

*WRITE TO BE  
HEARD:*  
SUPPORTING  
OFFENDER  
LEARNING  
THROUGH  
CREATIVE  
WRITING

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Authorship:  
Dr Jane Hurry, Patrice Lawrence,  
Anita Wilson and Jessica Plant



WRITE TO BE HEARD

## In my imagination - Music

Within the conscience and indeed the  
deepest of oceans,  
I am lifted by this wonder, this wave, this  
motion,

I thank thee, for captivating me  
capturing my physical essence and sole  
identity,  
mentoring me through sound and entity  
Regardless of length or brevity,  
Strength or naivety,

It soothes the soul, of much, there is  
plenty

Idly swinging on this bench, there I  
was,  
Steadily smiling, as I was, harpooned  
in the air, it was all a fuzz.

This remedy derived from pure melody  
is what I quenched, is what I  
thirst,

Now, in between the velvet sky and blue planet  
below, the harmonies that brought me here, to this I owe.



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# INTRODUCTION



## What is *Write To Be Heard*?

*Write to be Heard* is a grant-aided creative writing programme commissioned and funded by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). Its main objectives were to encourage hard-to-reach offenders to engage with education and arts opportunities in prison, to introduce new and innovative organisations to prisons and to investigate how to create a support network to help arts organisations working in prisons improve the services they offer.

In 2011, 'Making Prisons Work: Skills for Rehabilitation', the new offender learning strategy, was published jointly by NOMS and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The strategy recognised that improving prisoners' literacy and employability skills is central to the rehabilitation and reducing re-offending agendas. In the strategy, the role of the arts was acknowledged as a key part of the rehabilitation process as it can encourage self-esteem and communication skills. The strategy also asserts that *'future employment or self employment in, or associated with, the creative arts and crafts can for some represent a potential pathway to life free of crime.'* In addition, the strategy specifies that prison learning contracts should *'provide an informal adult and community learning offer, including the arts, to support long-term prisoners and those for whom an immediate focus on work is unrealistic.'*

*Write to be Heard* was an opportunity to test the impact of using an arts-based approach to engage hard-to-reach learners. The project encompassed a national creative writing competition: a schedule of creative writing workshops and master-classes; and a series of programmes broadcast on National Prison Radio.

Creative writing resources were also made accessible via the Virtual Campus. However, it was equally important to explore the impact of the project beyond the immediate activities. Were there lessons about how new arts organisations can bring high quality practice into prisons? How can we maximise learning potential across the custodial estate?

## The evaluation

In order to assess the impact of *Write to be Heard*, an independent evaluation was commissioned from the Institute of Education. The aim was to explore the perspective of prisoners, participating arts organisations and competition entrants. This would subsequently inform the development of a model of best practice for arts organisations to promote the delivery of high quality arts interventions in prisons.

## The *Write to be Heard* aims and objectives

*Write to be Heard* was funded to meet three key aims:

- To encourage hard-to-reach offenders to engage with education and arts opportunities in prison
- To introduce new and innovative organisations to prisons
- To investigate how to create a support network to help arts organisations working in prisons improve the services they offer

Encompassed within these aims, were the following project objectives:

- To develop a model of best practice which will encourage a greater number of prison establishments to build sustainable relationships with arts groups and so provide long-term, stable provision of arts related projects to offenders.
- To explore how offenders can be involved in recording, editing and providing radio programmes and Virtual Campus material.
- To explore how more qualifications can be offered to offenders taking part in the arts in prison.
- To suggest ways that the project might harness the potential of the Virtual Campus.

These aims and objectives will be addressed within the body of the report.

## The delivery partners

### Workshop delivery partner

**Geese Theatre Company (Geese)** is a multi-award-winning arts organisation dedicated to the use of drama, theatre and creative approaches within the Criminal Justice System. Since 1987 Geese has worked with approximately 200,000 people in custodial settings, devising and delivering a wide range of theatre performances, drama-based group-work programmes and creative workshops. In addition Geese work with criminal justice professionals, delivering training events in the use of theatre and creativity with offenders, as well as performing at social welfare conferences.





### Media partner

*The Prison Radio Association (PRA)* is a multi-award-winning charity, established in 2006, to promote and support the development of prison radio projects across the national prison estate. It also developed and launched and now runs the groundbreaking radio station, National Prison Radio (NPR) in partnership with NOMS. NPR is the world's first and only national radio station for prisoners. It is a 'by prisoner, for prisoner' service, with programming inspired, developed, produced and presented by prisoners working alongside a small team of professional radio producers.

### Offender learning partner

*The Virtual Campus* is a highly secure web-based environment which supports alternative methods of delivering learning opportunities. It is currently active in over 100 prisons and is a rich source of information on a range of subjects focussing on employability skills, life skills, education and personal development.

### Evaluation partner

*The Institute of Education (IOE)* is a graduate college of the University of London. The IOE's mission is to promote excellence in education and related areas of social research and professional practice through advancing knowledge and understanding.

*Write to be Heard* is managed by the *Arts Alliance*, a national membership organisation promoting the use of arts in the Criminal Justice System. The membership is made up of artists, arts and Criminal Justice System groups and individuals who work across art-forms with prisoners, those on probation and ex-offenders in the community. There are currently 520 Arts Alliance members benefitting from practice-sharing and networking events as well as opportunities to contribute to policy issues shaping arts interventions in the Criminal Justice System.





# Aim One

This is Stylistic radio, if you want to get in touch put in a request form – they're on the houses!





## Aim One: How successful was the *Write to be Heard* model in encouraging hard-to-reach offenders in prison to engage with education and arts opportunities?

*Write To Be Heard* offered opportunities to test new ideas. It was a collaboration that fused the drama and facilitation skills of Geese Theatre Company; the expertise of the writers; and the reach and prisoner knowledge of National Prison Radio. It was a chance to develop workshops using techniques that engaged with different learning styles and translate this content into a Virtual Campus resource.

The expectation was that as many prisoners as possible would be encouraged to write by participating in the workshops, listening to *Write to be Heard* programmes on National Prison Radio, accessing the material on the Virtual Campus and entering their writing for the competition.

In order to test the viability of the model as vigorously as possible, it was anticipated that:

- *Write to be Heard* creative writing workshops would be delivered in at least 25 prisons across different regions, reaching as diverse a group of learners as possible
- *Write to be Heard* workshops would, wherever possible, aim to reach offenders in prisons that were not benefitting from arts activities
- New artists would bring innovative ideas to creative writing workshops
- The learning opportunities would be maximised by the involvement of National Prison Radio and the Virtual Campus as delivery partners
- The *Write to be Heard* awards would attract entrants that would not usually enter writing competitions

## Evaluating the impact of *Write to be Heard* on hard-to-reach prisoners

Although a significant minority of prisoners are adequately or well qualified academically, the majority have weaknesses in their basic skills (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Hurry, Brazier and Moriarty, 2005). Longitudinal studies have documented the negative pathways associated with weak basic skills. Weak basic skills make it more difficult to find consistent employment and also heighten the chances of becoming socially marginalised (Parsons and Bynner, 1999; Bynner,

2004). However, prisoners can be resistant to education that is too much like school, where they may have experienced failure (Canton, Hine & Welford (2011); Barton, Ivanic, Appelby, Hodge, et al, 2007). Some present behavioural issues that preclude easy engagement with education and learning opportunities (Hurry, Rogers, Simonot and Wilson, 2012). Creative writing offers them an opportunity to engage in literacy activities in a context they may find more engaging.

Tett and colleagues (2012) provide a well-documented and persuasive rationale for the value of prison arts projects, such as drama and creative writing, as vehicles not only for promoting literacy development but also desistance. They cite studies which show the value of art projects for fostering positive relationships between prisoners (Goddard, 2005; Silber, 2005): with prison staff (Menning, 2010): with their families (Boswell, Wedge and Price, 2004; Palidofsky, 2010): with peers (Moller, 2003; Palidofsky, 2010): for personal development through enhancing self-confidence (Cohen, 2009; Goodrich, 2004; Silber, 2005): developing communication and social skills (Cohen 2009; McCue, 2010): and promoting further engagement in education (Anderson and Overy, 2010). It is argued from a desistance perspective that these positive developments are intermediate outcomes for prisoners on what may be a complex journey to rehabilitation (Burrowes, Disley, Liddle, Maguire et al, 2013).

Building on a desistance perspective, NOMS (2012) have articulated their policy aimed at reducing re-offending. Nine factors are identified that are linked consistently to both re-offending and desistance. This framework informed the evaluation of *Write to Be Heard* because it is at the heart of government decision-making on what provision to support. Five of these factors most relevant to the *Write to be Heard* creative writing programme are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Factors linked to re-offending and desistance

Factors linked to re-offending /desistance	Desired Intermediate Outcomes
Impulsivity / low self-control	Skills in pro-social problem solving and perspective-taking. Emotion management skills
Attitudes that support crime	Developing or enhancing a non-criminal identity Feeling hopeful and motivated about giving up crime
Family / marital relationships	Reduced conflict in close relationships, positive relationships, enhanced warmth and caring for others Strong and supportive family ties improving family and intimate relationship, confident and responsible parenting behaviours
Work	Increased employability in the form of skills and motivation to work and confidence to relate constructively to others in the work setting
Lack of positive recreation / leisure activities	Engaged participation in pro-social recreational activities, sense of reward from pro-social recreation and sustained involvement in pro-social lifestyle



The other four factors (drugs misuse, alcohol misuse, homelessness and a social network also engaged in crime) are not specifically addressed in *Write to be Heard*. The other four factors (drugs misuse, alcohol misuse, homelessness and a social network also engaged in crime) are not specifically addressed in *Write to be Heard*. Homelessness and participation in social networks refer largely to community rather than prison contexts. Drug and alcohol misuse could potentially be targeted within a creative writing programme, as part of a reflection on addictive behaviours. Although at least two workshops were delivered with prisoners overcoming addiction issues, the workshop content did not specifically address those problems, though some participants chose to create characters and develop storylines based on their own experiences. In contrast, aspects of both the workshops and the competition included writing for an audience under 10, which can provide a direct connection with family relationships.

There was a particular focus on prisoners who might typically avoid prison education and writing, which is the definition of hard-to-reach adopted here. There was also an intention to have systemic legacies and to this end, to explore how National Prison Radio could encourage prisoners to write and enter the competition: to capture aspects of the workshops for uploading on to the Virtual Campus: to stimulate prisons to make greater use of arts organisations: and to attract writers to work with prisoners. These means were envisioned as providing a legacy which could contribute significantly to sustaining creative writing activities within prisons.

## Method

The overall evaluation methodology was a questionnaire survey of workshop participants and competition entrants, which provided some breadth, supplemented by a small number of workshop observations. The workshops, though limited in number, provided sufficient rich data to lead to a descriptive report: the formulation of a useful model of engagement: and resources to help sustain the activities and approach.

### Workshop

Creative writing workshops were delivered in 28 prisons across 10 English regions, plus one in Wales.

Prisoners' engagement and responses to the workshop were captured in four ways:

1. Attendance registers were completed in the morning and afternoon sessions to document any drop out.
2. In 24 of the 28 prisons where workshops were run, prisoners completed a questionnaire at the end of the workshop. 185 questionnaires were collected.
3. Prisoners were observed by the evaluator in four prisons, chosen to include two male prisons, one female prison and a Young Offender Institution. Workshops on average contained between nine and ten participants.
4. Prison organisers at the four observed prisons were asked to give follow up feedback on any changes in prisoners' behaviour for the four weeks following the workshops. The two male prisons supplied this information.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) began with 18 items which addressed:

- a. The impact of the workshop on intermediate outcomes to desistance listed in Table 1, with a particular focus on writing, but also informed by previous work on art and desistance (McNeill et al, 2011)
- b. Evaluation of the workshop
- c. Previous writing experience

Table 2. Location of *Write to be Heard* workshops

Region	Number of prisons	Number of prisoners participating
East Midlands	6	62
East of England	1	7
Kent and Sussex	3	16
London	4	43
North East	1	9
North West	4	37
South Central	1	10
South West	1	12
West Midlands	4	27
Yorkshire and Humberside	2	17
Wales	1	9
Total	28	249

Participants were then given the opportunity to write about the workshop in their own words. To understand the process of the allocation of workshop places they were asked how they were chosen. Prisoners were asked whether or not they were in education in order to assess hard-to-reach status. They were also asked about their engagement in work. Because of the desire to provide legacy through the Virtual Campus there was a question on access to the Virtual Campus. Information on age and ethnicity was also collected.

In the four prisons visited by the evaluator, the range of workshop activities was observed and the ways prisoners engaged with these activities. Prisoners were questioned through the day about how they were chosen to attend the workshops and their previous engagement with writing. At the end of the workshop they discussed their reactions to the day in the group and whether or not they thought they would make use of the skills learnt.



## Competition

Prisoners entering the competition were also asked to complete questionnaires. 186 questionnaires were received from 64 prisons.

The questionnaire was similar to the workshop questionnaire but adapted where necessary to measure views on the competition (see Appendix 2). There were also questions on whether they had entered a writing competition before: how they heard about the competition: whether or not they listened to National Prison Radio: and whether or not they had attended a writing workshop in the previous four months. These questions gave information on hard-to-reach status (previous engagement with writing) and on factors that enabled competition entry, in particular the potential role of prison and education staff, National Prison Radio, writing workshops and the Virtual Campus.



## Profile of prisoners attending the workshops and entering the competition

The age breakdown of workshop participants, competition entrants and the general prison population (Berman and Dar, 2013) are shown in Table 3. Age categories for the workshop/competition samples and available statistics for the total prison population were slightly differently grouped for those aged over 25 years old.

To enable comparisons, the assumption was made for the 30-39 year old age band (total prison population), that half of the population were aged 30-34 and the remainder aged 35-39. With reference to participants aged under 25 years old, the workshop participants matched the profile of the general prison population closely.

25-34 year old participants appear to be slightly over represented amongst workshop participants (42% of the workshop participants were aged between 25 and 34, compared to an estimate of 32% of the general prison population). Competition entrants were significantly older than those who attended the workshops (Chi-square = 36.45, df = 6,  $p < .001$ ), with around two thirds (64%) being over 35 years old. They were also older compared with the total prison population, where it is estimated that only 44% are over 35 years old.

Prisoners attending the workshop were less likely to be white and more likely to be of either Mixed Heritage or Black or Black British than both the general prison population and the general population (Table 4). Competition entrants were significantly more likely to be white than workshop participants but were ethnically representative of the total prison population.

Table 3. Age by participation in workshop or competition

Age	Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Workshop participants (N=178) *	2%	20%	42%	20%	12%	4%	1%
Competition entrants (N=176) *	0%	14%	22%	21%	25%	11%	7%
			25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Total prison population	1%	22%	18%	28%	18%	8%	4%

\* There is some missing data for Tables 3, 4 and 5. The total N of workshop questionnaires = 185, of competition questionnaires = 186

Table 4. Ethnicity by participation in workshop or competition

Ethnicity	White	Mixed Heritage	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese Or other ethnic group
Workshop participants (N=178) *	61%	11%	4%	20%	4%
Competition entrants (N=173)	77%	5%	2%	11%	5%
Total prison population	74%	4%	8%	13%	1%
General population 15+	88%	1%	6%	3%	2%

95% of the entries were from male prisoners and this reflects the fact that 95% of the prison population is male.



## Hard-to-reach prisoners

### Workshops

There was an intention to engage hard-to-reach prisoners in the writing workshop, “hard-to-reach” being defined as those not attending prison education and/or inexperienced writers. Prison staff were responsible for the selection of prisoners. They were provided with the following criteria by Geese:

The workshops are all-day sessions for up to 12 people, aimed at people who:

- Are not regularly involved in Education,
- May never have shared their writing with others,
- Haven’t written before but would enjoy giving it a go.

Just over half the workshop participants were in education (55%), just under half were not (45%).

Table 5. The participation of hard-to-reach prisoners in workshops.

Criteria	Percentage of prisoners
Not in work or education	19%
In education only	32%
In work only	26%
In work and education	23%

### The writing experience of participants

In three of the four prisons where prisoners were observed, they were a mixture of experienced writers who may have entered competitions before: inexperienced, sometimes nervous, writers: and those who described themselves as non-writers. In the fourth prison, a Young Offender Institution, participants were selected on the basis of an interest in rap and poetry and tended to be comfortable with writing.

Persuading hard-to-reach prisoners to attend workshops was found to be far from straightforward. There had to be at least a willingness on their part to have a go. For example, in one prison, where prisoners had not volunteered to attend the workshop, they were not prepared to cooperate and an alternative group had to be found. The new group engaged enthusiastically and it was felt by all to be a successful day. The selection of prisoners to attend workshops is conducted by prison staff. They may need guidance, beyond the provision of a list of criteria, to support them in how to select and encourage inexperienced or anxious writers to attend such workshops.

A successful example of targeting hard-to-reach prisoners was employed by a chaplain approaching individual fathers to attend a workshop on writing for children under 10 years old. This workshop was well attended by prisoners with little or no writing experience. Follow-up written feedback received from these prisoners corroborates the presumption that some at least were inexperienced writers:

*'I have to say I fort I would not enjoy the workshop. But I am glad to say that yes I found it very enjoybal'*

*'I strongly belive this workshop should be run reguely as I got a lot out of it and it made me feel closer to my family'.*

(spelling is uncorrected)

In general, the workshops were successful in including hard-to-reach prisoners alongside those already in education or with previous writing experience. This is likely to be a realistic mix.

## How did prisoners hear about *Write to be Heard*?

As the workshops were being scheduled, postcards and posters were sent to governors in every prison in England, with additional information sent to Heads of Learning, Skills and Employment and education providers. Meanwhile, National Prison Radio recorded and broadcast one-minute interviews with writers to raise awareness of *Write to be Heard* activities.

Table 6: How prisoners heard about *Write to be Heard* workshops

Method	Percentage of prisoners
Prison staff	38%
Education staff	26%
Advertised on National Prison Radio	3%
Advertised elsewhere (eg. poster on wing)	13%
Other (eg. fellow prisoner, librarian)	20%

Around a quarter of prisoners heard of the workshops through the Education Departments, though prison staff were central to spreading the word.

The Virtual Campus has the capacity to offer a legacy for prisoners to develop their life skills. Participants were asked if they could use the Virtual Campus if they wanted to. Overall, 41% of participants had access to the Virtual Campus (See Table 7). This was nearly always in Education, so of those participants not in Education, only 30% could access the Virtual Campus.

This suggests that the Virtual Campus is currently limited in its capacity to support the inclusion of hard-to-reach prisoners. However, it does have considerable reach.

Table 7. Access to Virtual Campus by Education status

	Never heard of VC or no access	Access in Education only	Access elsewhere	Total
In Education or Training (N=80)	47%	46%	7%	100%
Not in Education or Training (N=76)	70%	24%	6%	100%
All (N=156)	59%	35%	6%	100%

### Competition

Unsurprisingly, given that workshops targeted hard-to-reach prisoners, competition entrants were less hard-to-reach in terms of education. 69% of entrants were in education compared with 51% of workshop participants, a statistically significant difference. Competition entrants were also slightly more likely to be in work (63% in work) than workshop participants (55%), but this was not statistically significant. Almost half those who entered the competition (47%) had sent something to a writing competition previously, while the remainder were doing this for the first time.



## How were prisoners encouraged to enter work for the awards?

Table 8. How prisoners heard about the awards

Method	Percentage of prisoners
National Prison Radio	19%
Education staff	39%
Writing workshop	13%
From another prisoner	7%
Other (mainly through Inside Time, but also from prison staff)	22%

### The role of National Prison Radio

One of *Write to be Heard's* key aims was to engage hard-to-reach prisoners, so it was very valuable to work alongside a media delivery partner that was familiar, credible and relevant to prisoners.



National Prison Radio content is developed and delivered by prisoners, and is accessible via in-cell TV around the clock. Eighteen specially-commissioned programmes were broadcast to promote the awards, share the learning and celebrate the entrants' achievements. (See Appendix 3 for details of the programmes). In 2013, as the *Write to be Heard* programmes were being broadcast, National Prison Radio was available in over 100 prisons with a potential audience of around 73,000.

Prisoners do not only listen to NPR; they also write to the station. In 2013, nearly 5,300 letters were received by the station.

The *Write to Be Heard* competition was trailed on National Prison Radio, firstly building awareness of the awards through a series of teasers on heavy rotation from August. Five writing workshops were edited into fifteen minute programmes and one minute spots. These were broadcast throughout October when the awards were open for submission. 53% of competition entrants reported on the questionnaire that they listened to National Prison Radio.

In addition to devising and broadcasting specialist content, National Prison Radio also wrote a *Write to be Heard* editorial for 'Inside Time', the free newspaper distributed in prisons. The same edition carried the *Write to be Heard* entry form as a tear-out centrefold. 63,000 copies of 'Inside Time' are distributed to all UK prison libraries and over 196,000 read the publication online.

National Prison Radio estimate that 84% of prisoners in England and Wales listen to the station and 35% tune in every day. A recent survey by National Prison Radio revealed that just over 40% of National Prison Radio listeners were aware of the *Write to be Heard* campaign, around 30,660 prisoners.

Thus radio made a valuable direct contribution to publicising the competition, and an unspecified indirect contribution through word of mouth.

### **The role of the Virtual Campus**

Competition entrants reported a similar level of access to the Virtual Campus as that reported by workshop participants (37% of those entering the competition reported being able to use the Virtual Campus). Where they did have access, as reported by the workshop participants, this was almost always in Education (in 91% of cases). Only two prisoners reported being supported in their entry through the Virtual Campus but at this time no specific content had been launched in this environment.

### **The role of Education**

The largest category disseminating information about the competition was clearly Education, which is not surprising since encouraging prisoners' writing is integral to its role. Even amongst entrants who were not attending Education, 30% heard about the competition directly from someone in Education. Although most entrants did not report getting support with their entry (58%), a substantial minority were supported through Education (30%) and a further 11% were helped by another prisoner. One prisoner was supported by a Toe by Toe Mentor.

### The role of the workshops

13% of prisoners reported being directly influenced to enter the competition through a writing workshop. The 25 prisons that hosted *Write to Be Heard* workshops prior to the competition submission deadline represent 17% of the 164 prisons in England and Wales. 35% of the competition entries came from these prisons, so it can be concluded that entrants were twice as likely to come from a 'workshop' prison than any other prison.

### Prisoners' reasons for entering

Prisoners were asked about their reasons for entering the competition. Their responses varied in complexity. The most common reason was 'to be heard'.

Table 9. Reasons for entering the competition

Reason for entering	Percentage of prisoners
<p><b>To be heard and to get feedback</b></p> <p>“To put my work into the wider arena and receive the views of more experienced writers.”</p> <p>“Interested, as never shown my poems to others.”</p>	30%
As a challenge	15%
<p><b>For enjoyment, for escape, because they like writing</b></p> <p>“It gave me an objective that I felt I would enjoy.”</p> <p>“I enjoy writing as a way to escape mentally from the four walls of prison.”</p> <p>“Because I love writing.”</p>	20%
<p><b>To express themselves</b></p> <p>“To express myself, to escape the torment of incarceration and because I like writing and hope for appreciation/recognition.”</p>	15%
As a result of involvement in a creative writing group or workshop or on the suggestion of Education staff	15%
To give to others	7%

## Prisoners' responses to the workshops and the competition

### Workshop

How successful were the workshops in encouraging engagement?

One measure of engagement is whether or not prisoners returned to their workshop in the afternoon. Registers were taken in the morning and afternoon for each workshop (see Appendix 4 for details). 91% of prisoners who attended the workshops returned for the afternoon session. Non-attendance was usually recorded on the registers as due to previous appointments (visits, health appointments etc.) rather than a lack of enthusiasm.

Prisoners' responses on the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive (Table 10). Workshops were seen as enjoyable (97% agreed or strongly agreed that it was fun) and were highly recommended to others (98% agreed they would recommend to others). Involving prisoners in positive activities related to writing, traditionally approached with reluctance (Canton, Hine & Welford, 2011; Barton, Ivanic, Appelby, Hodge, et al, 2007; Hurry, Brazier, Wilson, Emslie-Henry & Snapes, 2010), and is challenge enough, so the level of enthusiasm should be seen for what it is: remarkable.

But it was not just about enjoyment. In terms of intermediate outcomes related to desistance:

- 92% agreed or strongly agreed that they had learnt new writing skills
- 87% felt the workshop had given them confidence to write
- 82% agreed that the workshop made them think about themselves
- 70% could imagine themselves doing well out of prison

To give some overall sense of the response, all 18 items were summed to produce a percentage scale score with a minimum possible score of 0 (negative) and a maximum of 100 (positive). The average score is 78%.

Variations in reactions to the workshops were analysed by whether or not prisoners were in work or education, by age, by ethnicity and by whether they were serving a sentence or on remand. There was no statistical difference on any of these variables in terms of how they valued the workshops. It can be concluded on the basis of these results that the workshops were well received across the range of participants.



Table 10. Prisoners' responses to the workshop questionnaire - percentage frequency

As a result of the workshop:	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I have greater confidence to write	0%	3%	10%	60%	27%
I learnt new writing skills	0%	2%	6%	61%	31%
The workshop made me think about myself	0%	4%	15%	47%	35%
I am more confident about speaking in public	0%	7%	26%	39%	28%
It made me want to write	0%	2%	14%	54%	30%
It made me feel like expressing myself	0%	3%	13%	52%	31%
I thought about things that were bothering me	3%	17%	33%	27%	19%
It was fun	0%	0%	3%	32%	65%
I want to continue learning	0%	0%	4%	41%	54%
I would like to enter the writing competition	1%	6%	24%	36%	33%
I would like more support with writing	1%	6%	28%	40%	26%
I would like to read more	1%	4%	18%	42%	36%
It helped me imagine myself doing well out of prison	0%	4%	26%	34%	36%
I am more positive about the future	0%	0%	29%	40%	30%
Using drama has made exploring the issues more memorable	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%
I would recommend the workshop to others	0%	0%	2%	33%	65%
I was happy to stay for the whole workshop	0%	0%	2%	30%	68%

Forty participants wrote comments at the end of the questionnaire, most of which were positive. In terms of factors linked to desistance (See Table 1), the most frequent type of comment was on the opportunity to learn skills and gain confidence:

*"I have learnt more about writing - creative writing to add to what I have just done i.e. English level 1."*

The next most frequent comments referred to a feeling of inclusion and engagement, mapping to pro-social skills and to 'engaged participation in pro-social recreational activities'.

*"Made me feel part of the group."*

*"A positive course run by a group of positive and driven people...with a diverse group of (prisoners)."*

*"The opportunity to express ourselves in a positive manner. There are no opportunities to do this at any other time in this prison."*

There were also comments relating to a 'non-criminal identity':

*"It made me think more what I want to achieve out of my life and give me more determination to do so, as I spoke openly about myself."*

The impressions gleaned from the questionnaires were strongly supported by the observations. Prisoners' engagement and self-expression was palpable in every prison. Subsequent feedback from prisoners in two of the observed prisons evidenced a sustained effect on communications with their families, for example:

*"I was struggling to write letters home, but the day helped me get my mind working again."*

On 'non-criminal identity':

*"It was nice not to be treated as a criminal for the day...I was treated as a person in my own right. Something I had not experienced since my sentence started. If similar courses and ethos were employed a lot more in prisons then people would genuinely change within."*

On work-related skills:

*"Since I went to the Workshop, I have started a 'moving on' course, voluntarily. Its about skills and getting on with life, lots of things....I'm starting to write short stories and poems. Ive never done anything like that before. Doing things like this will help me when I get out of prison."*

Some participants suggested aspects they would like to have seen in the workshops. They mentioned having more time:

*"Shame it is only a one day one off experience."*

Or receiving more support:

*"I'd like to enter [the writing competition] but would need help with writing/spelling."*

A couple of people suggested preparations for the course:

*“The participants could’ve been asked to bring any of their work along to be critiqued and to be performed.”*

One person remarked:

*“We need prison radio for the comp winner.”*

The point above is worth noting. Although access to National Prison Radio did not necessarily stop prisoners from entering the competition, a number of award-winners were unable to hear their work broadcast. Some were in prisons where National Prison Radio was not installed or activated. In other prisons, technical difficulties prevented National Prison Radio from being accessible on the days of the broadcast. A small number of award winners had left prison by the time the programmes were broadcast.

For case studies of workshops in male and female prisons see Appendix 5.

### Competition

The entries came from 65 prisons across the country: 265 entries in total across four categories.

- Writing for an audience under 10 years old
- Writing with rhythm and rhyme
- Writing for more than one voice
- Telling a story

The most popular category was ‘Writing with Rhythm and Rhyme’, constituting just over 50% of all entries.

30% of entries were submitted for the category ‘Telling a Story’.

10% of entries were for pieces ‘For More Than One Voice’.

10% of entries were submitted for the ‘Writing for an Audience Under 10 years old’.

For a list of the readers and judges, please see the Appendix 8.

Every entry was read and just over a 30% of entries were commended for a second read by the judges. Every entrant received feedback on their work. The judges awarded:

- 20 Gold Awards
- 24 Silver Awards
- 17 Bronze Awards

Prisoners’ responses to the competition (see Table 11) were strongly positive with typically 70% agreeing or strongly agreeing with positive statements. Many prisoners felt that they had improved their skills, gained confidence and were enabled to imagine themselves doing well out of prison. They particularly endorsed the fact that entering the competition was fun, that it made them want to write more and to learn more generally (over 90% agreed or strongly agreed with these statements).



Competition entrants did not on the whole feel that they would have liked more support with their writing. They tended to have done 'quite a bit of writing' before the competition (71% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement), and for many writers there may be pleasure in the solitary act of creation. Prisoners who would have benefited from more support may simply not have been able to enter.

Table 11. Prisoners' responses to the competition

As a result of entering the competition	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I have greater confidence to write	0%	2%	30%	47%	21%
I feel more willing for my writing to be read aloud	0%	3%	15%	58%	24%
My writing has got better	0%	3%	30%	46%	21%
It made me think about myself	0%	2%	24%	47%	29%
It made me think about my family	1%	4%	24%	43%	28%
I am better at telling stories	0%	4%	41%	33%	22%
I could express myself	0%	1%	20%	57%	22%
I thought about things that were bothering me	3%	16%	28%	32%	21%
It helped me imagine myself doing well out of prison	1%	9%	22%	42%	26%
It was fun	0%	1%	4%	48%	47%
I want to write more	0%	1%	5%	45%	49%
I would like to learn more	0%	0%	10%	42%	49%
I would like to read more	0%	3%	17%	42%	39%
They should do this every year	0%	1%	3%	30%	66%
Before the competition I did quite a bit of writing	5%	12%	11%	34%	37%
I would have liked more help with my writing	11%	30%	28%	22%	9%

## Did *Write to be Heard* have an impact beyond creative writing skills?

*Write to be Heard* strengthened some family links, ignited many participants' desire for reading and writing and encouraged participants to think about themselves in a positive manner.

In addition, there are clear links between the skills practised in *Write to be Heard* and those required for 'employability'.

### Employability Skills

'Making Prisons Work: Skills for Rehabilitation' recognises the importance of employability skills alongside vocational skills. Although there is generally a common understanding of what constitutes 'vocational' skills, 'employability' feels less easy to define. Broadly speaking, it is the basket of skills and attributes that enable an individual to keep and sustain employment. The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) believes 'employability' constitutes wide-ranging skills encompassing communication, team working and organisational skills, as well as problem solving.<sup>1</sup> The UK Commission for Employment and Skills surveyed a number of definitions and developed a model of employability that shares territory with NIACE. The foundation of their model is an individual's 'Positive Approach'. Secondly, the individual requires skills related to numeracy, literacy and IT. Finally, the model addresses skills related to behaviour and attitude – self-management, thinking and problem solving, team work and communicating and understanding the business.

There is a gathering body of evidence on the way arts interventions can reduce re-offending and support resettlement. For instance, initiatives such as the Personal Effectiveness and Employability through the Arts Project (PEETA) specifically used arts as a way to support prison learners into employment. PEETA developed and piloted a new BTEC qualification to 'help those who may find accessing traditional routes to employability challenging' (Fletcher; 2012).

Even though *Write to be Heard* can be viewed primarily as a literacy project, like other creative writing programmes, it can draw out a number of other 'soft' skills. These include:

<b>Critique skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prisoners gave feedback on publicity material and made recommendations for improvement.</li> <li>Prisoners piloted and made recommendations for improving the evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>
<b>Interviewing skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Prison Radio presenters interviewed the <i>Write to be Heard</i> Coordinator to publicise awards.</li> <li>Workshop participants interviewed each other during exercises.</li> </ul>
<b>Mutual support skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audiences at radio recording sessions offered support and encouragement to less confident readers.</li> <li>Participants at the workshops encouraged each other to share their written work.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.niace.org.uk/current-work/area/employability>

For details of how *Write to be Heard* links with employability skills, please see Appendix 6.

### Literacy Skills

There is an obvious fit between creative writing and literacy skills, although literacy is not a requirement for telling a good story. *Write to be Heard* was set up to encourage participants to write for radio, deliberately focussing on ‘voice’ rather than spelling ability.

However, creative writing programmes such as *Write to be Heard* clearly resonate with the adult literacy core curriculum. Learners progress from Entry Level to Level 2 by improving their ability to use written and spoken language: to be able to listen and read increasingly complex and abstract language: and to expand their repertoire of vocabulary, genres, registers, grammar and punctuation.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the workshops were an opportunity to improve speaking and presentation skills.

*Write to be Heard* workshops were one-off events, but in terms of activities, were pertinent to the ‘Speaking and Listening’ and ‘Writing’ elements of the core curriculum. For a matrix of how *Write to be Heard* activities match literacy core curriculum skills, please see Appendix 7.

## How can the Virtual Campus support creative writing across prisons?

An expectation of *Write to be Heard* was that creative writing materials would be hosted on the Virtual Campus as a resource for prisoners entering the awards. The materials would encompass exercises and work-in-progress by prisoners, as well as an adapted version of the BBC Writersroom. The BBC Writersroom is an online resource which offers interviews with writers of TV and radio drama, a script library and tips for aspiring writers. The Writersroom website has been made available to prisoners via Virtual Campus as part of a developing partnership between the BBC and NOMS.

This aspect of the project was not realised; there was a delay in uploading both sets of resources. This meant that there was no opportunity for prisoners to be involved in developing content in the lead up to and during the competition. However, the Virtual Campus was used to publicise the awards via updates to around 6,000 VC tutors across the custodial estate and award-winners’ work will be published on the *Write to be Heard* Virtual Campus area. To develop content we were supported by Synergy Theatre and actors who were ex-prisoners.


The Virtual Campus is now live or going live in over 100 prisons and as the project concludes, *Write to be Heard* creative writing resources and the BBC Writersroom will be available as part of the legacy. The former is a multi-media series of exercises to engage both new and experienced writers, using filmed scenarios and micro-lessons by writers, as well as excerpts from NPR programmes. The topics include ‘Coming up with ideas’, ‘Writing convincing dialogue’ and ‘Creating characters’. The Writersroom on Virtual Campus looks

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://repository.excellencegateway.org.uk/fedora/objects/import-pdf:9531/datastreams/PDF/content> for details

very similar to the site available in the community but access to other BBC websites, Twitter and E-submissions has been blocked. It is hoped that this will be a tool for prisoners keen to develop their creative writing skills and that it will support prisoners who engaged with *Write To Be Heard* through workshops or the competition. Prisoners can submit scripts via Writersroom but they would need to do so via their personal officer.

These resources can be used in many ways: by prison writing groups: as a tool for skills and qualifications: by tutors in prison: and to support prisoners who wish to enter other writing competitions, both in prison and in the community.



Thank you for entering Write to be Heard. We look forward to reading your entry. Write to be Heard is open for entries on 9 September and closes on 1 November 2013. Please check the Write to be Heard rules in your Library or on the Virtual Campus.

You will need to complete a form for each entry so we can keep track of your work. Remember, you can only enter each category once. This form also includes a questionnaire to help us find out more about the type of people who have entered. It will be separated from your entry and will not affect how your entry is judged. You will need to keep a copy of your work as we will not do so.

Please complete the form in black ink and CAPITAL letters. Don't forget to sign it and please make sure your entry is COUNTERSIGNED by a staff member. We cannot accept entries without a countersignature.

TITLE OF YOUR WORK **THE BOXING RING OF LIFE.** NUMBER OF PAGES **1.**  
PLEASE MAKE SURE THIS TITLE MATCHES THE TITLE ON YOUR ENTRY

WHICH CATEGORY DO YOU WANT YOUR WORK ENTERED INTO? PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE

Writing for an audience under 10 years old\*    **Writing with rhythm and rhyme**    Writing for more than one voice    Telling a story

\*If you have committed an offence against a child or young person, you are not eligible to enter this category.



# Aim Two





## Aim Two: How successful was the *Write to be Heard* model in introducing new and innovative organisations to prison?

To ensure new arts organisations were introduced as part of the *Write to be Heard* project model, the competitive tendering process for the creative writing workshops demanded that at least 50% of the artists involved in the delivery had to be new to a prison setting. Ten applications were received from a range of arts organisations.

Geese Theatre Company (Geese) in collaboration with Writing West Midlands were awarded the grant as they met the criteria most fully, providing assurance that the training of new artists and delivery of workshops put learners at the heart of the creative process. Their method for delivery embraced a multi-agency partnership model and they were keen to collaborate with new writers to develop dynamic workshops that inspired and informed learners to think creatively.

Although Geese has extensive experience working in the Criminal Justice System, their work has focussed on issue-based drama, not creative writing. *Write to be Heard* was an opportunity to combine Geese's experience of engaging vulnerable and marginalised prisoners with professional writers bringing new ideas into prisons. Likewise, their understanding of different prison regimes enabled the scheduling and delivery of 28 workshops during the tight time period.

The project brief stipulated a combination of workshops, primarily delivered by writers with no experience; and master-classes by writers with an established career in their genre. Workshop leaders were selected through an open process. The brief was distributed via writing development organisations in London and the West Midlands, the *Write to be Heard* Coordinator's contacts and Arts Alliance contacts. The brief stipulated that writers must be new to working in prison but experienced in working with marginalised and vulnerable people. The project also aimed to deliver writing workshops covering a range of genres. Thirteen applications were received, ten writers selected. One of the selected writers subsequently dropped out.

The workshop leaders and one master-class leader attended a briefing day at Geese. The objectives of the day were:

- To provide an overview of the *Write to be Heard* project and the role of the workshops – including information about the different award categories, definition of 'hard-to-reach' etc
- To provide an introduction to the work of Geese Theatre Company
- To consider practical and logistical issues connected with working in custodial settings
- To explore the role of facilitator in a prison context: facilitator's roles and responsibilities, the importance of maintenance of boundaries and dangers of conditioning / collusion
- To discuss a proposed, provisional workshop structure

- To explore potential writing techniques / exercises for use with hard-to-reach prisoners

Writers participated in exercises and activities that could be used as part of their workshops, explored ways of translating Geese mimed scenarios into creative writing prompts and discussed concerns about and strategies for working in the prison environment. Writers were matched with facilitators to develop workshops that built a safe, creative space for participants to gain confidence.

For a list of exercises, please see the Appendix.

## Who were the writers?

The survey on the experience of working in prisons was sent to all fourteen writers involved in *Write to be Heard*; this consisted of nine workshop leaders and five masterclass leaders. Ten writers responded.

The majority of writers who responded were male. (Four writers, two male and two female, did not respond to the survey.)

Table 12. Gender of writers

Gender	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	40.0%	4
Female	60.0%	6

They covered a range of age groups.

Table 13. Age of writers

Age	Response Percent	Response Count
25 - 34	30.0%	3
35 - 44	20.0%	2
45 - 54	30.0%	3
55 - 64	10.0%	1
65 +	10.0%	1

They were from different ethnic backgrounds, though predominantly white. (Four writers from minority ethnic backgrounds did not respond to the survey).

Table 14. Ethnicity of writers

Ethnicity	Response Percent	Response Count
Black Caribbean	10.0%	1
Other Black background	10.0%	1
Dual ethnicity - Caribbean and White	10.0%	1
White - English	70.0%	7

The most successful means of recruiting workshop leaders was through Writing West Midlands, the regional literature development agency. Consequently, most of the workshop writers were living in the West Midlands. None of the master-class leaders lived in the West Midlands.

Table 15. Writers' place of residence

Place of residence	Response Percent	Response Count
East Midlands	0.0%	0
West Midlands	70.0%	7
South West	10.0%	1
East of England	0.0%	1
Greater London	10.0%	1
Kent and Sussex	0.0%	0
North West	0.0%	0
South Central	0.0%	0
North East	0.0%	0
Yorkshire and Humberside	10.0%	1
Wales	0.0%	0

In order to offer different types of workshops, writers were recruited with experience across diverse genres. (Writers were able to indicate a range of experience in different genres in their responses to the question about their writing expertise.)

Table 16. Genres in which writers worked

Genre	Response Percent	Response Count
Written poetry	40.0%	4
Performance poetry	30.0%	3
Writing plays	40.0%	4
Writing film/T scripts	10.0%	1
Writing radio scripts	30.0%	3
Short (flash) fiction	30.0%	3
Adult fiction	40.0%	4
Young adult fiction	0.0%	0
Children's fiction	0.0%	0
Baby and young children's books	10.0%	1
Other (please specify)	40.0%	4

The 'other' forms included journalism, life-writing and other non-fiction.

Of the writers who responded, only one had previous experience working in prisons.



Table 17. Writers' experience of working in prison

Previous experience of working in prisons	Response Percent	Response Count
No, never before	90.0%	9
One to three times	10.0%	1

## Why did writers want to be involved with *Write to be Heard*?

There were two main reasons. First, there was a keen interest in working with people who are disenfranchised and marginalised. Many of the writers worked with marginalised or vulnerable communities in a teaching role or therapeutically.

Second, writers wanted to improve and develop their own practice and – indeed – to challenge themselves.

## How did the writers prepare for the workshops?

Research and planning were key to success, frequently carried out in collaboration with Geese practitioners. For instance, one writer's preparations included:

*'a face-to-face meeting with a member of Geese Theatre Company about their previous experiences of the type of prison we were going to (in this case, an open prison) and we discussed a way we could work together creatively.'*

Another...

*'...met with the theatre practitioner(s) the night before, and we discussed which exercises might work best, and how they might fit together. We had outlined a few exercises over email beforehand. What we found was that each group was different, so that we often had to change our plans once we went in. But having a pool of exercises and activities to begin with was very helpful.'*

The briefing day enabled writers to understand the unpredictable nature of working in prisons. Lack of communication within establishments and the varying regimes and interests of prisoners themselves meant that writers could not be sure about who would attend their workshops. Prison staff were requested to target prisoners not in education, though there was no guarantee that those prisoners would be the ones who attended.

Writers responded with detailed planning. Such as:

*'- Contacting other authors who'd run 'Writing for Children' workshops for adults, for advice/tips/expertise. Finding and collating appropriate fiction to inspire/enthuse the workshop members in printed and audio form. Devising appropriate written exercises on plot / characterisation / 'voices'/ ideas, which would inspire confidence in members to attempt writing of their own - especially to write stories for children they know. Finding out about writing for radio. Providing 'planning sheets' for workshop members to keep.'*

Writers were keen to plan for every eventuality, ensuring sufficient material to meet a class of mixed abilities and attention spans. This required -

*'... lots of material and handouts (better to have too much, I thought, than not enough). I also tried to put myself in the position of prisoner so I could think about what might inspire/motivate/interest them. I looked at some collections of writing by prisoners and got some ideas from their work.'*



## What were the enjoyable aspects of delivering the project?

The key pleasure for nine out of the ten writers who responded was the prisoners' progress during the workshops. One writer described:

*'15 hardened criminals getting so deeply and immediately engrossed in the same writing that occupies my day and work and life. Since the sessions, the news that some have entered Write to Be Heard was fantastic.'*

Some of those attending that workshop received top awards from the judges.

A different writer agrees:

*'For me it was wonderful to start the morning with a group of men who were withdrawn, defensive and unwilling to show any signs of vulnerability and end the day with them feeling energised and open and willing to take risks. Every day I was struck by the quality of work that was produced and the interaction from the inmates with me and each other.'*

Writers were also pleased by the way the workshops benefited specific individuals. For instance:

*'Having one older offender tell me that he didn't feel he'd been in prison, he'd been somewhere else that day.'*

The following writer describes two participants that stood out.

*'- one prisoner couldn't read or write and had thought he might be excluded, but I worked with him and a member of Geese on a one-to-one basis and between us we listened to his accounts of what it is like to have*

*horses as a member of the Travellers community....When he understood the arc of a story, we were able to show him how to craft one of his accounts into a story...another prisoner was keen to host a writing group in the prison and needed his confidence building - he was particularly keen to have some feedback on a poem he had written, and it was great to see his enthusiasm when I helped him with that and was able to encourage his obvious ability.'*

## The challenges for writers new to working in prison

New writers worked with one or two Geese facilitators to deliver the workshops. The facilitators led ice-breaking exercises and activities to help the group to bond. Geese are also renowned for using masks in short theatre pieces to facilitate discussion on issues such as addiction, anger management and domestic violence. As part of the workshops, masked actors mimed short scenarios to help participants develop characters and advance their stories.

Although Geese's skills and experience provided a 'cushion' for new writers, there were still many challenges. Writers knew nothing about the participants until they arrived, including the willingness of participants to be there; and often prisoners did not know the nature of the workshop until attending. In many cases, the prisoners stayed and participated. Writers were disappointed when that was not the case.

One writer experienced:

*'...participants who tried to disrupt sessions or who refused to take part in certain drama exercises that they thought were childish. Encouraging these participants to rejoin the group and make a positive contribution to the session was challenging.'*

Geese stipulated that the workshops were for prisoners not engaged in education. The prisoners that attended often ranged from those with low literacy to experienced writers. For instance, one writer needed to balance the group dynamics of a 'a mixed ability group - highly literate to barely literate, with two deaf participants and one autistic member fixated on Jimi Hendrix' with a number of highly regarded poets. Another described the problem of:

*'Not really knowing what to expect - having such a diversity of abilities and backgrounds in one group - ranging from those who could not read or write at all to those (two life-prisoners) who had written novels!'*

Another writer was pleased to have the support of the Geese facilitators, but worried about dovetailing Geese's practice into their own.

*'For me the challenge was not about the group, but more about the fit between what the Geese members wanted to do and what I had in mind. I wasn't sure at times of my role, and the Geese members might have felt like spare parts too at times. Yet it was great to have them there. There is*

*a mismatch between the dynamic interaction Geese are all about and the more reflective process of writing creatively. Not sure how this could be resolved.'*

Writers were also challenged by the demands of the prison regimes, including scheduling conflicts and the reliance on prison staff to accompany participants to and from the workshops on time.



## What support should be available to writers new to working in prisons?

Based on their own experiences, writers were asked to recommend ways that writers new to prison can be supported. Working with a mentor or organisation experienced in working in prisons was key:

*'I think going in with a group, such as the Geese Theatre Company, was invaluable. To be with people who know how prisons work and who can guide you through safely was very reassuring and I learnt a great deal from them over the four days that we spent together.'*

More specifically, a mentor could -

*' - input into how to offer feedback on work in a constructive way. Any group leadership skills would be valuable to new workers - spotting challenges, covert bullying, problem areas of writing, testing out limits etc.'*

Another respondent detailed the information that writers new in prisons need to know:

*'It's important that writers are told that they need to be flexible; that their sessions should be structured, but allow for any unforeseen changes or time challenges. Writers should also employ an icebreaker as prisoners often arrive with tensions from other sources, and will need to be refocused so that they are 'present' in the workshop. Also, writers should not assume that prisoners will know each other, and so introductions are key, as is helping them to leave the session feeling a little more connected to each other.'*

Writers valued the information and advice on working in prisons as well as the onsite support that enabled them to sustain the interest of a range of participants with varying expectations and learning needs. However, it is important to ensure that both parties are clear about what they are contributing to the process.



## Did *Write to be Heard* increase the opportunities and enthusiasm for new writers to work in prisons?

All writers would deliver workshops in prison again. Many valued *Write to be Heard* as an opportunity to explore new ways of delivering workshops, improve their offer and to find new partners with whom to deliver projects.

Table 18. Opportunities for writers' career development

Opportunities for career development	Response Percent	Response Count
I will develop opportunities working with Geese Theatre Company	40.0%	4
I will develop opportunities working with National Prison Radio	10.0%	1
I will develop opportunities with writers I have met	20.0%	2
I will use it to access funding opportunities	30.0%	3
I will use it to enhance my CV	60.0%	6
I will submit proposals directly to prisons	50.0%	5
It has given me new ideas for teaching and delivering workshops	80.0%	8
I plan to work with other arts organisations working with offenders	40.0%	4
I have become a member of the Arts Alliance	20.0%	2
It has made no difference	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0

## The responses of staff in the prisons to *Write to be Heard*

The interest and enthusiasm of prison staff is central to the success of any project. Prison staff help in many ways including disseminating publicity and other material about projects, selecting and encouraging participants, organising artists' entry in to prisons (especially if artists are bringing equipment), booking an appropriate space and often, in joining in with the activities. Consequently, we evaluated the impact of *Write to be Heard* on prison staff.

## Method

The workshop team, managed by Geese, worked with someone within each prison to organise the workshop. These prison organisers were asked to complete a questionnaire once the workshop had been delivered. 15 questionnaires were collected. Staff from the prison who attended the workshop also completed

questionnaires. 27 questionnaires were collected from 24 prisons. Note that the staff in the prison were not necessarily employed by the prison regime, they could, for example, be in the Education Department.

The prison organisers' questionnaire asked about their role in the prison, followed by ten items concerning the potential impact of the workshop on prisoners, informed by the desistance framework, and their own views on the workshop (See Table 19). Respondents were also given the opportunity to write about the workshop in their own words.

The prison staff questionnaire was similar to the prison organisers' questionnaire but had nine items and enquired about prisoner engagement and participation on the day (See Table 20).

In the four prisons visited by the evaluator, the evaluator had conversations with prison organisers and staff attending the workshop concerning the selection process of prisoners for the workshop, the extent of creative writing activities in the prison and their access to National Prison Radio and the Virtual Campus.



## Prison organisers' responses to the workshops

A wide range of roles were represented amongst the prison organisers, demonstrating the complexity of scheduling arts activities in prison: prison librarian; chaplain; Cluster Heads of Learning, Skills and Employment; Education manager; literacy tutor; substance abuse worker; resettlement officer; prison radio personnel; prison officer. As can be seen in Table 19, their responses were on the whole very positive. They mostly agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop would improve prisoner outcomes. They were not so consistently positive on the value for discipline. They all agreed or strongly agreed that they should have more arts workshops and that they would recommend them.

Similarly, the 27 prison staff who attended the workshop and completed questionnaires were universally positive, mostly very positive, reporting that prisoners had been engaged and had participated enthusiastically in writing and storytelling. Over 80% of these prison staff strongly endorsed the value of having more arts events and of the workshop in particular (Table 20).

Table 19. Prison organisers' responses to the workshop questionnaire

About the writing workshop	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
It will improve prisoners' self-expression through writing				3	12
It will encourage more positive attitudes in prisoners				5	10
It will increase interest in work			3	5	7
It will increase interest in education/training			2	7	6
It will help with discipline			9	2	4
We should have arts workshops more often				2	13
I would recommend the workshop to someone else				1	14
More prisoners wanted to come than there were places	1	2	4	3	5
We will promote the writing competition					15
It would be good to have more than one event to support their writing				1	14

Table 20. Prison staff responses to the workshop questionnaire

About the writing workshop	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Prisoners were engaged				2	25
Prisoners participated enthusiastically in activities				7	20
Prisoners did some story telling / oral work				6	21
Prisoners did some writing				5	22
It will encourage some to enter the writing competition			1	7	19
It was thought provoking				7	20
We should have arts events more often				3	24
I would recommend the workshop to someone else				5	22
Prisoners were happy to stay till the end			1	8	18

These positive responses were confirmed in comments made on the questionnaires. Not only did they feedback that prisoners had benefitted but also on how inspiring and informative they had found it themselves:

*“Sometimes... I wonder what I’m doing in prison education. Today’s event reminded me... if there were ever evidence of the method of delivery for engagement and learning: it was provided today.”*

Of the four prisons observed by the research team, two were facilitated by the Education Department and in both cases education staff commented that seeing new techniques at the workshops would inform their own practice. Seeing specific activities that had successfully stimulated writing was useful as they could be replicated. More generally, they observed that prisoners were highly engaged in writing activities and contrasted this with the reluctance to write that they often saw when writing tasks were more skills based. It emphasised the value of creative writing.



# Aim Three



## Aim Three: How did *Write to be Heard* contribute to learning about support networks for artists in prisons?

*Write to be Heard* is a grant-funded project that met many of its immediate objectives in addressing offender learning issues through creative writing. In the form presented in this report it has run only once (as required by the regulations of the grant applications), though leaving an important legacy of content and materials. There are no plans for continuous funding, in spite of its success. It has enabled the development of learning resources for offenders, contributed towards the career development of writers and facilitators, and enabled prison staff to witness the positive impact of arts interventions in prisons.

However, the economic environment is not an easy one in which to develop new arts projects. A survey by the Arts Alliance<sup>3</sup> in 2013 found that the majority of organisations were experiencing or anticipating a decrease of funding while experiencing an increase in people using their services. Both arts organisations and prison staff were finding it increasingly difficult to organise and deliver arts interventions in prison. It is therefore increasingly important for organisations to share knowledge and resources; understand the policy environment and priorities that shape service delivery within the Criminal Justice System; and have a keen understanding of how to gain funding for and evaluate the services provided.

The *Write to be Heard* project tender was won by the Arts Alliance in an open procurement competition. Delivery of the project was an opportunity to strengthen the evidence base on the impact of delivering arts interventions in prisons. The project also benefitted from being delivered by the Arts Alliance and Clinks as infrastructure organisations providing a support network to practitioners working in the field of arts and criminal justice. Mechanisms exist for disseminating information, networking and sharing knowledge between different areas of expertise, as well as for enabling the engagement of new contributors.

## The role of support networks in sharing expertise

A number of expert groups were set up by the Arts Alliance network to support and guide the implementation of *Write to be Heard*. Initially a 'start up' group, which included Arts Alliance Steering Group members and the Prison Radio Association came together and designed the Workshop Delivery Grant to ensure appropriate artists were commissioned to deliver this vital part of the model. Following the commissioning process, a *Write to be Heard* Partner Group was implemented, which provided expert guidance and support to ensure successful delivery. The meetings facilitated an opportunity for arts practitioners to come together, share ideas and implement successful strategies across the project. The

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.artsalliance.org.uk/>

meetings enabled arts organisations to share knowledge specifically around:

- Health and safety in custodial settings
- Partnership working - across and between sectors
- Involving prisoners in different aspects of the project
- Creative practice/art direction
- Encouraging new artists into the sector
- Promoting arts projects in prisons
- Engaging hard-to-reach prisoners
- Diversity and inclusion
- Utilising the NOMS infrastructure such as the Virtual Campus and National Prison Radio
- Developing a framework for arts in criminal justice

In addition, Arts Alliance members may belong to a variety of networks and be willing to draw in extra expertise. For instance, the Koestler Trust, contributed their extensive knowledge of running an arts awards scheme to the project planning group. Arts Alliance members, Storybook Mums and Dads, were able to promote information about the 'Writing for Audience Under-10' category of the awards through their network. The Shannon Trust supports a network of literacy mentors in prison. Writers in Prison Foundation are a member of the Arts Alliance steering group and have several years of experience of delivering creative writing programmes in prison. Synergy Theatre Project supported *Write to be Heard* by judging the 'Writing for more than one voice' category and through recruiting actors and a director for the filmed prompts forming part of the Virtual Campus resource.

## The role of support networks in introducing and supporting organisations new to working in prisons

The Arts Alliance designed a competitive tendering process for the workshop delivery aspect of the project. The specification demanded that at least 50% of the artists involved in the delivery were new to prison settings. Eleven out of the fourteen writers delivering creative writing workshops had not worked in prisons before. All would like to do so in the future.

Based on the learning from *Write to be Heard*, networks supporting new organisations have a role in:

**Offering opportunities for experienced organisations to mentor new organisations.** This includes briefing new artists about how prisons work, offering opportunities to observe workshops in prisons and advising on planning for the uncertainties intrinsic within prison regimes.

**Promoting the value of arts interventions within prisons.** Any arts network, whether at national, regional or prison level has an essential role advocating the use of arts in prisons and creating opportunities for new artists. Sharing experience and expertise within networks will offer chances to create strong,



evidence-based arguments demonstrating how arts interventions contribute towards resettlement, employability and reducing re-offending.

**Encouraging artists to collaborate and create new ways of engaging offenders.** 86% of participants attending the workshops agreed that the use of drama made exploring the issues more memorable. Most of the new writers also highly commended the collaborative aspect of the project. A network that includes arts practitioners and prison staff can explore and develop innovative projects to engage reluctant and vulnerable learners.

## Creating a *Write to be Heard* sustainable legacy

The legacy and impact of *Write to be Heard* is, at this stage, hard to accurately quantify. Many aspects of the project are in their infancy. The evaluation showed an immediate positive impact on participants, in terms of employability and life skills and wider factors associated with desistance. Other potential positive outcomes of the project have not been measured. This includes the impact on prisoners' self-esteem from hearing their work broadcast and receiving awards and feedback from established writers. Some prisons have chosen to celebrate participants' success. For instance, a prison library is printing an ex-prisoner's award-winning poem in a prison leaflet to encourage other prisoners to write. A librarian in a different prison has arranged for the governor to give out the certificates and prizes to the participants. However, within the limits of this project, it is not possible to determine whether these events translate to positive long term outcomes.

*Write to be Heard* has also developed a creative writing resource for the Virtual Campus. Its impact cannot be evaluated at present.

There has, however, been a significant impact on the Arts Alliance allowing it to expand its membership, so supporting new artists and providing a structure for sharing the lessons learnt from the project.

As *Write to be Heard* has progressed, the Arts Alliance has:

- Seen its membership expand by 40% - attracting new members including education providers, Heads of Learning, Skills and Employment (HoLSE) and new and innovative artists across art-forms including musicians, writers and visual artists. Some members have joined as a direct result of *Write to be Heard*. In addition, the wider membership means a greater reach for sharing the practice emerging from the project.
- Communicated learning about arts in criminal justice via events, e-bulletins and online digital platforms. This includes presentations about *Write to be Heard* at the HoLSE forum, an ESRC learning event about celebrating prisoners' achievements and inspiring a performance at the launch of the Arts Alliance report 'Re-imagining futures: Exploring arts interventions and the process of desistance'.

- Provided opportunities for practitioners, academics, commissioners and policymakers to come together and share information and good practice. Two *Write to be Heard* practice-sharing events are being held in Manchester and London. A further policy event has been organised for senior policymakers, education managers and arts organisation directors.
- Established the foundation for strong and lasting partnerships between arts organisations, Prison Radio Association and new artists.
- Provided strong links with relevant government departments to promote the importance of arts interventions in prisons as demonstrated by the *Write to be Heard* project. For instance, Arts Alliance contributes to the Arts Forum – a tri-annual meeting administered by the Ministry of Justice attended by NOMS, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Skills Funding Agency, the Youth Justice Board and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
- Established a structured professional mentoring scheme providing a pool of trained mentors to support new artists and organisations working in prisons. The findings of *Write to be Heard* have contributed to the development of the scheme.
- Collated a ‘live’ database of contacts including artists, arts organisations and education/prison staff to help broker partnerships between prisons and artists. The widening of the database has been a direct result of *Write to be Heard*.
- Developed a model of good practice as a reference for networks supporting artists delivering interventions in prisons.



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# CONCLUSIONS

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## Conclusions on *Write To Be Heard*

It was an impressive collaboration between National Prison Radio, the National Offender Management Service's Learning and Skills Team, Arts Alliance and Geese Theatre Company.

Workshops were delivered in 28 prisons (the requirement was 25). They were extremely well received by prisons and prisoners. Writers new to prison contexts were successfully introduced to providing workshops. The competition attracted 265 entries, was adjudicated by ten readers and judges, awarded 66 prizes and broadcast 31 entries on National Prison Radio. Prisoners were involved in designing the publicity, piloting the questionnaire and broadcasting the final programmes.

In fact, the project relied on the prisoners' enthusiasm to read and reflect on work that was not their own and their willingness to cheer on each other's performance to create the right celebratory ethos for shows being broadcast over the Christmas period, a potentially difficult time of year.

The learning from the workshops has not been lost. A creative writing resource is being developed for the Virtual Campus prison intranet. Inspired by the collaborative sessions delivered in the prisons, it will use film and audio to help prison writers develop their writing skills.

*Write To Be Heard* was a project in two parts, a workshop and a competition, and our data suggest that these two parts reached different audiences. Participants at the workshops were more representative of the prison population. The competition entrants were likely to be older and more likely to be in education than workshop participants, and to be more experienced writers.

Using reports from prison staff and prisoners; and observation of the workshops, we have measured the 'desired intermediate outcomes' relating to desistance that have been identified by NOMS on the basis of the current evidence base. Each of the strands of information, the reports from prison staff, from prisoners at the workshop and at follow-up and from the observations, consistently describe a powerful picture of prisoner engagement and an indication of the potential for positive change on those outcomes.

The majority of participants embraced the opportunities afforded by the creative writing workshops with relish, some explicitly commenting on the opportunities for positive thinking, self-expression and positive affirmation. Realising the potential for change is likely to involve follow-through to support prisons' continued use of workshops and participants' creative writing and group work.

Desired Intermediate Outcomes linked to desistance	Workshop outcomes
Skills in pro-social problem solving and perspective taking. Emotion management skills	Good team work during the workshop itself. Instances of self-reflection, looking at people in a different way. High levels of support and reflection at the recording of the NPR celebration shows.
Developing or enhancing a non-criminal identity Feeling hopeful and motivated about giving up crime	More positive attitudes about the future. Opportunities to remember a non-criminal self. Experiencing being treated as 'a person in my own right'.
Reduced conflict in close relationships, positive relationships, enhanced warmth and caring for others Strong and supportive family ties improving family and intimate relationship, confident and responsible parenting behaviours	Active listening skills, followed by sensitive and considered feedback at the workshops. Improvement in confidence in dealing with family members, with relating to children, with writing to family and generally feeling closer to family.
Increased employability in the form of skills and motivation to work and confidence to relate constructively to others in the work setting	Reported gain in both confidence and skill in writing. Increased appetite for future learning.
Engaged participation in pro-social recreational activities, sense of reward from pro-social recreation and sustained involvement in pro-social lifestyle	High levels of participation in writing activities and a sense of reward and enjoyment. Some evidence of sustained involvement in writing. Engagement with other prisoners.

Prison staff commented that attending the workshops informed their own practice. There is potential for the professional development of prison and education staff in observing and collaborating in such high quality workshops delivered by experts. This is relevant not only to learning about teaching creative writing but also to positive interaction with prisoners. In the NOMS Rapid Evidence Assessment of arts projects (Borrowes et al, 2013) evidence suggests that one of the avenues for positive change enabled by arts projects is through 'improving relationships between offenders and staff' (p 4). Exploiting this opportunity would add to the range of positive outcomes that current policy seeks to achieve and could provide a legacy. *Write to be Heard* has provided a positive model and a framework for future success.

Responses of the competition entrants also reflected the positive effect of creative writing measured against factors linked to desistance.

Overall, and despite the brevity of the workshops, some key messages have emerged as a result of offering prisoners the chance to '*Write to be heard*'.



# Key Messages





## Key messages

These key findings and recommendations have been summarised from the report and are intended to be helpful in establishing a best practice model for integrating arts in prison settings.

*Write to be Heard* found that:

1. The impact of creative writing projects is far reaching. The project stimulated the creation of new prison writing groups: enabled staff to experience and learn new skills to manage group dynamics and learning environments: encouraged those less confident in their literacy skills to read out loud in public: and brought together writers and artists in new partnerships.
2. Prisoners are keen to write, especially if the writing resonates with personal experience and a desire for self-expression. Regardless of their status – hard-to-reach or not – participants saw the workshops as an opportunity to take up the identity of ‘writer’ rather than ‘prisoner’. The writing workshops offered a rare chance and a safe environment in which to build self-confidence through the medium of creative writing and the competition gave prisoners a chance ‘to be heard’ beyond the prison gate.
3. Creative workshops can offer a pathway into engagement with more formal learning opportunities. The opportunity to engage was taken up in the *Write to be Heard* workshops by not only experienced writers but also those participants considered ‘hard to reach’. Creative writing can offer a model that can be adapted to engage learners who often lack the confidence to move directly into more formal literacy work, realising their potential for developing communication and writing skills.
4. Creative writing programmes can contribute towards improved literacy and employability skills. Creative writing workshops can improve literacy skills and softer employability skills such as critiquing, interviewing and offering mutual support.
5. Creative writing can act as a catalyst for positive changes linked to desistance factors in the offender population. Maintaining good relations with families and friends is a known protective factor against re-offending (Burrowes et al, 2013). Some prisoners in *Write to be Heard* workshops, for example, wanted to write stories for their children in order to cement positive relationships. Equally, increased confidence in writing – such as entering the writing competition - can increase a sense of social capital and active citizenship.
6. Taster workshops and one-off interventions have limitations for learners and artists. The *Write to be Heard* workshops generated considerable interest and engagement across a range of prisons and prisoners, which converted into a highly successful national writing competition. Nevertheless the question remains, ‘What next?’ Professional writers new to the field were keen to re-use their materials and expand their experience of working with the groups targeted. Prisoners wanted on-going support to maintain their newly-



found enthusiasm. Creative expression upon which self-confidence can be built needs to be nourished if it is to survive the challenges of the prison environment.

7. Successful creative writing projects emerge from positive collaboration and co-operation between prisons and external agencies. In this instance partnerships were formed between the commissioning agent and the third sector: between the prisons and outside agencies and personnel: between various professional groups within the prison and a broad range of prisoners. These combinations generated a positive ethos and a successful outcome to both the workshops and the competition based on enthusiasm, social inclusion and experience.
8. Workshops delivered by outside experts are an opportunity for Continuing Professional Development. Those who attended the workshops were often excited by the possibilities of creative writing and the techniques for engaging prisoners. The potential for Continuing Professional Development on the back of workshops for prisoners could be fully exploited.
9. Arts Champions within the prison are vital to make creative projects a success. For projects to be successful in prisons, it is essential to have a link person or prison arts champion, who can liaise with external agencies. This is likely to work more effectively if it is a role that spans levels and departments (for example a member of the multi-faith Chaplaincy).
10. National Prison Radio and the Virtual Campus can provide useful resources and dissemination tools for creative projects. These platforms are useful media for broadcasting creative work and enabling active participation.
11. Support networks are crucial to enable arts project to be a success in prison. Infrastructure support needs to be in place to help creative projects flourish in prisons. These can either be external support networks marshalled by organisations such as the Arts Alliance; or through appropriate management support from within prison establishments.



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# APPENDICES








# Appendix I. Workshop Questionnaire

## Geese Theatre Company - Self-Assessment Checklist

Name of Establishment..... Date.....

Thank you for taking part in this workshop. We hope you found it both fun and useful. This form will help us know what you found useful. Please could you tick to show how you agree or disagree with the statements. Be honest - your name is not on the form.

As a result of the workshop:	Strongly disagree 	Disagree 	Neither agree nor disagree 	Agree 	Strongly agree 
	Please tick one for each question				
I have greater confidence to write					
I learnt new writing skills					
The workshop made me think about myself					
I am more confident about speaking in public					
It made me want to write					
I feel more willing for my writing to be read aloud					
It made me feel like expressing myself					
I thought about things that were bothering me					
It was fun					
I want to continue learning					
I would like to enter the writing competition					
I would like more support with writing					
I would like to read more					
It helped me imagine myself doing well out of prison					
I am more positive about the future					
Using drama has made it more memorable					
I would recommend the workshop to others					
I was happy to stay for the whole workshop					

If you have anything else you would like to say about the workshop, write it here and over the page:



**And now a few things about you**

**1. How did you get to go to the workshop (tick one):**

- Advertised on prison radio & I volunteered
- Advertised somewhere else & I volunteered
- Heard about it in Education & I volunteered
- Heard about it somewhere else (say where) & I volunteered
- Staff member asked me to attend (say who asked you)
- Other (say what)

**2. Are you in Education or Training (circle one):**

YES NO

**3. Are you in Work (circle one):**

YES NO

**4. What age are you (circle one):**

Under 18      18-24      25-34      35-44      45-54      55-64      65+

**5. How would you describe your ethnicity (circle one):**

- White British      Indian      Black Caribbean
- White (other)      Pakistani      Black African
- White Irish      Bangladeshi      Black other
- Mixed heritage      Chinese      Other
- Other Asian

**6. Can you use the Virtual Campus if you want to (circle as many as apply):**

Not at all      In Education      On the wing      Elsewhere (say where):

**7. What is your status in prison (circle one):**

On remand      Serving a sentence

**8. How long have you been in prison this time? \_\_\_\_\_years \_\_\_\_\_months**

**9. When do you expect to be released?**

- Within 3 months      1- 4years
- 3- 6 months      5 years +
- 6months- 1 year      Don't know






***Thank you very much for your participation and for taking time to complete this form.***

## Appendix 2. Prisoner Questionnaire Competition

### Write to Be Heard – writing competition

Name.....Name of Establishment.....

Thank you for entering the Write to Be Heard competition. We are really looking forward to reading your entry. We would like to hear your views about entering the competition. It would help us if you would answer the questions below as honestly as you can – it has nothing to do with the judging of the entries. Your answers will only be used by the research team. You do not have to complete this questionnaire if you don't want to.

As a result of entering the competition	Strongly disagree 	Disagree 	Neither agree nor disagree 	Agree 	Strongly agree 
	Please tick one for each question				
I have greater confidence to write					
I feel more willing for my writing to be read aloud					
It made me think about myself					
It made me think about my family					
I am better at telling stories					
I could express myself					
I thought about things that were bothering me					
It helped me imagine myself doing well out of prison					
It was fun					
I want to write more					
I would like to learn more					
I would like to read more					
They should do this every year					
Before the competition I did quite a bit of writing					
I would have liked more help with my writing					

If you have anything else you would like to say about the competition write it here:

Why did you enter the competition?

Why did you choose what you wrote about?

**And now a few things about you**

1. **Have you sent something in to a writing competition before (circle one):** YES NO
2. **How did you hear about the writing competition (circle as many as apply)**
- |                    |                                  |                          |                          |              |                 |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| On prison<br>Radio | Through a<br>writing<br>workshop | From another<br>prisoner | From a prison<br>officer | In Education | Other (specify) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
3. **Do you listen to Prison Radio:** YES NO
4. **Have you been to a Writing Workshop in the last 4 months:** YES NO
5. **Did you get some other support with your entry: (circle as many as apply):**
- |                         |                      |                          |                   |                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Someone in<br>Education | Toe by Toe<br>Mentor | Storybook<br>Dads / Mums | Virtual<br>Campus | Other<br>(specify) |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
6. **Are you in Education or Training (circle one):** YES NO
7. **Are you in Work (circle one):** YES NO
8. **What age are you (circle one):**
- |          |       |       |       |       |       |     |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Under 18 | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
9. **What would you say is your ethnicity (circle one):**
- |                |             |                 |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| White British  | Indian      | Black Caribbean |
| White (other)  | Pakistani   | Black African   |
| White Irish    | Bangladeshi | Black other     |
| Mixed heritage | Chinese     | Other           |
|                | Other Asian |                 |
10. **Can you use the Virtual Campus if you want to (circle as many as apply):**
- |            |              |             |                           |
|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Not at all | In Education | On the wing | Elsewhere<br>(say where): |
|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|
11. **Are you (circle one):**
- |           |                    |
|-----------|--------------------|
| On remand | Serving a sentence |
|-----------|--------------------|
12. **How long have you been in prison this time? \_\_\_\_\_years \_\_\_\_\_months**
13. **When do you expect to be released?**
- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| Within 3 months | 1- 4 years |
| 3- 6 months     | 5 years +  |

## Appendix 3. Schedule of *Write to be Heard* programmes on National Prison Radio

### Schedule of *Write to be Heard* programmes on National Prison Radio

All programmes were presented by performance poet, Mr Gee.

Programme	Length	Month Broadcast
<i>Write to be heard</i> 'Get Writing' teaser interview with Alex Wheatle	60 Seconds	August 2013
<i>Write to be heard</i> 'Get Writing' teaser interview with Dreda Say Mitchell	60 seconds	August 2013
<i>Write to be heard</i> 'Get Writing' teaser interview with Mr Gee	60 seconds	August 2013
<i>Write to be heard</i> 'Get Writing' teaser interview with Femi Martin	60 seconds	August 2013
<i>Write to be heard</i> 'Get Writing' teaser interview with TY	60 seconds	October 2013
Creative writing workshop recorded at HMP Stafford	15 minutes	October 2013
Creative writing workshop recorded at HMPYOI Werrington	15 minutes	October 2013
Creative writing workshop recorded at HMP Bronzefield	15 minutes	October 2013
Creative writing workshop recorded at HMP Brixton	15 minutes	October 2013
Creative writing masterclass recorded at HMP Highdown	15 minutes	October 2013
Writing tip - hot penning	60 seconds	October 2013
Writing tip - describing a special place	60 seconds	October 2013
Writing tip - creating a character	60 seconds	October 2013
Writing tip - writing a conversation	60 seconds	October 2013
Writing tip - rhyming couplet	60 seconds	October 2013
Celebration of award winner's recorded at HMP Styal	30 minutes	December 2013
Celebration of award winner's recorded at HMP Brixton	30 minutes	December 2013
Celebration of award winner's recorded at HMP Highdown	30 minutes	December 2013


**Appendix 4. Attendance at *Write to be Heard* workshops**

Prison	Type (male unless otherwise stated)	Capacity	Number attending am	Number attending pm
Bristol	Local	614	9	7
Brixton	C	798	10	9
Bronzefield	Female Local and YOI	527	12	12
Chelmsford	B and YOI	578	8	7
Dove Gate	B	1,060	6	6
Drake Hall	Female closed and YOI	315	7	6
Elmley	Local	1,252	4	5
Everthorpe	C	689	12	10
Garth	B	798	12	10
High Down	B	1103	10	10
Hull	Local	1,210	9	9
Huntercombe	C – foreign national	430	10	9
Kirkham	D	630	12	10
Lancaster Farms	YOI	531	7	7
Leicester	Local	408	7	5
Lincoln	Local	727	11	10
Lowdham Grange	B	888	12	12
Preston	Local	743	7	5
Ranby	C	1,098	11	10
Ryehill	B	625	11	11
Stafford	C	741	11	10
Standford Hill	D	464	NK	NK
Stocken	C	843	10	8
Swaleside	B	1,112	7	6
Swansea	B	435	9	9
Werrington	YOI	160	4	3
Wold	C	360	7	8
Wormwood Scrubs	Local	1,279	10	10
<b>Total</b>			<b>245</b>	<b>224</b>



## Appendix 5. Write to be Heard case studies

### Case study of a woman's prison

Participants were asked to write about their own special places, following on from a thought-provoking Geese mime and a story from the writer of a special place for her as a child.

Louise was an inexperienced and anxious writer. She could be described as 'hard to reach'. She wrote about a childhood place and then read it out to the group:

*"There was a rope tied to this big old tree and the first time, I was so excited and I swung high and went smack into the trunk...It was lovely though, it seemed to be always summer and it was fresh and the garden went on forever. There was a smell of sausages."*

Despite her view of herself as a non-writer, Louise became easily involved and wrote fluently, producing something clearly evocative for her, and enjoyable.

Three Eastern European women who did not speak English fluently formed a little group of their own. They commented that they often felt excluded in amongst the English-speaking women, so they were quite pleased at least to be included in the workshop. Anna read her piece out in Russian and Marta (fellow prisoner) translated, explaining that it was about a wood that she went to as a child with her mother. Despite the cultural and language barriers Anna was clearly quite moved by her memory, with tears in her eyes, and Marta commented that it was 'difficult to explain in English'. It seemed that everyone in the group became similarly involved in an activity they found moving and engrossing.

### Case study of two men's prisons

In the male prisons, similarly, despite having a mix of experienced and inexperienced writers, everyone got involved. They took part enthusiastically in the activities and they wrote or dictated complex, subtle, humorous and moving stories, snapshots and poems. They worked together and they shared their ideas and feelings.

These observed responses illustrate potential first steps on the journey towards desistance, in terms of: pro-social problem solving development and perspective taking: emotional management skills: feeling hopeful and motivated about non-criminal lives: enhanced warmth and caring for others: strengthening family ties: increased skills, motivation and confidence in oral communication: and writing, work related skills.

Comments made at the end of the day confirmed a strong positive response to the workshops, relating to a range of desistance factors. Participants mentioned that they had acquired new skills for creative writing.

*"It was a big inspiration to continue writing."*

The male group writing for children under 10-years-old expressed powerful effects on their sense of fatherhood:

*"I feel more like a father. I can't wait to come out. I didn't feel like a dad, I didn't know what to do."*

*"It had given me more confidence and I am going to ask about Storybook Dads."*

Subsequent feedback from prisoners in these prisons evidenced a sustained effect on communications with their families, for example:

*"I started to write a book for my daughter and its going well."*

*"I was struggling to write letters home, but the day helped me get my mind working again."*

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<sup>1</sup> Not her real name. No real names are used.

On 'non-criminal identity':

*"It was nice not to be treated as a criminal for the day...I was treated as a person in my own right. Something I had not experienced since my sentence started. If similar courses and ethos were employed a lot more in prisons then people would genuinely change within."*

*"I have done a lot more writing in my cell since the Workshop... the day gave me lots of ideas and I am working on them... There was a chance to look at people and life in a different way."*

On pro-social perspective taking:

*"It was good hearing others' ideas"*

On work-related skills:

*"Since I went to the Workshop, I have started a `moving on` course, voluntarily. Its about skills and getting on with life, lots of things.....I'm starting to write short stories and poems. Ive never done anything like that before. Doing things like this will help me when I get out of prison."*  
(spelling uncorrected)

Despite these positive responses, prisoners also commented that there were barriers to following through on their enthusiasm. Some articulated a reluctance to go into Education because of the greater financial incentive of work. Others experienced difficulty in getting into Education due to limited places and long waiting lists. Some would have liked more writing support but did not think this was accessible, even from other prisoners due to recent severe restrictions on time for 'association'.

## Appendix 6. Linking *Write to be Heard* with employability skills

Employability Skill	<i>Write to be Heard</i> contribution towards skill development	<i>Write to be Heard</i> feedback
Communication skills:	<p><u>Interpersonal communication skills</u>  <b>Effective speaking</b> – workshop participants found their voice through writing and reading their work</p> <p>Active listening – workshop participants listened to and reflected on the exercises and each other’s work. The audiences at NPR read, listened to and reflected on the work other prisoners wrote for <i>Write to be Heard</i>.</p> <p><u>Presentation skills</u>  <b>Public speaking</b> – participants at the workshops and NPR events read work in front of an audience of strangers, including for broadcast cross the custodial estate. NPR presenters promoted the workshops and competition.</p> <p><u>Writing skills</u>  <b>Effective written communication</b> – all awards entrants, regardless of literacy level, expressed themselves in writing for someone else to read and understand.</p>	<p>63% of workshop participants agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops made them want express themselves.</p> <p>67% of workshop participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more confident speaking in public.</p> <p>92% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they had learnt new writing skills.</p>
Positive approach:	<p><b>Self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses</b> - many workshop participants, initially suspicious and nervous, revealed their lack of confidence in writing and/or public reading. Many also found their strengths as writers. In addition, prisoners aware of their weaknesses sought support.</p> <p><b>Permission to make mistakes</b> – participants edited and redrafted work to improve it. Some prisoners reading for NPR lacked confidence in their ability to read out loud in public. All readers approached agreed to do so, encouraged to have more than one attempt if required.</p> <p><b>Accept compliments</b> – workshop participants spontaneously gave and accepted praise for their work, as well as positive feedback from published writers. Award winners received positive feedback from high profile judges.</p> <p><b>Use criticism as a learning experience</b> – Workshop participants gave and received criticism from each other; plus receiving feedback from workshop leaders. Some writers entered the competition specifically to receive feedback, however, all competition entrants received feedback on their work, including some points for development.</p>	70% of workshop participants felt more positive about their future.
Team work:	<p><b>Contributing towards group cohesiveness</b> – due to the nature of prison dynamics and the personal experience that informs creative writing, it was essential to create a safe and supportive space. Though often wary and suspicious, prisoners participated in initial team building exercises that built trust, equality of status and bonded the group. This created an environment for participants to share work and receive constructive feedback.</p> <p><b>Mutual support</b> – workshop participants and those reading for NPR shows encouraged each other’s achievements. More literate prisoners offered others support. In one workshop, women translated for non-English speakers to enable them to participate.</p>	

<b>Time management</b>	<b>Negotiating regime restrictions</b> – the prison regimes allowed limited time for workshops. Prisoners developed ideas, drafted and polished work during that time. Those wishing to enter the competition produced and sent work to a deadline.	
<b>Personal development:</b>	<p><b>Building confidence and self-esteem</b> – the workshops and awards were an opportunity for prisoners to feel good about their achievements and receive public acknowledgement for the development of new skills.</p> <p><b>Self-motivation</b> – writing is generally a solitary activity. Many writers entering the awards could not hear their writing on NPR even if they were award winners – some were due for release prior to the shows being broadcast or were incarcerated in prisons with no NPR access. Still, many were motivated to write and send their work. One prisoner set up and facilitated a writing group in order to motivate his peers.</p> <p><b>Self-discipline</b> – workshop participants had to hold attention throughout the day, returning in the afternoon, even though in some cases, there were competing demands. All writers had to focus on improving their writing.</p> <p><b>Ability to work alone</b> - writing is a solitary activity. Only one entry received was a joint entry. In workshops, participants worked as individuals to produce work to be read aloud to the group.</p>	<p>85% of workshop participants felt more willing for their work to be read in public.</p> <p>94% of competition entrants wanted to write more.</p>
<b>Emotional intelligence:</b>	<p><b>Self-awareness:</b> awareness and understanding of emotions as they occur and as they evolve.</p> <p><b>Self-management:</b> managing emotions appropriately and proportionately.</p> <p>The creative writing workshops required a number of skills relating to emotional intelligence including the ability to respond appropriately as participants shared work, an awareness and understanding of emotions triggered by writing and sharing work and the ability to reflect on the impact of sharing personal and creative work within the prison environment.</p>	<p>46% of workshop participants and 53% of competition entrants agreed that <i>Write to be Heard</i> helped them think about what was bothering them.</p>
<b>Continued learning</b>	<b>Adaptability and knowledge development</b> – prisoners wanted to explore further educational opportunities. In addition to existing resources within prisons, the Writersroom and <i>Write to be Heard</i> resource on the VC will assist continued learning.	<p>76% of workshop participants wanted more support with writing.</p> <p>95% of workshop participants wished to continue learning.</p>



## Appendix 7. How *Write to be Heard* activities match core literacy skills

SPEAKING AND LISTENING		
Element	Curriculum Requirement	<i>Write to be Heard</i> contribution towards skill development
Listen and respond	Listen for gist	Participants listened to and followed instructions for team-building and writing exercises.
	Listen for detail	<i>Write to be Heard</i> workshops required responsiveness to a range of prompts, instructions and information to progress written pieces.
	Clarify and confirm	Participants responded to instructions and prompts, sought clarification to support their writing and gave feedback to writers sharing their work.
	Respond	Participants responded to exercises requesting personal information, opinion (for instance, about favourite books) and abstract ideas. Participants also responded to feedback about their work.
Speak to communicate	Speak clearly and appropriately	Speaking skills were practised through group work and sharing written pieces during the workshops and at the NPR celebration shows.
	Make requests and ask questions	The workshops were designed as an interactive process. Participants were invited to make requests and ask questions throughout.
	Present information	Many workshop exercises required participants to present information logically – for instance, describing a workshop partner's appearance and writing experience, choosing a postcard and explaining the personal significance.
Engage in discussion	Follow and contribute	Workshop participants engaged in discussion about writing strategies such as three act structures and character development. The NPR celebration show recording engaged participants in reflection and discussion about the award entries being broadcast.
	Use appropriate languages and strategies	Workshop participants were invited to share ideas, reflections and writing-in-progress. Group members used body language and appropriate language to reassure and support less confident members and took turns where appropriate.

WRITING		
Element	Curriculum Requirement	<i>Write to be Heard</i> contribution towards skill development
Composition:	Compose and plan	Participants at the workshop and entering the awards planned and drafted a piece of creative writing with descriptive detail of an appropriate length, meeting the criteria of the award categories.
	Organise and present text structure	Awards participants structured writing according to genre and award category. Some entries arrived with accompanying letters written in appropriate tone and structure.
	Use language style and purpose	The workshops, awards, NPR writers' tips and VC resources encouraged learners to explore language in different styles – eg. rhyming couplets, dialogue for radio, short descriptive pieces.
	Proofread	The demands of re-editing and redrafting creative writing were explored in the workshops and VC resources.
Grammar and punctuation:	Apply grammar	Creative writing required participants to write complex sentences using grammar appropriate to the genre.
	Apply punctuation and capitalisation	Although <i>Write to be Heard</i> was a programme encouraging entrants to write for radio, most entrants applied punctuation and capitalisation to enable the judges to read it properly.
Spelling and handwriting:	Apply strategies to spell correctly	Although <i>Write to be Heard</i> was a programme encouraging entrants to write for radio, most entrants tried to correctly spell words to enable the judges to read it properly.
	Form handwriting	Award entrants were required to produce legible text to be read by someone they did not know personally.

## Appendix 8. Write to be Heard Master-class Facilitators and Judges

### Master-class facilitators

**Alex Wheatle's** first novel 'Brixton Rock' was published to critical acclaim in 1999. He is a veteran of the sound system era, founding the Crucial Rocker sound system in 1977, performing his own songs and lyrics under the name of Yardman Irie. He spent a short stint in prison following the Brixton uprising of 1981. His books are on school reading lists, and he works with English Pen, Booktrust and the Children's Discovery Centre to promote reading.

**Anna Perera** was a secondary school teacher and ran a unit for teenage boys who were excluded from school before turning to writing. Her novel 'Guantanamo Boy' was translated into several languages and nominated for many awards, including shortlisting for The Costa Children's Book Award. Her recent young adult novel 'The Glass Collector' tells the story of 15 year old Aaron and his life in the slums of present day Egypt.

**Eileen Browne** is an award-winning illustrator and writer of children's books. She worked as a school teacher and a youth worker before becoming an author and illustrator. Her first book was published in 1977. Her titles include 'Handa's Surprise', which was shortlisted for the 1995 Sheffield Children's Book Award, 'Handa's Hen' and 'Boo Boo Baby and the Giraffe'.

**Femi Martin** is a writer and performer, most widely known for her flash fiction. She has delivered workshops in partnership with many organisations including Spread the Word, English PEN, The Barbican Centre, The Reading Agency and The George Orwell Prize. Femi is currently head judge at StorySLAM:Live and was the Dickens 2012 Young Writer-in-Residence.

**Ty – aka Ben Chijioke** – is a hip hop artist and performance poet. His second album, *Upwards* was nominated for a Mercury Prize in 2004. He has worked extensively internationally with the British Council and as an educator with poetry organisations Ghetto Gramma and Apples & Snakes.

### Judges

**Dame Anne Owers** is the Chair of Clinks and currently the Chair of the Independent Police Complaints Commission. Anne was HM Chief Inspector of Prisons from 2001 to 2010 with a remit that included inspections of prisons, immigration removal centres and police custody.

**Dean Atta** is a writer and performance poet. He has been commissioned to write poems for the Damilola Taylor Trust, Keats House Museum, National Portrait Gallery, Tate Britain and Tate Modern. Dean won the 2012 London Poetry Award and was named as one of the most influential LGBT people by the Independent on Sunday Pink List 2012.

**Baroness Lola Young** of Hornsey has been an actor, arts administrator, professor of Cultural Studies at Middlesex University, writer, cultural critic and broadcaster. Lola has sat on the Boards of several national cultural organisations including the South Bank Centre, the Royal National Theatre and The National Archives. She has been involved in a number of judging panels, including Chairing the Orange Prize for Literature, the Caine Prize for African Literature and the Art Fund Prize. She currently advises arts and cultural agencies and organisations on policy, diversity, leadership and strategic planning and continues to write.

**Mark Billingham** was an actor, stand up comedian and TV writer before becoming a crime fiction writer. His series of crime novels featuring London-based detective Tom Thorne are worldwide bestsellers and have been adapted into a TV series starring David Morrissey.

**Meg Rosoff** is a multi-award-winning writer of novels for young adults and children's books. Her titles include 'How I Live Now', 'Just in Case' and 'The Bride's Farewell'. 'How I Live Now' was recently adapted for film.

**Neil Grutchfield** is the New Writing Director for Synergy Theatre Project and a freelance dramaturg and scriptwriter. Synergy Theatre Project works towards rehabilitation and resettlement with prisoners, ex-prisoners and young people at risk of offending through theatre and related activities.

### Readers

**Becky Jacobs** is a singer and freelance radio producer. Becky has produced many shows for National Prison Radio including the *Write to be Heard* programmes. In 2008, Becky won a Gold award at the Sony Radio Academy Awards for her podcast 'The Book Slam'.

**Charlotte Weinberg** is a writer and performance poet, also the Executive Director of Safe Ground. Safe Ground incorporate arts into their flagship programmes supporting prisoners to explore family relationships and personal development.

**Eva Lewin** is the Writer Development Manager for Spread the Word, London's writer development agency. A writer herself, Eva has over 20 years' experience in the sector supporting writers' career development.

**Jolade Olusanya** is a spoken word artist and parkour enthusiast. In 2013, Jolade reached the finals of the Young Poet Laureate for London competition. He has performed and led spoken word workshops in Gambia and London as a spoken word mentor for children and teenagers and headlined several spoken word events in Gambia hosted by the Balafong group – a prestigious young Gambian writers' association.






# Appendix 9. Write to be Heard Workshop – prison staff questionnaire

## Write to Be Heard Workshop – prison staff questionnaire

Name of Establishment..... Date.....

Your role (eg. prison officer, tutor in Education, etc.).....

We want to document the value of the Write to Be Heard workshop. We would be very grateful if you could complete the questionnaire below as best and honestly as you can. Your response will be anonymous; we will only record your role in the prison.

About the writing workshop	Strongly disagree 	Disagree 	Neither agree nor disagree 	Agree 	Strongly agree 
	Please tick one for each question				
Prisoners were engaged					
Prisoners participated enthusiastically in activities					
Prisoners did some story telling / oral work					
Prisoners did some writing					
It will encourage some to enter the writing competition					
It was thought provoking					
We should have arts events more often					
I would recommend the workshop to someone else					
Prisoners were happy to stay till the end					

If you have anything else you would like to say about the workshop, write it here (and continue on the back page):

**1. Why were you at the workshop (tick as many as apply):**

- I was involved in setting it up
- I volunteered
- I was asked to supervise the workshop
- Other (say what)

**2. Can prisoners use the Virtual Campus if they want to (circle as many as apply):**

- Not at all
- In Education
- On the wing
- Elsewhere (say where):
- Don't know

## Appendix 10. Workshop exercises

### General Exercises

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                      **Name Ball Game**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

The group (including facilitators) stand in a circle, the worker has a ball. The exercise involves passing the ball around the circle and learning people's names at the same time. In the first stage this involves saying your own name when you have the ball, making eye-contact with someone across the circle and passing the ball to (not at!) them.

When this has been going for a while, invite the group to drop their own name and just to say the name of the person they are throwing the ball to. Encourage the group to establish a fairly quick rhythm. Once a rhythm has been established it is possible to introduce forfeits. These might include: kneeling down; having one arm placed behind the back; closing one eye etc and should be introduced for things like breaking the rhythm, forgetting someone's name, giving a bad throw, or failing to catch the ball.

**NOTES:**

A fairly low focus, fun way of learning people's names.  
Give forfeits to lots of people and quickly to avoid it being 'a big deal'.

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                      **Anyone Who**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

Make a circle of chairs, with one chair less than the number in the group. The leader stands in the middle and says, "anyone who..." and then adds something that is true about themselves e.g. anyone wearing black shoes, anyone who likes pizza, anyone who has been to Scotland. Everyone for whom this is also true has to get up and change chairs, trying to avoid being left in the middle. No one can move to the chair to their left or right, or go back to the chair they came from. Whoever is left in the middle starts the game again. The person in middle can also say, "all change" and everyone must change chairs.

**NOTES**

It is important to include a safety warning - this is a 'no contact' exercise.

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                      **Groups Of**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

In this exercise, people begin by milling around the room. When the leader calls a number, for example, 4, group members quickly get into groups of that number. Those left outside of a group can form another group. You can then use any types of categories to form groups e.g. people born in the same year; groups who have the same star sign; groups born in the same season of the year; groups with the same shoe size. Use your imagination, but be aware that the groups should be formed based on non-controversial subjects that will tend to increase the sense of group bonding and as opposed to highlighting differences.

**NOTES:**

Low focus.

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                      **Map on the Floor**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

Ask the group to spread out around the room. Then ask them to imagine a map of an area you want to cover e.g. UK, Scotland or even smaller. Once you've established North, South, East and West ask them to place themselves where they were born, where they live, where they'd like to go etc. This isn't a geography test! Encourage the group to talk to people near to them.



Comments/ concerns. Be aware that with certain groups, particularly those that are poorly bonded, the question of where they live or even where they were born might be too threatening for some group members. It may set up rivalries in some groups, and it may not be information they wish to share with each other.

**NOTES:**

Low to passing high focus.

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                    **Dangerous Places**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

Direct each group member to identify a place/object/item in the room, which is potentially dangerous during active exercises, and to stand by it.

One by one group members explain possible dangers to the rest of the group.

**NOTES:**

Medium focus.

Can be used as a way of introducing expectations or groundrules for the group ('How do we make the room safe for us to explore the issues we are here to focus on together?')

## Thematic Exercises

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                    **Group Juggling**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

You will need a number of socks or soft juggling balls, almost as many as there are group members. Begin with the group standing in a circle and throwing a sock to someone roughly across the circle in an easy-to-catch arc. The person who has just received the sock does the same, throwing it to someone roughly across the circle from them. They then fold their arms to let other people know not to throw the sock to them again. In this way the sock will be thrown to each person only once, then back to you. You should be the last to receive it. This is now the set pattern of throws for the next step.

Ensure that each person is clear who they are throwing the sock to and who they are receiving it from. The sock is now thrown in the same pattern again, until people are comfortable and confident about the sequence. Now, one by one, add in as many socks to the sequence as the group can tolerate. If socks are dropped, they should be picked up and thrown back in. To increase the difficulty, you can add the command 'change', at which point the sequence must instantly reverse.

**NOTES:**

Low focus.

Good focus, concentration and co-operation exercise.

Can be processed in terms of what people have to 'juggle' in their lives. How did it feel to have things thrown at you when you weren't ready? How is this like situations in the real world? What did you think when you dropped a sock? What might picking it up mean?

**NAME OF EXERCISE:**                    **Grandma's Footsteps**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

Ask for a volunteer to stand at one end of the room with their back to the group. They are now 'Grandma'. The rest of the group must now creep up on Grandma and tag her gently on the back. Grandma can turn around whenever she likes and send individuals back if she sees them move so the group members must freeze when she turns around. You may want to introduce the '2 second rule' which means that Grandma must face away from the group for at least 2 seconds.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

Add the task of placing a set of keys behind Grandma that the group must get back to the start line. Once the keys have gone, Grandma can have one guess every time she turns around as to who might have them. If she guesses wrongly, the group continues but if she guesses correctly, the whole group must go back to the start line and start again. The keys can not be thrown or slid along the floor or put in pockets and must pass between at least 3 people. It is useful to let the group have a discussion about tactics between attempts.

**NOTES:**

Medium focus.

Team work and problem solving exercise.

It is important to let the group achieve the goal so plenty of time is essential.

Can be processed in terms of personal and group goals. What might the keys represent? What might being sent back mean? What might send you back? Who might Grandma be? What would you need to do to keep trying for your goals?

**NAME OF EXERCISE:** **Points Of View Circle**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

Have the group stand in a circle. Ask someone to stand in the centre. Ask the group to notice how many eyes, ears, noses and hands they can see from where they are. Ask the group why some someone in the circle can see something different to someone else. Ask people to swap places and say what they see. Ask why it is different now.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

Replace the person in the middle with a chair and say that it represents whatever issue you wish to explore e.g. an specific offence, young people, a young offender. Ask the group "who will have an opinion on it?". Ask the group to hold the roles they have suggested e.g. mother, police officer, mates and ask them for opinions, thoughts and feelings about whatever the chair represents. It is useful to label the chairs as representing the roles then different people can speak from different roles by swapping places.

**NOTES:**

Low group focus, high individual focus.

Process to explore the idea of differing perceptions.

A very useful exercise to explore the notion of reframing, particularly around effects of behaviour on others.

**Closure exercises**

**NAME OF EXERCISE:** **Count to Ten**

**DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE:**

Everyone must stand in a circle and the group are given the instruction to count from 1 to 10. The numbers must go in sequence but anyone can say any of the numbers. They can not use a system like going round the circle and if two people say a number at the same time, they must go back to 1 again. You can increase the number if this is achieved quickly e.g. Count to 20.

## The Dog and the Cheetah

125

Whilst out walking in the veldt Dog came upon a pile of bones. He saw Cheetah approaching out the corner of his eye, and knowing dog was the preferred meal of cheetahs, Dog realised he was in trouble. Stretching languidly he said aloud "I do so enjoy eating cheetah".

Whilst out walking in the veldt Cheetah observed Dog standing over a pile of bones and thought this must be Christmas because he really enjoyed eating dog. He was taken aback when Dog stood back, stretching saying loudly how much he enjoyed cheetahs. Not known for his courage Cheetah slinked off into the bush.

Whilst out in the veldt Monkey observed Dog standing over a pile of bones and saw Cheetah approaching. He said to himself, "This has to be my lucky day because if there is one thing Cheetah prefers to monkey it is dog."

When he saw dog stretch and say aloud how much he enjoyed eating cheetah and Cheetah sneak away he smiled because he was a wise monkey and knew what Dog had done.

Monkey dashed off to find Cheetah to make a deal with him. In exchange for Cheetah not hunting Monkey he explained what Dog had done and together they set off to find Dog.

Dog was a wily old dog and had seen Monkey dash off to find Cheetah so he followed him and heard them strike their deal. Once again he knew he was in trouble.

Monkey and Cheetah found Dog sitting on a log with his back towards them and approached him quietly. Just as they got near to him he stood up suddenly saying angrily "Where is that darned monkey. He promised me he would bring me another cheetah over an hour ago!"





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59 Carter Street  
London EC4V 5AQ  
020 7246 2568