

**Sheffield  
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Hallam Centre  
for Community  
Justice

# The Melting Pot

- Year One Evaluation



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## Section 1: History and background of the Melting Pot

The Melting Pot is a three year creative writing and mentoring programme, working with some of the most isolated and vulnerable prisoners at the Dangerous and Severe Personality Disorder (DSPD) Westgate Unit at HMP Frankland in Durham. This ambitious and pioneering project is the first of its kind in the UK. The Melting Pot (MP) project specialises in developing and exploring creative writing activities which are specifically aimed at the DSPD prisoner.

The project is a direct result of a long-term development partnership between Writers in Prison Network (WIPN), the Writer in Residence at HMP Frankland (2002-2006), and the Learning and Skills Department at HMP Frankland. During 2007-2008, WIPN and the Sir James Knott Trust worked together to assess the impact of the Writer in Residency at HMP Frankland with a view to developing new project opportunities. This culminated in a successful bid to the Northern Rock Foundation by the Writer, with WIPN support, to deliver the three-year Melting Pot (MP) project. Thus, the concept of the MP was the creative vision of an enthusiastic Writer in Residence and was enabled by a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship between the three key stakeholders, all of whom were keen to embrace development and innovation in working with some of the most challenging prisoners, in the most challenging of settings.

Key Melting Pot project objectives are to:

- offer a highly unique extra-curricular, sensitive and intelligent approach to creative writing and mentoring among DSPD prisoners;
- identify and help contribute to the overall well being of men within the DSPD Unit; and
- contribute to the therapeutic and rehabilitation programme within the DSPD setting.

In the UK, a specific DSPD Programme operates within two high security establishments in the prison estate for men<sup>1</sup> and specifically focuses on the rehabilitation needs of prisoners

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<sup>1</sup> These are the Westgate Unit in HMP Frankland and the Fens Unit at HMP Whitemoor. The DSPD programme also operates in two high security psychiatric units in England - Rampton and Broadmoor.

who are deemed to have dangerous personality disorders. Prisoners are encouraged to address their own personal difficulties and receive intensive therapeutic treatment programmes, along with interventions, such as education, sport, and extra-curricular meetings and visits.

Admission to the DSPD Programme is based on three factors: risk of serious harm, personality disorder, and there being a functional link between the two<sup>2</sup>. In practice, this means that a person is likely to be suitable if they are assessed as being at very high risk of causing harm to others, based on the Offender Assessment System (OASys), and have previously been assessed by a psychologist or psychiatrist as having at least one severe personality disorder. Personality disorders are classified using one of two internationally recognised systems<sup>3</sup> and are defined as:

***“An enduring pattern of inner experience and behaviour that deviates markedly from the individual’s culture is pervasive and inflexible, has an onset in adolescence or early adulthood, is stable over time, and leads to distress or impairment”.<sup>4</sup>***

## Section 2: Aims of evaluation

In September 2010, the Hallam Centre for Community Justice (HCCJ) at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) began a three-year evaluation<sup>5</sup> of the MP. The evaluation aims to:

- Map the activities of the MP
- Asses the extent to which the MP has met its objectives
- Identify the barriers and facilitators to effective delivery of the programme
- Assess the impact of the project on prisoners, writers and the host prison

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.dspdprogramme.gov.uk/useful\\_information.html](http://www.dspdprogramme.gov.uk/useful_information.html) (09/09/11).

<sup>3</sup> ICD-10 or DSM IV.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Mentalhealth/Personalitydisorder/index.htm> (03/04/12).

<sup>5</sup> The first year of the evaluation was funded as part of the overall WIPN evaluation. Years two and three are being funded by Northern Rock, who also fund the MP project.

- Identify effective practice and make recommendations to inform the future operation of the MP
- Provide other prisons with an awareness of the project and to enable them to assess the feasibility of introducing similar projects in their own setting
- Provide potential investors with an awareness of the prospective benefits of projects of this nature

This document reports on the first year of the evaluation.

### Section 3: Methodology

During year one of the evaluation, a predominantly qualitative approach has been adopted.

Data collection activities have included:

- A documentary review, including examination of minutes of steering committee meetings, project interim reports, and the Coordinator/Lead Writer's journal
- A brief literature review examining the specific challenges of working in a high security estate and with DSPD offenders in particular, and the role and potential value of 'the arts' within this context
- Attendance and observation of a Melting Pot Steering Group meeting
- Interviews with Wing Staff (n= 3)
- Interview with Psychology Research Team member
- Interview with the Writer delivering the programme
- Interviews with prisoners currently engaging in the project (n=7)
- Interview with a Visiting Writer
- Interview with a Prison Education Tutor

The interviews outlined above were conducted during an evaluation visit to HMP Frankland in May 2011, over a two-day period. Resources to fund the evaluation have been limited and this has impacted upon the amount of data collected. However, the aim of this first evaluation report is not to provide definitive answers around the impact of the MP but to 'tell the story' of the MP journey, from its inception to the present time, highlighting key successes, challenges and learning points along the way. During years two and three of the evaluation, some of the key issues highlighted during year one will be further examined. In

addition, a range of quantitative data will be examined in order to further unpick and support year one findings.

## Section 4: DSPD prisoners - a brief overview

### 4.1 The management of PDSD prisoners

It is estimated that 5% to 13% of people living in the community; 40% to 50% of psychiatric in-patients; and 50% to 78% of prisoners are diagnosable with a personality disorder (PD). Personality disorder is often rooted in deprivation, neglect or trauma in childhood, which can result in an inability to function effectively as an individual or in society<sup>6</sup>. As a result, people with PD may present with a range of physical, mental health and social problems, such as substance misuse, depression and suicide risk, housing problems, offending, and long-standing interpersonal problems<sup>7</sup>. The National Health Service uses the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV), a guide to diagnosis, which divides personality disorders into three main clusters<sup>8</sup>:

- Cluster A - Odd/eccentric behaviours, often encompassing schizoid and schizotypal personality disorders
- Cluster B - Dramatic/emotional/erratic behaviours, often encompassing antisocial, borderline, histrionic and narcissistic personality disorders
- Cluster C - Anxious/fearful behaviours, often encompassing avoidant and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders

Managing dangerous and disturbed prisoners has been a long-standing challenge since the 19th century (see, for example, Seddon, 2008a, 2008b; Seddon, 2007<sup>9</sup>). During the last two

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Mentalhealth/Personalitydisorder/index.htm> (03/04/12).

<sup>7</sup> Department of Health (2009) Recognising Complexity: Commissioning Guidance for personality disorder services  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_101789.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_101789.pdf)  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_101789.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_101789.pdf) (07/02/12).

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/personality-disorder/Pages/Definition.aspx> (03/04/12).

<sup>9</sup> Seddon, T (2007) Punishment and Madness: Governing prisoners with mental health problems, Abingdon: Rutledge-Cavendish. Seddon, T (2008a) Risk, Dangerousness and the DSPD units, *Prison Service Journal*, Issue 177: 27-31. Seddon, T (2008b) Dangerous liaisons: Personality disorder and the politics of risk, *Punishment and Society*, 10: 301- 317.

decades, the management of this prisoner cohort has received particular attention. A number of governmental policy documents have focused specifically on ways of both preventing personality disorder and providing appropriate treatment and care for those who have personality disorders.

There are currently four high security units which address the specific needs of those diagnosed with severe personality disorders: Rampton and Broadmoor psychiatric hospitals, the Fens Unit in HMP Whitemoor, and the Westgate Unit in HMP Frankland. DSPD treatment services are also being piloted for women at HMP Low Newton. The principles which govern DSPD prisoner service delivery are set nationally but units have discretion over the means of delivering services, within the framework set out in Ministry of Justice (MoJ) 2008 guidance<sup>10</sup>. However, they are all required to: undertake structured assessments, which seek to establish whether an individual meets the DSPD criteria; and for those who meet the DSPD criteria, to provide treatment that addresses mental health need and risk.

In addition, the four DSPD units in England have the same nationally set criteria for admission (see, Home Office, 2008; Saradjian et al., 2010<sup>11</sup>). However, as the evidence base for the effectiveness of different treatment pathways with this client group is scarce (Home Office Report 30/03<sup>12</sup>), the treatment programme in each unit has developed independently, governed primarily by an expert advisory panel. Ministry of Justice guidance regarding treatments or interventions offered by DSPD units has a focus on reducing the risk of serious

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<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Justice (2008) Dangerous and severe personality disorder (DSPD) High Security Services for men: Planning and Delivery Guide  
[http://www.personalitydisorder.org.uk/news/wpcontent/uploads/High\\_Secure\\_Services\\_for\\_Men.pdf](http://www.personalitydisorder.org.uk/news/wpcontent/uploads/High_Secure_Services_for_Men.pdf)  
(03/04/12).

<sup>11</sup> Saradjian, J, Murphy, N and Casey, H (2010) Report of the first cohort of prisoners that completed treatment in the Fens Unit, Dangerous and Severe Personality Disorder Unit at HMP Whitemoor, Prison Service Journal, 192: 45- 54.

<sup>12</sup> Home Office Report 30/03: Review of Treatments for personality disorder  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr3003.pdf>  
(03/01/12).

offending presented by such prisoners. In order to maximise the likely success of treatment programmes, some common principles and goals are identified, as follows<sup>13</sup>:

- Treatments should involve prisoners in treatment planning, encouraging them to share ownership of treatment outcomes
- Treatments should work on building and maintaining motivation to ensure that patients and prisoners engage as productively as possible with the therapeutic regime
- Units should develop innovative, creative and motivational ways of working with such individuals

The Home Office identify five different treatment models that have been used to more or lesser extent with those diagnosed with DSPD (Home Office Report 30/03: 6<sup>14</sup>):

- Therapeutic community model
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (includes dialectical behavioural therapy)
- Psychodynamic psychotherapy
- Pharmacological intervention
- Physical treatments, for example, electro-convulsive therapy

Although approaches to treatments differ according to the type of personality disorder and treatment setting, it has been suggested that success is most likely when DSPD prisoners have the opportunity to:

***"...place their experiences in a contextual and explanatory framework that can help to raise that person's own awareness of their behaviours, thoughts and emotions..." (Howells et al., 2007<sup>15</sup>)***

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<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Justice (2008) Dangerous and severe personality disorder (DSPD) High Security Services for men: Planning and Delivery Guide [http://www.personalitydisorder.org.uk/news/wp-content/uploads/High\\_Secure\\_Services\\_for\\_Men.pdf](http://www.personalitydisorder.org.uk/news/wp-content/uploads/High_Secure_Services_for_Men.pdf) (03/04/12).

<sup>14</sup> Home Office Report 30/03: Review of Treatments for personality disorder <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr3003.pdf> (03/01/12).



Therefore, effective treatment can be characterised as encouraging increased awareness of self and of interpersonal relationships, and also increased cooperative or pro-social behaviour (Livesley, 2003, 2007<sup>16</sup>).

## 4.2 Working creatively with DSPD prisoners

The potential benefits of engaging with creative writing projects is under-researched and under-reported, however, the use of literary and creative arts in conjunction with traditional therapy for those with mental health problems is on the increase and is being recognised professionally in both the U.S. and Britain (see, Neilson and Murphy, 2008<sup>17</sup>; Murphy and Neilson, 2008<sup>18</sup>).

Creative arts-based activities have been provided in prisons for some years now (for examples see, Howard, 1997<sup>19</sup>; Blacker et al., 2008<sup>20</sup>; Cox and Gelsthorpe, 2008<sup>21</sup>; Parkes and Bilby, 2010<sup>22</sup>, and for a comprehensive summary see, Hughes, 2004<sup>23</sup>). Evidence for the efficacy (or not) of such interventions is still relatively poor (*ibid*) but increasing emphasis is now being placed upon approaches to demonstrating the effectiveness of service and

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<sup>15</sup> Howells, K, Krishnan, G and Differ, M (2007) Challenges in the treatment of dangerous and severe personality disorder, *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, Vol. 13: 325–332.

<sup>16</sup> Livesley, W. J. (2003) Diagnostic dilemmas in the classification of personality disorder. In *Advancing DSM: Dilemmas in Psychiatric Diagnosis* (eds K. Phillips, M. First & H. A. Pinks), pp. 153–189. American Psychiatric Association Press. Livesley, W. J. (2007) The relevance of an integrated approach to the treatment of personality disordered offenders. *Psychology, Crime and Law*, **13**, 27–46.

<sup>17</sup> Nielsen, P, M and Murphy, F (2008) The potential role of life-writing therapy in facilitating 'recovery' for those with mental illness, *Media and Culture Journal*, Vol. 11, No.6 <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/viewArticle/110> (30/03/12).

<sup>18</sup> Murphy, F and Nielsen, P (2008) Recuperating writers- and writing; the potential of writing therapy, *Text Journal*, Vol. 12, 1: 1- 26: [http://www.textjournal.com.au/april08/murphy\\_neilsen.htm](http://www.textjournal.com.au/april08/murphy_neilsen.htm) (02/04/12).

<sup>19</sup> Howard, A (1997) The Effects of Music and Poetry Therapy on the Treatment of Women and Adolescents with Chemical Addictions, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, Volume 11, no.2: 81- 102.

<sup>20</sup> Blacker, J., Watson, A. and Beech, A.R. (2008) 'A combined drama-based and CBT approach to working with self-reported anger aggression', *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, **18**, 129–37.

<sup>21</sup> Cox, A. and Gelsthorpe, L. (2008) *Beats and Bars, Music in Prisons: An Evaluation*, London: The Irene Taylor Trust.

<sup>22</sup> Parkes, R and Bilby, C (2010) The Courage to Create: The Role of Artistic and Spiritual Activities in Prisons, *Howard Journal*, Vol. 49, No 2: 97- 110.

<sup>23</sup> Hughes, J (2004) *Doing the Arts Justice: A review of research literature, practice and theory*. Unit for the Arts and Offenders Centre for Applied Theatre Research

interventions (Ellis and Gregory, 2011<sup>24</sup>). There is some evidence to suggest that arts participation can be particularly beneficial for prisoners with mental health issues and can be an important element in recovery (e.g., Spandler, 2007<sup>25</sup>).

Several studies have found that arts-based creative interventions are associated with enabling the disclosure of thoughts and emotions, increased insight, self-reflection, a sense of control and increased self-esteem (see, Esterling et al., 1999; Nugent and Loucks, 2011<sup>26</sup>; McCourt, 2005<sup>27</sup>). In addition, there is evidence that engaging with creative writing programmes can improve organisational skills and promote the development of alternative coping strategies (Esterling et al., 1999: 92).

Thus, although limited, the current evidence base suggests that engaging with creative writing programmes offers great potential for high risk offenders in a DSPD unit, in terms of potentially contributing to or being complimentary to the therapeutic environment. The extent to which the MP is aligned with policy guidance on the treatment of DSPD prisoners and the specific ways in which the MP contributes to treatment pathways will be discussed later in this report.

## Section 5: The Westgate Unit - an overview

HMP Frankland is a high security dispersal prison, holding over 700 prisoners convicted of serious offences. The MP project is based in the Westgate Unit in HMP Frankland. The Unit opened in May 2004, following substantial investment, to accommodate those prisoners deemed to be highly dangerous and to have severe personality disorders. Though housed within the prison, it is a self-contained unit accommodating 80 prisoners in four separate and identical units, each of which has 20 spaces. The Unit has its own multi-faith room,

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<sup>24</sup> Ellis, J and Gregory, T (2011) 'Demonstrating the value of arts in criminal justice', Arts Alliance: Clinks [http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance/clinks\\_aa\\_demonstrating-value\\_FINAL\\_SECURE.pdf](http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance/clinks_aa_demonstrating-value_FINAL_SECURE.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Spandler, H., J. Secker, L. Kent, S. Hacking, and J. Shelton. "Catching Life: The Contribution of Arts Initiatives to 'Recovery' Approaches in Mental Health." *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* 14.8 (2007): 791–799.

<sup>26</sup> Nugent, B and Loucks, N (2011) The arts and prisoners; Experiences of creative rehabilitation, *The Howard Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 4: 356-370.

<sup>27</sup> McCourt, E (2005) Art of the Possible: The place of art therapy in work with high risk offenders, *Irish Probation Journal*, Vol. 2 (1): 35- 41.

sports hall, fitness suite, library and canteen. Its healthcare facility has separate dentists' and opticians' rooms, while the education suite comprises an art, IT and general classroom. The DSPD has an all-weather sports area, a horticultural area and a greenhouse.

Treatment programmes on the Unit focus specifically on the rehabilitation needs of the individual prisoner deemed to have a dangerous personality disorder. Westgate Individualised Treatment Needs Analysis and Progression (WITNAP) is the assessment process undertaken by all prisoners accepted onto the Westgate Unit. Following initial assessment, prisoners move on to the treatment phase. The Westgate Unit use The Good Living and Development (GLAD) model with prisoners to assist in identifying and understanding what motivates them. From this model, each individual's wants/needs are identified to ensure a sense of wellbeing. Indeed, HMP Frankland has been identified as a prison that has a strong focus on programmes linked to motivation (Ministry of Justice, 2011<sup>28</sup>). There are a wide variety of treatment programmes available at the Westgate Unit which include:

- Iceberg CBT<sup>29</sup> Module
- Emotional modulation skills-based programme, based on DBT<sup>30</sup>
- Psycho-Education programme<sup>31</sup>

Within the therapeutic regime at Westgate, there is a strong emphasis on self reflection/evaluation and the identification of feelings, thoughts and emotions that may help to identify and address current behaviour and offending patterns.

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<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Justice (2011) Research Summary 4/11: The early years of the DSPD programme: results of two process studies.

<sup>29</sup> Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: a therapy that seeks to reduce an individual's emotional distress by helping them to identify, examine, and modify the distorted and maladaptive thinking underlying the distress. In other words, changing the way the individual feels by changing the way they think.

<sup>30</sup> Dialectical Behaviour Therapy: is a therapy designed for individuals with complex psychological disorders. It comprises individual and group therapy sessions, which together aim to provide a supportive, 'validating' environment in which skills for regulating emotions, tolerating distress, being successful in relationships and being mindful (self-aware) are taught and strengthened through practice.

<sup>31</sup> Contains 4 modules: Boundary setting awareness, Risk assessment awareness, Personality disorder awareness, Introduction to treatment.

## Section 6: Mapping the Melting Pot activity

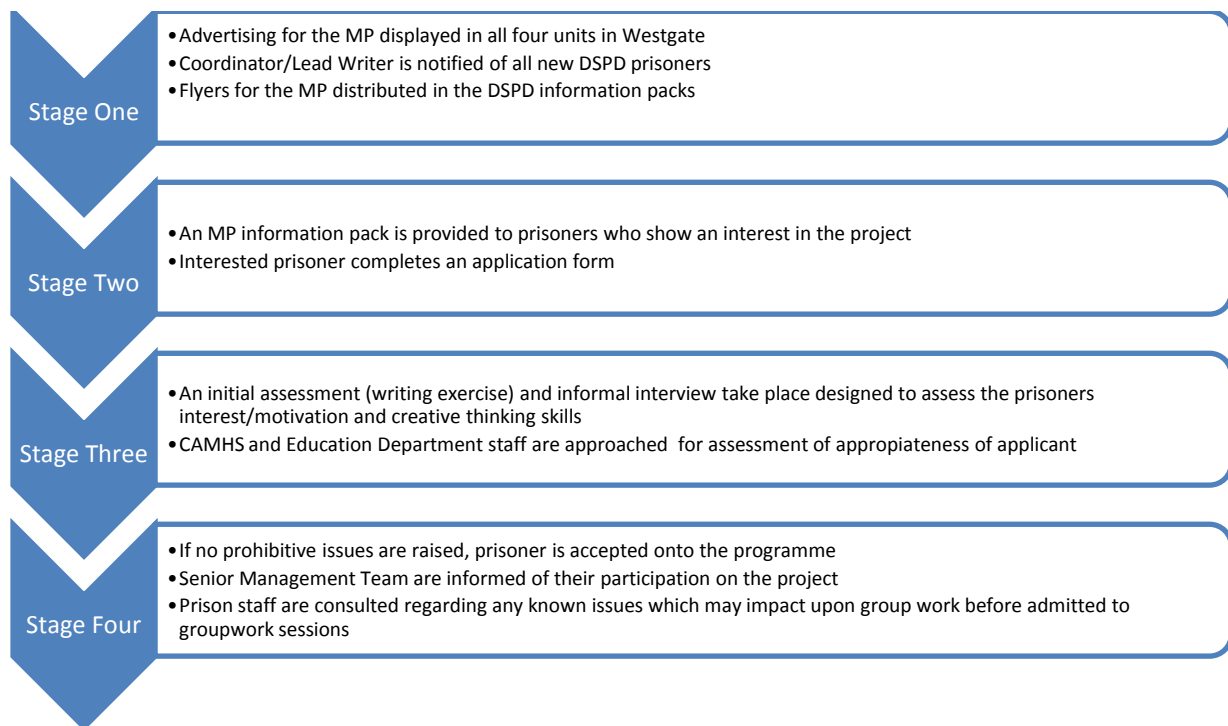
### 6.1 Laying the foundations

Prior to Cycle One of MP, a huge amount of 'groundwork' was undertaken by the Coordinator/Lead Writer in order to ensure that the project had solid foundations from the outset. The endorsement and support of the Westgate Unit Director, the Senior Management Team and the Clinical Management Team was sought and gained. Where appropriate, training was provided by HMP Frankland at the earliest possible stage (e.g., Personal Safety Control and Restraint training and Security and Personality Disorder Awareness training). In addition, full security talks were given to MP staff, and keys and official identification were provided. The willingness of HMP Frankland to undertake these activities signifies not only a strong commitment to the project and recognition of its potential benefits but also a high level of trust in the Coordinator/Lead Writer.

During the development phase of the project, WIPN assisted the Melting Pot Coordinator/Lead Writer with tender writing and course development, as well as providing ongoing support whenever required.

### 6.2 Recruitment

A key component in the introduction of any new intervention in a prison setting is the generation of interest among prisoners to ensure the viability of projects and also equality of access. A concerted advertising drive, regular attendance at staff meeting/briefings, liaison with therapeutic/psychology/education staff and ongoing work with prison officers on each of the four units in Westgate have enabled identification of potential prisoners who might be approached to participate. The evaluators have identified a rigorous and effective recruitment process undertaken by the Coordinator/Lead Writer as follows:



The recruitment strategy has evolved organically over time, as the MP has gained increasing visibility with the unit. The Coordinator/Lead Writer has continually sought to develop and improve the process.

Once the course is fully subscribed, potential participants in the next Melting Pot cycle are categorised as 'floating' and are provided with one-to-one support and help while awaiting admission to the next Melting Pot Cycle. This has proved an effective strategy in maintaining prisoner interest and motivation until a place becomes available.

### 6.3 Course activity

The Coordinator/Lead Writer attends the Westgate Unit three days per week (Wednesday to Friday) on alternate weeks; this involves attendance on all four units, as follows:

- Units 3 and 4 - Wednesday and Thursday evening association
- Units 1 and 2 - Friday afternoon association
- Group MP sessions - Thursday afternoons

The MP project currently provides 15 hours per week in group work<sup>32</sup> and between 8 and 20 hours per week of in-cell work, which is counted as purposeful activity for the prison. The Coordinator/Lead Writer also allows 'catchment time' in his visiting schedule to ensure that prisoners who may have missed a session/appointment have the opportunity to meet with him. This represents good practice in terms of consistency of support and maintaining motivation.

The MP activity is delivered in 3 'cycles'. Cycle 1 (delivered between June and December 2010) included the following 3 'strands':

- 1) A six-month creative writing course with four prisoners. This was delivered in a group setting and also involved one-to-one mentoring<sup>33</sup>
- 2) One-to-one mentoring support to six additional prisoners
- 3) MP Outreach work, which focussed on the promotion of a 'culture of writing' within the Westgate community. This strand has involved the Coordinator:
  - working with 10 'floating' MP prisoners, timetabled for one-to-one sessions
  - attending staff, department and individual meetings (Clinical Director and DSPD Governors, Senior Management Team and Clinical Management Team)
  - developing course and monitoring templates and recruitment processes
  - introducing Visiting Writers to the Unit and the Melting Pot participants
  - making links with external organisations (e.g., meeting to explore a possible arts collaboration with Durham County Council Film Festival)

The delivery approach taken in Cycle 1 has therefore involved working with a total of 20 participants in both one to one and group settings. The content of the group sessions provided during Cycle 1 are provided in Table One:

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<sup>32</sup> As per prison protocol recommendations, no more than five prisoners at any one time can participate in group activity.

<sup>33</sup> A 40-minute mentoring session every two weeks.

**Table One**

Sessions provided	Content of sessions
1	<p>Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to 'What is creative writing?'</li> <li>• Examples of creative writing work shared</li> <li>• Explanation of expectations and support provided by project</li> </ul> <p>Pre-Course questionnaire conducted</p> <p><u>Exercise:</u> Creative Writing Gym</p>
2	<p>The four basic building blocks of short story writing: character, setting, theme, plot</p> <p>Melting Pot Journal handed out and explained</p> <p><u>Exercise:</u> 'The Wind': Questions and considerations at to what it is.</p> <p>Go on to choosing a memory (from the list generated) or a clear image/place</p>
3	<p><u>Exercise:</u> Creative Writing Gym (three word association exercise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind story continues</li> <li>• Building a character</li> <li>• Expanding a plot</li> <li>• Looking at the theme and any symbolism</li> </ul> <p>Free writing time</p>
4	<p><u>Exercise:</u> Creative Writing Gym</p> <p>A picture is used to prompt story writing and/or three word association writing/aprompts (e.g., desert, ladder, plane, toothbrush, sea, ship)</p>
5	<p><u>Exercise:</u> Creative Writing Gym (words and rhyme, association couplets)</p> <p>Poetry- looking at examples</p> <p>Word association</p> <p>Linking words</p> <p>Making breakfast group poem (consider actions and sounds)</p>
6	<p><u>Exercise:</u> Creative Writing Gym: Poetry-based: looking at pictures assists participants to describe feelings and sensations and symbols</p>
7	<p>Optional sessions offered (Radio Scriptwriting, Life Story or Article writing)</p> <p>Radio Scriptwriting was chosen. This session involved studying examples of radio scriptwriting and devising/developing a storyline.</p>

Sessions provided	Content of sessions
8 and 9	Radio Scriptwriting Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a radio play</li> <li>• Developing parts and roles for characters</li> <li>• Understanding direction and giving instructions in radio play</li> </ul>

The Melting Pot Coordinator has also developed a personal portfolio for participants, to contain:

- All written work produced
- Worksheets and notes supplied by Coordinator and Visiting Writers
- Participant journal for observing and recording personal thoughts and reflections on engaging with the programme

In summary, the evaluators have identified a thoughtfully conceived programme of activity. In addition to attempting to build a comprehensive writing skills set for participants, particular attention has been paid to:

- Appropriate sequencing and intensity of activity (e.g., delivering the radio drama scriptwriting component later in the course, due to it being a very challenging piece of work)
- Encouraging prisoner ownership of the project (e.g., developing a personal portfolio for each participant)
- Ensuring the prisoner is enabled to have input into the way the course developed (e.g., the Coordinator/Lead Writer has proactively responded to a strong interest in autobiography shown by the group)

The timetabling of MP activity has been an ongoing issue and a challenge for the Coordinator/Lead Writer. A key achievement has been to formalise mentoring and support activity amongst the timetable allocation on the Unit. As well as the persistent efforts of the Coordinator/Lead Writer, the Administration team on the unit have had a key role to play



here. Timetabled sessions are now able to take place in a designated space (Chaplaincy have supported the use of their Multi Faith space).

Monitoring and tracking forms for all MP participants have been specifically designed and are now in use. These provide a general overview on each prisoner after each contact session, either group or one-to-one.

#### **6.4 Staffing and governance**

Whilst the majority of MP activity is delivered by the Coordinator/Lead Writer, two Visiting Writers are also involved in the delivery of the MP programme. The Visiting Writers attend the unit for one-to-one evening mentoring session work during the alternate weeks the Coordinator does not attend the prison. The involvement of Visiting Writers has proved successful and represents good practice in a number of different ways. First, it has reduced the isolation of the Coordinator/Lead Writer and offers him the opportunity to 'bounce around' ideas and gain creative input from other writers. Second, it enables cover when Coordinator needs to take leave. Third, and crucially when working with a challenging and potentially demotivated group, it has ensured a consistency in approach, which has assisted in maintaining prisoner engagement. The integration of Visiting Writers into the project has been deliberately gradual, with them initially working alongside the Coordinator/Lead Writer (whilst gaining familiarity with the setting) and then eventually working independently on the Unit during a period of annual leave. Their gradual introduction to the MP has meant that participants have responded positively to them:

***"The visiting writers are helpful for a different view - they give me inspiration in my writing". (MP Participant)***

As with the Coordinator/Lead Writer, the Visiting Writers have had formal security talks and training where appropriate to ensure smooth integration within the Unit and with the client group.

In addition to the Visiting Writers, the administration team have also provided valuable support for the Coordinator/Lead Writer in developing timetables and also informing him of

new arrivals on the Unit. WIPN have continued to support the MP both informally (ad hoc telephone conversations) and more formally (Coordinator/Lead Writer attendance at quarterly WIPN conferences has enabled a forum for support, sharing of ideas and networking).

MP is governed by a Steering Group which meets quarterly. Steering Groups are generally well attended (including a prison Senior Management Team presence), which reflects a strong commitment to the MP. Steering Group meetings also provide an 'official' forum for WIPN to provide guidance and support to the Coordinator/Lead Writer. A further strength of the Steering Group is the involvement of the funder (the Northern Rock Foundation), which has maintained a strong interest in and commitment to the work undertaken. Meetings have been fully documented, thus providing an 'audit' trail of project activity. In addition to the Steering Group, WIPN, the prison Senior Management Team and Clinical Management Team have provided ongoing direction and guidance to the project.

## Section 7: Embedding the Melting Pot into the Westgate Unit

During the first year of the MP evaluation, the evaluators have witnessed the process by which the Coordinator/Lead Writer has successfully integrated the MP into the prison regime. This is reflected in a May 2011 journal entry by the Coordinator:

***"A growing sense of senior management interest and ever involving willingness to make things happen - e.g., Governor...has suggested (and emailed) contact info for family day/visit potential to link up Westgate with MP".***

There was a strong consensus in interview data that the embedding of the MP has been crucial to the way its delivery has respected the Unit's protocols and rules. Undoubtedly, the very extensive experience of the Coordinator/Lead Writer in working in prisons, and specifically working within HMP Frankland has been invaluable here. The MP activity has 'fitted into' the Westgate Unit regime and has been carefully timetabled so as not to interfere with core commitments and protocols (both prison and prisoner). This sensitivity

of approach reflects the knowledge and experience of the Coordinator/Lead Writer, who clearly knows how to work in cooperation rather than in conflict with regimes. A protocol operation sheet has been drawn up to explain operational procedures and line of communication/management regarding the presence of MP staff on the unit.

The Coordinator/Lead Writer and the Visiting Writers have completed training appropriate to undertaking work in this challenging setting (e.g., Control and Restraint training, Manipulation and Conditioning/Personality Disorder Awareness) and the fact that prison staff have been most helpful in enabling this is indicative of their support of the project.

The following successes, in terms of embedding the MP into the regime at the Westgate Unit have been of particular significance:

- An excellent rapport with officers, staff and non-MP offenders on the unit has been established. This has enabled effective liaison and coordination with key staff members.
- Coordinator/Lead Writer has formed positive and cooperative relationships with key players at HMP Frankland including the Head of Psychology, CAMS/Education Department workers, the prison Library. Productive liaison with the Education Department has taken place on gaining support for specific pieces of work (e.g., the magazine, recording of a radio play).
- The Coordinator/Lead Writer has been invited to attend Care First team meetings, which involve an internal debrief for all staff with offender contact. Individual offender behaviour is discussed and here the Coordinator/Lead Writer can both offer and receive relevant information about prisoners with whom he works.
- The Coordinator has been formally asked by prison staff to feed into the core behavioural monitoring programme on the Unit. This involves him recording any significant prisoner behaviour which he observes during MP work in the core monitoring programme book which is used by all other Unit staff on a daily basis.
- The MP Coordinator formally feeds into prisoner GLAD plans. The fact that the Coordinator has been invited to contribute in various different ways to reviews of

prisoner behaviour and need seems to reflect a high value on the relationship which the Coordinator has built up with prisoners.

- Coordinator/Lead Writer has been granted access to the prisons P Drive and also P: Nomis. Also, the Head of the Westgate Unit has helped to find space and storage for the Coordinator/Lead Writer.
- Coordinator/Lead Writer has been granted use of the group session rooms on the Unit with full integrated prison officer support. Not only does the allocation of prison officer time to the MP indicate strong support for the project but it also raises awareness of the project among prison staff and highlights interest.

As well as the very significant successes outlined above, there have also been some challenges for the Coordinator/Lead Writer. Whilst prison officer support for the MP has been strong, it has not been possible to enrol a designated officer to the MP, as the Coordinator had hoped for in order to increase consistency for MP prisoner. Also, the Coordinator/Lead Writer had hoped to be able to organise lunchtime creative writing sessions for staff to enhance the 'creative culture' on the Unit. Despite attempts at recruiting for this activity, it has not been possible to arrange, largely due to the fact that prison staff are often 'working to rule'. Indeed, the Coordinator/Lead Writer reported that some elements of the MP still felt a little '*ad hoc*' and '*unstable*' due to major and ongoing changes in the prison service during this period of austerity measures. A key concern for the project is how the existing excellent relationships with prison staff can be maintained when staff cuts are being made and staff may not have time to commit to the project in their working day.

## **Section 8: Engaging DSPD prisoners in Melting Pot activity**

The Coordinator/Lead Writer has been successful in devising effective strategies for prisoner engagement. This is a considerable achievement considering the range of challenging and difficult behaviours exhibited by DSPD prisoners. The unique skills and experience of the Coordinator/Lead Writer have undoubtedly been important here. He has worked as a creative practitioner in various HMP establishments across the UK since 1996 and continues to receive national commissions and awards for his work as a professional artist, writer,

mentor and publisher. Thus, the innovator of this project is ideally placed not only to deliver the various components of the MP project but also to develop meaningful and motivational relationships with the most challenging of prisoners.

The Coordinator/Lead Writer has developed a flexible approach to engaging prisoners, realising at an early stage that having a consistent physical presence is the best way of generating interest in the MP:

***"When I am in regularly - work picks up! Pretty obvious, but many need encouraging and motivating". (Coordinator/Lead Writer journal extract)***

Also, conducting MP activity during evening association (and Friday afternoon association) has been the most appropriate time for prisoners to engage, working as a complementary activity outside of the core day regime and also adding to purposeful activity hours recorded by the prison. This willingness to work flexibly and also to undertake antisocial hours to maximise engagement reflects the commitment of the Coordinator/Lead Writer. The MP has aimed to engage prisoners who are not fully engaging in other activities. This has been supported by the Education Department who have allowed MP prisoners to do some of their MP work during education classes, providing it does not interfere too much with their accredited work. The prison Education Tutor interviewed for this evaluation reflected that the Coordinator/Lead Writer has engaged well the education department, seeking advice from them where appropriate. The Tutor also acknowledged that the MP Coordinator/Lead Writer had a *'free and easy brief'* compared with prison education staff, which complemented their own more formal and traditional teaching. Prison staff reported being very impressed (and somewhat surprised!) by prisoners engaging with the MP in their own private time, which has sometimes involved giving up other valuable leisure activities. In addition, prison staff felt that engagement with the MP is a good way of addressing the lack of motivation often experienced by offenders whose release date is so far away.

There is a strong sense within the evaluation data that MP participants have been listened to and their individual and complex needs have been responded to. Where possible, activities have been tailored to individual interests and prisoners have had input into

activities undertaken. Personal goal setting has been important in achieving and maintaining engagement. This style of approach is in line with MoJ guidance in maximising the likely success of treatment programmes for DPSD prisoners outlined in Section Four. The importance of consistency in programme delivery has been recognised and addressed in various ways. The security requirements of the Unit have sometimes meant that group activity is limited (when there is no officer availability) but this has been counteracted by one-to-one and/or pair/small group work on the landings at 'opportune moments' (e.g., slotted in between main regime or evening association). This demonstrates that the MP is able to respond effectively to the limitations of a prison environment. A key feature of the organisation and structure of the course is consistency and joined up support, for example, the one-to-one mentoring sessions that follow up group work maintain motivation and re-affirm the achievements of participants. There is ample opportunity for prisoner reflection and feedback, in both group and one-to-one sessions, which allows a 'check in' for any concerns and promotes wellbeing. The Coordinator/Lead Writer reflects in his journal that:

***"Prisoners have responded well to advice, guidance and criticism".***

In addition to the supported activity outlined above, there is also ample evidence of self-motivated activity by MP participants in evaluation data. Prisoners have spent time in their cells writing and planning for the next activity, in the absence of facilitation and guidance. This implies that the activities are meaningful for them and fulfil certain needs within the confines of prison walls. It is also encouraging to see evidence of peer support among participants both within and outside of group activity. This has given them the opportunity to develop teamworking skills, and respectful relationships and a degree of empathy, perhaps for the first time in some cases. An increased capacity for empathy has been highlighted as a key factor in desistance from crime, thus, this may be a particularly important 'soft outcome' for the MP and worthy of further investigation in the remainder of the evaluation (e.g., Laub and Sampson, 1993<sup>34</sup>).

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<sup>34</sup> Laub, J.H. and Sampson, R.J (1993) Turning points in the life course: why change matters to the study of crime. *Criminology*, 31: 301-325.

The momentum of the MP appears to have built up over time, by month five of the first cycle the Coordinator/Lead Writer reports in his journal that:

***"The group have become more committed and eagerly anticipate next session - several prisoners have double checked attendance".***

By the end of Cycle 1, three prisoners expressed a desire for continued support beyond their direct project involvement, which the Coordinator/Lead Writer was willing to facilitate. In addition, some prisoners have continued to receive mentoring support when relocated to another prison. This is indicative of the high motivation levels of both the prisoners and the Coordinator/Lead Writer.

Whilst it is clear that the Coordinator/Lead Writer has worked very hard to engage prisoners in MP activity and has developed motivational strategies that have been successful, a number of challenges to engagement have been identified, as follows:

- General apathy/laziness among prisoners
- Negative effects of habitual behaviours of prisoners in this setting (e.g., staying up all night)
- Specific characteristics of personality disorder (e.g., manic and/or depressive behaviours)
- Legal matters relating to the prisoner/prison taking up a lot of prisoners' energy and distracting them from their writing endeavours
- Problems and challenges external to the prison environment (e.g., with family and relationships) providing distractions
- Illness (either genuine illness or perceiving themselves as sick)
- Writers block/feeling unsure of how to progress
- Limited access to computers on which to type up their work
- Lack of clarity around the level of commitment expected for MP participation

In addition to the above, some participants felt that being in an intensive therapy situation affected their energy and motivation with regard to participation in the MP activities:

***"Sometimes during intensive therapy- you are too emotionally drained to engage with writing- he [the Coordinator] understands what it is like sometimes and gives me no hassle if I need a break one week". (MP Participant)***

## **Section 9: Prisoner experience and impact**

As outlined in Section 8, there is clearly a high level of motivation to engage with the MP on the Westgate Unit. Enthusiasm for the project among both staff and prisoners has increased over time, largely due to the presence and drive of the Coordinator/Lead Writer. Initial exploration of prisoner experience of the MP in the year one evaluation has revealed a range of benefits for participants. On one level, prisoners have clearly enjoyed the experience of writing, learning new skills and of having the opportunity to be engaged in activity outside of the core prison curriculum:

***"Creating something out of nothing is very satisfying".***

***"Bringing characters to life- giving them life- great".***

***"A story has a beginning, a middle and an end- so it's a strategic view of how to construct things like stories- I use different skills than before".***

In addition to creative writing skills, participants appear to have begun to develop a range of 'soft skills', including enhanced communication. The Coordinator describes a particular incident in his journal where a prisoner was unhappy with a prison officer's presence in a one-to-one mentoring session. This led to a discussion around the role of the officer and how his presence was to ensure their own safety as well as the safety of the staff member. This was a very positive exchange in a potentially very challenging situation, which enabled the prisoner to view the situation from a different perspective.

On a deeper, more profound level, there is evidence to suggest that prisoner involvement in MP has provided a vehicle for self-exploration and self-expression, offering a sense of freedom with the confines of the prison walls:



***"I have so many things in my head, writing gets them out". (MP Participant)***

***"Within writing, I have learnt to express emotion and also feel emotions through poetry. It has helped me express my feelings, and my emotional understanding is better". (MP Participant)***

Prisoners have begun to use language to describe complex emotional experience and as a release mechanisms for intense and 'hard to say' emotions:

***"I used to lock in my experiences- not talk about it- now I write about them. Bottling up how you feel does not help. Write about it- it relieves things- it makes them more manageable somehow". (Melting Pot Participant)***

In addition, there is some tentative evidence of improved self-management and self-regulation among some participants, for example reports of reduced self harming for one participant and a reduction in psychopathic score reported by another.

For some participants, the creative writing process has enabled them to reflect on their life situation and relationships, one participant had gained the confidence to use their writing to enhance family relationships:

***"I have sent [some writing] to my father- the family are keen to read it. It has made staying in contact easier- given them something to talk about too-. We have a closer relationship now, closer together since I begun writing"***

For others, an opportunity to focus less on his offending:

***"It re-directs my attention from my habitual habit, my index offence and redirects it into something more constructive. It takes mind away from index offence and focuses it somewhere else, on something else and given me another direction. It's like being challenged constructively by***

***[Coordinator] and the writing in a way that makes me think about focussing on expressing my ideas clearly. It gives me hope and has given me something more constructive to hold on to". (Melting Pot Participant)***

The data collected during the course of the year one evaluation suggests that MP is making a significant contribution to the overall wellbeing of men within the DSPD Unit. Some of the findings presented here will be further explored in the remainder of the evaluation and triangulated with quantitative findings on impact.

### **Case Study**

A member of the evaluation team was approached by a young man engaging in the Melting Pot programme during the evaluation visit. He provided an articulate and powerful narrative regarding the impact his engagement with writing in general and the Melting Pot in particular has had on his life, which is presented here in a case study format. The young man's name is fictional.

Peter describes himself as being a troubled young man with a history of bottling up his emotions or *'locking in my experiences, hiding them, not talking about them and never looking at them again- especially the bad ones'* (Peter). Peter has always had trouble expressing the emotions he feels, and is convinced this has resulted in much of the kind of behaviour that brought him to the attention of the criminal justice system:

***"It's not easy for men to show their 'weak' side. I was always known as fighter which made it worse too. I'd bottle stuff up until I'd explode with frustration at it all- that's when the trouble started". (Peter)***

Peter spent the formative years of his life in and out of correctional establishments.

***"I was refusing meds at one point too. I used to get cross- kick out, self harm. I was a prolific self-harmer- I'm not now. I'd end up with 28 days segregation where pens were not allowed- just a vicious circle really". (Peter)***

Peter has been writing poetry and books for some years now; he has always found it helpful to put his feelings on paper; however, the difference he feels regarding his writing has been quite marked since engaging in the Melting Project as he is learning to share his feelings with other people. Peter also admits that as part of sharing these emotions in the written word, he accepts he can feel differently about them. Peter is currently undergoing intensive therapy at the DSPD Unit and finds it difficult to engage fully with the interventions offered by clinical staff. Peter is convinced that engaging with the Melting Pot project has helped him begin to write for a reason and the knock on effect has been that it has assisted with his therapeutic work:

***"The therapists here always ask me how I feel. I used to get very angry because I couldn't say things about how I felt. Now- I have given therapist my poems- they often ask me how I feel and I can't say it out loud- so I write it- they are ok with that. So now the writing helps- I get the feelings out- maybe one day I will be able to say things, but for now writing is much better than just exploding and fighting everyone near me". (Peter)***

It has been suggested that participation in the arts can be a way of engaging populations resistant to therapeutic intervention in exploring personal experiences and thinking critically (Hughes, 2004). As already outlined for DSPD prisoners specifically, therapeutic treatments are more likely to be effective if individuals are able to place their experiences in a contextual and explanatory framework, which can help raise that person's own awareness of their behaviours, thoughts and emotions. The fact that MP participants are starting to use their writing to reflect in a meaningful way on their life experiences indicates that engagement with the project may complement the therapeutic regime on the Westgate Unit by increasing the readiness of men to accept and engage meaningfully in therapy. It is clear that the work undertaken in MP is filtering through to therapy sessions:

***"I have referred to my creative writing in therapy- my therapist seems to like they responded well when it came up in discussion". (MP Participant)***

One prisoner spoke about how his early childhood memories had become a large body of creative writing work and how this had fed into his therapy sessions. One of the MP Visiting Writers also reflected on the potential for creative writing to 'safely unlock' some of the challenges that each prisoner faces, which may then be explored in a therapeutic situation:

***"Students have to give something of themselves when writing creatively, it is therapeutic certainly as it brings out these issues and in the third person- so in a non-threatening way. It gets the stuff out of their head and on to the page- it gives them distance from it". (Visiting Writer)***

As any therapy involves clinicians trying to access and address their client's views of the world around them, the potential for a creative writing project to assist in this process are powerfully described below:

***"With the writing- you put yourself into it. You are taking someone with you into your world". (Melting Pot Participant)***

The impact of MP on individuals has been overwhelmingly positive, especially the way in which MP activity has supported the therapeutic and rehabilitative activities of the Westgate Unit; this will be further explored in years two and three.

## **Section 10: Summary/Conclusion**

The year one evaluation of the Melting Pot has revealed an innovative and unique project which contributes to the overall wellbeing of men on the DSPD unit in a myriad of ways. Effective management of the programme by the Coordinator/Lead Writer, in conjunction with ongoing support from WIPN and the wider steering group, has enabled the project to function well in a challenging setting. The general approach, personality and experience of

the Coordinator/Lead Writer has been cited as a key factor for the smooth integration of the project into the Westgate regime. He has worked in ways which are respectful to prison protocols, building up strong and productive relationships with both prisoners and key staff within regimes. It is reflective of the trust placed in the Coordinator/Lead Writer that he has been invited to feed into prison behaviour monitoring and action planning processes. Conversely, the Coordinator/Lead Writer has sought advice and guidance from prison staff where appropriate. Challenges have been encountered regarding the embedding of the MP within the Westgate Unit regime and progress has sometimes been slow (e.g., gaining designated prisoner officer support for the project, formalising MP activity within the timetable allocation, and enabling creative writing work with prison staff). However, the excellent relationships fostered on the Unit, along with the persistent and proactive approach of the Coordinator/Lead Writer have enabled progress to be made in these areas.

Having Visiting Writers working alongside the Coordinator/Lead Writer in developing and delivering the MP project has worked well. The project has benefited greatly from the input of artists with serious writing credentials along with a strong commitment to working with DSPD prisoners. For this prisoner cohort, engagement with the MP has enabled the development of a strong skills set and has provide a vehicle for self expression. It has also guided participants on a journey of self-reflection and self-awareness, which appears to have contributed positively to their therapeutic programme and also complemented the formal prison education programme. Whilst there are inevitably challenges involved in engaging and motivating prisoners with very complex mental health issues, a proactive and well-considered approach has been developed. Of particular note here is how activity within the MP has, where possible, been tailored to prisoners' individual needs and how a comprehensive mentoring/support package has been provided. Prisoners have had input into the programme design, which has enhanced the credibility and relevance of the work undertaken. The approach adopted is very much in line with MoJ guidance for working with DPSD prisoners, particularly with regard to enabling shared ownership of work undertaken and building and maintaining motivation. The Melting Pot project is an excellent example of a creative project which is prepared to take risks and undertake challenging work with this challenging prisoner cohort. The MP represents an opportunity to further assess the

potential of using creative writing with DSPD prisoners specifically and also other prisoner cohorts.

## Section 11: Recommendations

The preceding sections have set out key successes and barriers to success encountered by the Melting Pot project, based on the limited amount of data collected at this stage in the evaluation. In addition, the proactive attempts which have been made to overcome some of the difficulties in working in a high security setting and with DSPD prisoners have been noted. Clearly, the barriers presented and the ongoing learning evidenced during the year one evaluation need to be turned into opportunities. To support and give direction to this process this section offers recommendations regarding the future operation and strategic development of the MP. The recommendations also aim to provide good practice guidance for other prisons who may wish to replicate this type of project in their own setting:

- The personal qualities which the Coordinator (and also Visiting Writers) bring to the project should continue to be recognised and developed. This may include providing ongoing opportunities for training as well for self-evaluation and reflection in the context of formalised supervision sessions
- The input and integration of clinical staff into the MP programme should be further developed - this may include discussion around the feasibility and/or desirability for course content to fit into treatment cycles
- The clinical staff team could also be asked to consider referring appropriate clients into the MP programme
- The extent to which MP activity is aligned with policy guidance on the treatment of DSPD prisoners and how it may contribute to treatment pathways should be regularly considered
- Consider seeking funding for a longitudinal research study which incorporates the long-term follow up and tracking of representative samples of MP participants (whether they remain in custody or are released). This would enable a robust analysis of extent to which the MP represents value for money for the prison service

- Where appropriate, continue to develop course content which encourages participants to reflect upon their behaviour and emotions (and especially ways in which this may be linked to their offending)
- Continue to foster the support of the Westgate Unit Director as well as the Senior Management Team and the Clinical Management team - this may be especially important in the context of staff changes and cuts
- Continue to foster positive relationships with the Education Department, especially to engage in ongoing discussion around how MP can complement formal prison education and visa versa
- Alongside the evaluation team, seek to develop a comprehensive set of performance indicators which are aligned with project objectives
- Further develop and utilise the data collection strategy outlined by the evaluation team in Section 12. Regular reviews of data collection activity should be undertaken within the Steering Group and any issues or problems reported back to the evaluation team at the earliest possible stage
- Where possible, use monitoring data to support funding applications and promotional activities
- Aim to widen participation of the Steering Group by:
  - inviting external mental health organisations to join. This would ensure a more outward looking focus and may lead to more funding opportunities
  - considering inviting a prisoner representative onto the steering group to ensure 'higher level' input into programme planning
- Steering Group could develop strategies for enhancing the attractiveness of MP to potential future funders (this may include gaining the endorsement of high profile external mental health organisations e.g., MIND)
- Continue to network and establish links with external arts projects to raise awareness of MP and to make contacts for invited guest sessions
- Continue to seek designated prison officer engagement for the MP
- Ensure that expectations for MP involvement are made explicit for prisoners before engagement begins. This should include clarity regarding the time and emotional



commitment which may be involved. Using 'testimonies' from ex-participants regarding their experiences (both positive and negative) may be useful here

- Strategies for assessing the motivation levels of potential participants (prior to enrolling on the course) should be developed.
- Motivational work for participants could be incorporated into programme activity. This may involve linking in with the clinical team in devising motivational strategies for participants, taking account specific features of mental health issues
- Encourage all peer support activity and formalise if appropriate (e.g., pair up participants to foster long standing relationships and enhance motivation)
- Ensure the work of the MP project is informed by a theory base, incorporating arts-generated models of change and also from routes to desistance literature
- Develop formalised exit procedures and strategies, if they do not already exist
- Ensure that participants can have 'time out' from programme activity if they are involved in a particularly intensive cycle of therapy
- Develop good practice guidance as a product for other prisons who may be considering a similar programme of work.

## Section 12: Evaluation plans for years two and three

It should be noted that the findings presented here are tentative in nature and will be further explored during the next phase. In particular, we hope to collect quantitative data around impact of the MP and we also hope to further explore the views and experiences of clinical staff on the Westgate Unit. This will enable the evaluators to develop more robust and corroborated conclusions. Plans for years two and three of the evaluation have been developed in conjunction with the prison research team and the Melting Pot Coordinator/Lead Writer, and with reference to guidance from the Arts Alliance/ Clinks<sup>35</sup>. A summary of the data collection plan is provided in Table Two below. Data collection tools have been developed and are awaiting approval by the Melting Pot Steering. In addition,

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<sup>35</sup> Ellis, J and Gregory, T (2011) 'Demonstrating the value of arts in criminal justice', Arts Alliance: Clinks [http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance/clinks\\_aa\\_demonstrating-value\\_FINAL\\_SECURE.pdf](http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance/clinks_aa_demonstrating-value_FINAL_SECURE.pdf)

meetings have been arranged with the Coordinator and the MP funder to clarify key issues and expectations for the next phase.

**Table Two**

<b>Data source</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Process/protocol</b>	<b>How often?</b>
<b>Steering Group meeting notes and attendance at meetings</b>	<p>In order to establish how the project has developed and managed</p> <p>To ensure all stakeholders are kept up to speed on developments and any issues can be addressed with regard to using the data tools etc</p> <p>To establish what core characteristics/ processes/ support are/ is required for the successful introduction of this kind of project into a DSPD unit?</p>	<p>HP to circulate meeting minutes to KA</p> <p>KA will attend a steering group meeting during the annual evaluation visit</p>	quarterly
<b>Offender-writer Journals</b>	In order to assess the impact of the engagement in MP on unit offenders	HP to photo copy and forward to KA (with any identification removed)	quarterly
<b>Pre-course Questionnaire</b>	To establish offenders expectations of the course and provide base-line data	HP to photo copy and forward to KA (with any identification removed)	quarterly
<b>Post course</b>	To establish what the offenders	HP to photo copy	quarterly

Data source	Rationale	Process/protocol	How often?
<b>Questionnaire</b>	felt they gained by attending the programme, explore how progressed through comparison with pre - course questionnaire data (base line)	and forward to KA (with any identification removed)	
<b>Clinician Impact Assessment Questionnaire (CIAQ)</b>	To collate clinical input into any observed impacts of offender engagement  Each prisoner has WITNAP Update two years post-assessment and then yearly after that.	<u>Proposed process:</u>  1. HP to access allocated case manager assigned to his participants from Clinical Profile and access dates WITNAP updates occurring  2. KA to email questionnaire template  3. Return to KA by email (coded -with all identifications removed)	annually in line with WITNAP process
<b>Numerical assessment of men engaging in the project</b>	To show levels of engagement over the time scale of the project and consider drop out levels and their rationale	HP to complete post-session per offender and forward to KA (coded -with all	quarterly

Data source	Rationale	Process/protocol	How often?
	To enable commentary on men declining/ withdrawing from the project	identifications removed)	
<b>Reflexive writing exercise feedback from MP participants</b>	Ensures direct offender voice (service users) are reflected in the evaluation  <u>Entitled:</u> 'How engaging with MP has affected me/ my stay at unit'	HP to hand out.  Offenders to return in provided SAE direct to KA	As required/ on-going
<b><u>To develop Melting Pot as a Product/ intervention:</u></b>  a) MP Coordinator Writer's Journal  b) Mapping of Creative Writing in a DSPD unit as a model of intervention  c) Developments in recruitment strategies	To capture developments, good practice, what worked/ didn't work during delivery and impact on facilitator of programme  To ensure the programme can produce a legacy 'product' which can be replicated in other prison settings  To ensure these developments are captured and developed into a Melting Pot model.	HP to write up and forward to KA  and  Interviews during evaluation visits and by e mail correspondence  and  HP to write up and forward to KA	quarterly  During evaluation visit interview and by e mail correspondence

Data source	Rationale	Process/protocol	How often?
<b>Mentoring Monitoring Forms</b>	To track developments over time and assess offender engagement	HP to photo copy and forward to KA (with any identification removed)	quarterly
<b>Qualitative Interviews</b>  Interviews with wing staff  Interviews with clinical staff  Interviews with offenders engaging with MP	To ensure all stakeholder views are included in the evaluation and to allow for the possibility that some stakeholders may respond more positively to one-to-one, rather than questionnaire/paper-based evaluation tools	KA to conduct during evaluation visits	Visits early 2012 and early 2013