp is required and nothing else is needed on the envelope)

# WHAT DOES WOMEN IN PRISON BELIEVE?

**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.”

## OUR VISION

A new system of justice that addresses the root causes of offending (including addiction, poverty, mental ill health, homelessness and experiences of trauma and abuse) in communities, through a network of women’s centres and services available to every woman who requires support.

## OUR MISSION

■ To persuade decision-makers to radically reduce the women’s prison population, by demonstrating how investment in specialist community support services, including women’s centres, enables women to move forward with their lives. To promote the development of communities where small therapeutic secure units replace prisons for the minute number of women whose offending and risk to the public may require custody. We do this by:

■ Leading inspiring, passionate campaigns to replace the current system, and to radically reduce the number of women in prison, thereby freeing resources for investment in community support services, including women’s centres.

■ Delivering high quality, trauma-informed independent support services for women, in communities and prisons, that focus on early intervention and holistic provision as part of a ‘whole system’ multi-agency response.

■ Offering a platform for women’s voices which builds women’s confidence and self-belief, strengthening an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and provides opportunities to speak ‘truth to power’ to bring about real change.

## OUR VALUES

■ **Social justice and feminism** – We are committed to social justice and the feminist goal of gender equality. We see daily the price paid by women, children and families as a result of injustices across sex, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability and class. The current system is broken. It causes harm and delivers neither justice nor rehabilitation. We know from experience that a women-centred ‘whole system’ approach is the best way to reduce crime, strengthen communities and protect the public.

■ **Independence and trust** – Core to our success is our independence and the trust placed in us by the women with whom we work, whose energy and assets are at the heart of our services and campaigns. This partnership based on independence and trust is a vital part of our ethos and drives our ability to speak ‘truth to power’.

■ **Dedication to changing our lives and the world** – We believe that women can change the world in which they live, as well as their own and their families’ lives, when they are given meaningful support and opportunities to speak out, utilise their strengths and be ambitious for change. We know that this requires perseverance and hope. We see setbacks as a chance to learn from failure, renew our efforts and try a different approach, not a reason to give up.

# LEADERS UNLOCKED

## YOUNG ADVISORS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE: AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE YOUR VOICE FOR CHANGE

The Young Advisors project gives young adults aged 16–25 years a voice on the Criminal Justice System. We bring together young adults with experience of the justice system to influence decision-makers who are working on reforms.

The Young Advisors comment on important policy topics, collaborate with professionals from key national bodies who are working on reforms, and conduct face-to-face research with other young adults in prisons and community.

The project is delivered by Leaders Unlocked and supported by the Barrow Cadbury Trust as part of its Transition to Adulthood (T2A) initiative.

The project follows a successful pilot project in 2016–17, in which Young Advisors conducted peer research on the topic of Race and the CJS, and were invited to make presentations of their findings at the Ministry of Justice and Royal Courts of Justice and to David Lammy MP. Their report was referenced in the final report of the Lammy Review — an independent review into the treatment of, and outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System.

If you are aged 16–25 and would like to get involved with the project, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch with Rose Dowling, the project's director, at [rose@leaders-unlocked.org](mailto:rose@leaders-unlocked.org) or write to Leaders Unlocked, Unit 202, The Colour Works, The Bootstrap Company, 18–22 Ashwin Street, E8 3DL.



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How to create a magazine in prison

Poems and inspirational quotes

## 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:

Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON