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Peer relations: Review of learning from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Prison Reform Fellowships – Part IV

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Key points

- This report is the fourth in a series of five briefings which present learning from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT) Prison Reform Fellowships.
- Like the preceding three briefings, this one is concerned with the broad theme of ‘connections’. Its particular focus is on interventions visited by the Churchill Fellows which aim to harness the power of **peer relations** towards positive goals.
- This report looks at the importance of positive peer relations at all stages of the criminal justice programme, specifically:
 - Peer relations as a tool to support desistance and diversion
 - Promoting positive peer relations in prison
 - Peer support on release from prison
- Research has long documented the enormous influence of peer pressure - whether positive or negative – on offending behaviour. Positive peer pressure is utilised in work with young fathers and programmes which help to develop youth leadership, while work to reduce gang violence aims to counteract the negative effects of peer pressure.
- In England and Wales, the growing use and benefits of peer support across the prison estate have been recognised by inspectors. Mentoring roles encompass the provision of emotional support, advising, and facilitating self-help or learning.
- Examples of peer support programmes visited by Fellows include a programme run by ex-prisoners in the US which encourages the peer-led and grassroots education of prisoners; the use of drama to promote positive behaviour in prison in South Africa; and a programme in the US which uses life sentence prisoners as ‘social mentors’ to help new prisoners to adapt to prison life.
- The importance of peer support for those leaving prison and re-entering the community is widely recognised, and is increasingly viewed by the UK government as a key means of ensuring continuity of support for those released from prison.
- Examples of such ‘through the gate’ support was seen in Finland, where former prisoners work with those being released from prison to help them access the services they need to resettle back into the community, and in the US through the Delancey Street Foundation, which is entirely staffed by people who have been through the prison system, and teaches marketable skills to recently released prisoners.

Introduction

This report is the fourth in a series of five briefings which present learning from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT) Prison Reform Fellowships. The Fellowships, arranged in partnership with the Prison Reform Trust and conducted from 2010 to 2015, explored ways in which other countries respond to crime and whether similar approaches can be adopted in the UK. The backdrop to the Fellowships was a recognition of the limitations of conventional criminal justice responses to crime which, in England and Wales, have led to an imprisonment rate that is the highest in Western Europe.¹ Prisons in England and Wales are overcrowded, with poor conditions greatly exacerbated by severe cuts to funding and staffing levels. Official figures reveal that the year 2016 saw record high numbers of deaths (including those that are self-inflicted), incidents of self-harm and assaults in prison.²

The overarching theme of the briefings on the Fellowships is ‘connections’. This reflects the fact that many of the Fellows visited interventions seeking to forge or nurture strong, positive connections between offenders and their families, peers and the services available to them, and between the services themselves.

Within the overarching ‘connections’ theme, this report is concerned with harnessing the power of **peer relations** towards positive goals. As the initial briefing in this series notes:

‘Peer pressure’ is routinely evoked as a factor in offending behaviour, especially among young people, but the influences exercised by peer groups over their members can work in diverse ways. Many criminal justice interventions seek to harness the power of peer relations towards positive goals.

This report will look at the importance of positive peer relations at all stages of the criminal justice programme. More specifically, it will consider:

- Peer relations as a tool to support desistance and diversion
- Promoting positive peer relations in prison
- Peer support on release from prison

Peer relations as a tool to support desistance and diversion

In 2013 the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) published a report summarising the findings from a rapid evidence assessment (REA) on intermediate outcomes and the impact on reoffending of interventions targeting offenders’ peer relationships. The report noted that

The quality and extent of peer relationships can impact on antisocial behaviour and offending in a number of ways. First, association with peers who hold attitudes and engage in behaviours which are pro-social can, in combination with the support of

*partners, encourage desistance from crime ... Second, studies have shown that early peer rejection through, for example, bullying, is associated with later criminal behaviour ... Third, antisocial peer relationships can strengthen, support and help to maintain offending attitudes and behaviour. In short, the presence or absence of peer pressure may act as a catalyst either to reduce offending, or to persevere with it.*³

Some Fellows looked at initiatives which use positive peer relationships to help prevent crime and violence by and amongst young people. Fellow Carlene Firmin⁴ noted that:

During adolescence, young people are influenced by their peers more than at any other time in their life ... Peers can set social norms and values that in turn inform young people's relationships and sense of self. In some settings peer influence can outweigh that of a young person's family, particularly in social contexts where peers are dominant such as in schools, youth clubs and other environments in which young people socialise. This level of influence means that peers can act as a positive influence for change as well as a driver of harmful ideals.

Firmin travelled to New Zealand and Brazil to visit projects which aim to develop youth leadership skills with a particular focus on those which aim to prevent violence (see *Fellowship observations 1*). Vicki Helyar-Cardwell⁵ travelled to the US to visit programmes working with young fathers to see how projects can support their involvement in their child's life and promote their desistance from crime. She visited projects in Washington DC and New York and found that group work and peer support were seen as particularly useful for younger fathers who liked to work with others their own age. Many reported the benefits of making friends with other younger fathers facing similar challenges, and she found that some outstanding projects managed to create a 'team' environment and ongoing support networks. Her recommendations on how such projects could be replicated in the UK can be seen at *Applying the learning* on page 6.

One example of the ways in which negative peer pressure can manifest is through gang membership, which can give a sense of identity and belonging to its members, with rivalries between gangs frequently leading to violence.⁶ According to UK government figures, gang members carry out half of all shootings in London and are responsible for 22% of all serious violence.⁷ To examine how this issue is addressed in the US, Andy Laidlaw⁸ visited the CeaseFire project in New Orleans which is specifically aimed at reducing street violence in the Central City neighbourhood. The CeaseFire model uses 'violence interrupters' and outreach workers to interrupt and resolve potentially violent situations before they escalate, and to prevent retaliatory shootings by mediating ongoing conflicts between groups. In addition, CeaseFire New Orleans challenges community norms about violence by mobilising support services

and the larger community to demand a change in behaviours that lead to shootings and killings. The team consists of men (reflecting the fact that gang violence tends to be a male phenomenon) who have a certain reputation or history and consequently have credibility in their own communities. This ‘credibility’ is crucial for them to be able to mediate effectively and mentor younger gang members or anyone seeking an exit from gang activity.

Other Fellows looked at initiatives which aim to divert young people out of the criminal justice system. The development of Peer Courts in the US was studied by Fellow Mark Walsh and was covered in detail in our previous report on problem solving approaches to criminal justice.⁹ Peer Court programmes are a system through which formal prosecution for young people can be avoided, and which strive to nurture a respect for the rule of law, help develop positive citizenship attitudes and encourage community engagement. As Walsh notes, ‘Positive peer pressure is used in Peer Courts to exert influence over adolescent behaviour bringing a unique and often much needed balance to the youth justice system.’ Angela Allcock¹⁰ visited the Young New Yorkers scheme in the US which works alongside the courts to divert young people from the criminal justice system into group activities taking place in the community that use innovative methods of engagement. The organisation provides ‘arts-based transformative justice programs ... With the ultimate goal of empowering them to transform the criminal justice system through their own creative voices.’ (See *Fellowship observations 2.*)

**Fellowship observations 1:
Developing youth leadership skills**

Carlene Firmin visited projects in New Zealand and Brazil which develop youth leadership skills. Violence prevention was a central point of discussion at events Firmin attended in New Zealand to mark Waitangi Day – a public holiday to recognise the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand’s founding document, on that date in 1840. Many of these debates involved, or were led by, young people. One group of young people had visited Māori young people across New Zealand, in schools, pupil referral units, custody and youth projects to gather their hopes for the future of their country. This same group presented the views of their peers to an audience of activists. These young people had a vested interest in the welfare of New Zealand and they had also been supported to consider violence, and other forms of offending, as related to structural inequalities, and wanted to see these addressed in order for safety to be realised. Like the young people in New Zealand, those Firmin met at the Fight for Peace project in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, were able to connect their experiences of violence to the structural inequalities that plagued the favela of Mare and those who lived there. Therefore, young people had ambitions to work in human rights, activism and youth engagement, seeing these as routes through which violence, and other forms of offending behaviour, could ultimately be addressed.

Carlene Firmin visited New Zealand and Brazil in 2014

Fellowship observations 2:

Using the arts to divert young people from the criminal justice system

The flagship 8-Week Arts Diversion Program in New York is an alternative sentencing programme for young people. Upon completion of the programme, participants typically have their criminal cases sealed, meaning they cannot be generally accessed and can only be made available via a court order. The programme consists of weekly, three-hour, arts-based transformative-justice classes, each framed by a relevant theme: community; choice; accountability; responsibility; contribution; leadership. Each participant explores these themes in conversations with the group, and through art exercises presented by Teaching Artists, utilising photography, video, illustration, and design. The programme culminates in a large-scale public art exhibition that is designed by YNY participants, and that addresses a social justice issue that is important to them. Staff explained how it was vital to create a place of safety for the young people, where they felt able to open up, to display their vulnerability, and discuss honestly their feelings around their substance misuse, mental health and offending behaviour.

Angela Allcock visited the United States in 2015

Applying the learning: Peer support for young fathers

Based on her visit to young fathers programmes in the US, Vicki Helyar-Cardwell drew out the following lessons for replicating such work in the UK:

1. Projects working with young fathers should continue to develop their good practice with an ongoing consideration of the cultural competency of staff, a relentless strengths-based approach and incorporating peer support.
2. Projects should develop to work in the community with young fathers at risk of involvement in the justice system and those serving community sentences or on release from custody. These projects will need to be locally relevant and tailored to local needs.
3. Projects working with young fathers should unashamedly challenge statutory agencies and seek system-wide change within and beyond the criminal justice system.

Helyar-Cardwell notes:

I bear the issues and solutions facing young fathers in mind when undertaking policy/research into the criminal justice system and those with multiple needs. The Fellowship, along with other factors, shaped my decision to join Revolving Doors Agency which prioritises peer led solutions and research.

Vicki Helyar-Cardwell visited the United States in 2013

Promoting positive peer relations in prison

In England and Wales, the growing use and benefits of peer support across the prison estate have been recognised by inspectors.¹¹ Mentors have a role that is distinct from that of paid staff, and the positive benefits are felt by both the peer supporters and the prisoners they support. At their best, prisoners who become involved in mentoring are offered a clearly defined role, training, supervision and support to positively assist their peers. Mentoring roles might include provision of emotional support, advising, and facilitating self-help or learning.¹²

A number of Fellows looked at the use of prison-based mentoring and peer support in other countries. Ronald McMaster¹³ travelled to the US where he visited the 'Getting Out by Going In (GOGI)' project, which was developed after its founder spoke to prisoners and realised that all the programmes that were being delivered to them had little impact on their offending behaviour. More information about the programme can be found at *Fellowship observations 3*. Sakira Suzia¹⁴ visited an innovative project in South Africa which was set up by two prisoners when they discovered there was a shortage of rehabilitative programmes. As can be seen in *Fellowship Observations 4*, they faced a number of obstacles which they overcame to establish their drama group, which aims to educate prisoners on how the prison works.

Two Fellows looked at work being done by, or to support, those serving long or life sentences through mentoring. Andy Laidlaw¹⁵ visited Louisiana State Penitentiary in the US, which uses life sentence prisoners as 'social mentors' to help prisoners with determinate sentences. The training is provided by the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and many mentors are educated to degree level. Other long term offenders at the prison are certified academic and vocational tutors delivering meaningful qualifications and skills in 17 distinct vocational areas. Eleanor Butt¹⁶ visited Canada to observe the Lifeline Programme, the employees of which are predominantly former prisoners and which works to help those with very long sentences accept their sentence and adapt to prison life. More information about the programme can be seen at *Fellowship observations 5*.

Fellowship observations 3: Getting Out by Going In (GOGI)

GOGI is a non-profit organisation based in Los Angeles, where the majority of staff are ex-offenders. GOGI programming has been introduced in 37 States within the United States with more than 10,000 active GOGI students who are engaged in individual self-study and small group study. It is designed for the peer-led and grassroots education of prisoners. The focus of all GOGI studies is to teach and encourage a positive prison culture through positive decision-making offered to men and women in jails and prison. GOGI offers materials in English and Spanish as well as specialised materials for specific population needs. Inmates send the GOGI books out to their families so that they can 'learn to live the GOGI way' and help the inmates on release to stay out of prison.

Ronald McMaster visited GOGI in USA in 2015

**Fellowship observations 4:
Peer support through drama**

Sakira Suzia describes the obstacles faced by two prisoners who established a drama group in San City prison:

Martin and Thulani organised a drama group to demonstrate the activities that occur in prison and how it affects others to educate the prisoners. Some of the wardens were not happy with their plan and resented them. Some days they would open the spare cells for them to practice and other days they would shut the doors preventing them from progressing. Through their shows, more and more prisoners joined their group. They did a show on HIV and gang culture in prison and how it affected the prisoners. The wardens did as much as they could to stop the shows. With every obstacle Martin and Thulani, with their sheer determination, did everything they could to be successful. Their group allowed the prisoners to express themselves, to be emotional, to occupy their time so not to fall into the hands of gangsters, or get involved with drugs and other criminal activity that was a daily occurrence in the prison. Martin and Thulani have inspired other prisoners and made them feel more human again.

Sakira Suzia visited South Africa in 2014

**Applying the learning:
The Getting Out by Going In programme**

Since his Churchill Fellowship, Ronald McMaster has sought to introduce the Getting Out by Going In (GOGI) programme in prisons in Northern Ireland.

The founder of GOGI has visited the Northern Ireland Prison Service on several occasions and has had discussions with senior officials who have been positive about the programme. However, implementation has been delayed due to changes in personnel within the Prison Service, and due to lack of capacity in one of the designated prisons. Commenting on these developments, McMaster notes that he and his colleagues 'are committed to getting GOGI into the prisons here in Northern Ireland and in UK mainland prisons as we believe this is something that can help prisoners change their negative choices, thoughts and emotions in order to change their lives.'

Ronald McMaster visited GOGI in USA in 2015

Fellowship observations 5: The Lifeline Programme

The Lifeline Programme aims to keep prisoners motivated and hopeful, through education, work, volunteering or a Lifeline-designed programme. Lifeline workers also play an important role in preventing institutionalisation through assisting lifers to maintain family relationships and ensuring they do not become completely alienated and out of touch with the way the outside world is changing. The end goal is to release productive, law-abiding citizens into the community after 20 years spent in prison. To achieve this aim they have to be helped to understand and be equipped to participate in the community they will be released into.

Eleanor Butt visited Canada in 2015

Peer support on release from prison

The importance of peer support for those leaving prison and re-entering the community is widely recognised, and is increasingly viewed by the UK government as a key means of ensuring continuity of support for those released from prison.¹⁷ This was noted by then Justice Secretary Chris Grayling in his speech to the Centre for Social Justice in November 2012:

When someone leaves prison, I want them already to have a mentor in place to help them get their lives back together. ...Often it will be the former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow.

In 2013 the government launched the Justmentoring website which aimed to ‘give prisoners or offenders in the community quick and easy access to a range of mentoring services, helping break the depressing cycle of crime many are trapped in.’

In England and Wales the St Giles Trust is a leader in this field, training serving prisoners to offer peer-led support and services to fellow prisoners through its Peer Advice Project.¹⁸ A 2009 evaluation of the project found that the peer advisors were very positive about their involvement in the project, which had helped them increase their skills and self-confidence, and build a work ethic and a sense of control over their lives. Also noted was the ‘multiplier effect’ whereby benefits that accrue to individuals from their work as peer advisors are matched by benefits to the recipients of their advice.¹⁹

Two Fellows were interested to see how such mentoring works in other countries. David Martin²⁰ visited Finland to observe the work of the Criminals Return into Society (CRIS) scheme under which former prisoners work with those being released from prison to help them access the services they need to enable them to resettle back into the community

(see *Fellowship observations 6*). Lynn Jolly²¹ visited the Delancey Street Foundation in New York, US, which describes itself as a ‘residential self-help organisation for former substance abusers, ex-convicts, homeless and others who have hit bottom.’ It is entirely staffed by people who have been through the prison system. Work is key and everyone gets a job to do from day one. The foundation aims to have everyone leave when they are ready with three marketable skills, so learning from each other how to cook, drive, paint, build, clean, serve, cut hair or keep accounts is also central to the communal life.

Fellowship observations 6: The CRIS scheme

CRIS contacts inmates while they are still incarcerated and the contacts are intensified during the period just before release. On the date of release, a number of members of CRIS meet the prisoner outside the walls of the prison in order to actively show the new member what true comradeship means, with the view that there must be neither time nor space for the person to fall back into the old criminal way of life. The prisoner is allocated a dedicated Aid Person who is available 24 hours a day to give advice and support. CRIS also arranges sport and other leisure activities for its members, including weekly soccer practices, and volleyball games and tournaments, as well as regular movie evenings.

David Martin visited Finland in 2011

Looking ahead

As with the previous reports in this series, we hope that the initiatives discussed in this one will help to stimulate new ideas and innovative practice within criminal justice in the UK. At a time of rapid change to the policy landscape, there are undoubtedly many opportunities to adapt and apply the learning from abroad to the UK context. This report only touches on certain specific aspects of the Fellowships covered here, and we would urge readers to read the full reports listed in the Appendix for more information, or to contact the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, the Prison Reform Trust or the Institute for Criminal Policy Research for more details.

Winston Churchill Memorial Trust <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/>

Prison Reform Trust <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/>

Institute for Criminal Policy Research <http://www.icpr.org.uk/>

Endnotes

- ¹ According to the Institute for Criminal Policy Research World Prison Brief database, the current prison population rate stands at 146 per 100,000 of the national population (http://prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison_population_rate?field_region_taxonomy_tid=All).
- ² Ministry of Justice (2017) Safety in Custody Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales: Deaths in prison custody to December 2016, Assaults and Self-Harm to September 2016, London: Ministry of Justice https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586364/safety-in-custody-quarterly-bulletin.pdf
- ³ Skrine, O. et al (2013) Intermediate outcomes of peer relationship interventions: a rapid evidence assessment , National Offender Management Service <http://www.icpr.org.uk/media/36299/Intermediate-outcomes-of-peer-relationship-interventions.pdf>
- ⁴ Firmin <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Firmin%20C%20Report%202014%20Final.pdf>
- ⁵ Helyar-Cardwell http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Helyar-Cardwell%20V%20Report%202013_0.pdf
- ⁶ While there is much debate over the definition of a ‘gang’, a widely used definition is that of Hallsworth and Young: ‘A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group’s identity’ (Hallsworth, S. and Young, T.(2005) Interpreting the gang and other criminal groups, Report produced for the Metropolitan Police Service.
- ⁷ 2010 to 2015 government policy: knife, gun and gang crime https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-knife-gun-and-gang-crime/2010-to-2015-government-policy-knife-gun-and-gang-crime_
- ⁸ Laidlaw <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Laidlaw%20A%20Report%202015%20Final.pdf>
- ⁹ Jacobson, J. and Fair, H. (2016) Problem solving approaches: a review of learning from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Prison Reform Fellowships – Part III <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/reports/WCMT%20-%20problem%20solving.pdf%20-%20FINAL.pdf>
- ¹⁰ Allcock <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Allcock%20A%20Report%202015%20FINAL.pdf>
- ¹¹ HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2015) Annual Report 2014–15, London: The Stationery Office https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/07/HMIP-AR_2014-15_TSO_Final1.pdf
- ¹² HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016) Life in prison: Peer support, London: HMIP. <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/01/Peer-support-findings-paper-final-draft-1.pdf>

Further examples of work to promote active citizenship in prison can be found in *Time Well Spent: A practical guide to active citizenship and volunteering in prison.*

<http://www.icpr.org.uk/media/4426/time%20well%20spent.pdf>

¹³ McMaster

<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/McMaster%20R%20Report%202015%20Final.pdf>

¹⁴ Suzia

<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Suzia%20Report%202014%20Final.pdf>

¹⁵ Laidlaw

<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Laidlaw%20A%20Report%202015%20Final.pdf>

¹⁶ Butt

http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Butt%20E%20Report%202015%20Final_0.pdf

¹⁷ Fletcher, D. and Batty, E. (2012) Offender Peer Interventions: What do we know? Sheffield Hallam University

<https://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/offender-peer-interventions.pdf>

¹⁸ St Giles Trust, Work in prisons and with prison leavers

<http://site.stgilestrust.org.uk/what-we-do/Work-in-prisons-with-prison-leavers>

¹⁹ Boyce, I., Hunter, G. and Hough, M. (2009) St Giles Trust Peer Advice Project: An Evaluation. Institute for Criminal Policy Research

<http://www.icpr.org.uk/media/10363/St%20Giles%20Trust%20peer%20Advice%20evaluation.pdf>

²⁰ Martin

http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/migrated-reports/907_1.pdf

²¹ Jolly

http://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/migrated-reports/1197_1.pdf

Appendix

The following is a list of the ten participating Fellows who contributed to this report, with a link to each online profile on the WCMT website. The profile includes the option to download the full report where available.

Angela Allcock

Developing a trauma informed approach to rehabilitative group work in prisons in Norway and the USA, 2015
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/angelaallcock2015>

Eleanor Butt

Treatment and conditions for prisoners with very long sentences in Canada, Netherlands and Portugal, 2015
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/eleanorbutt2015>

Carlene Firmin

Exploring the impact of gender-sensitive approaches to youth offending in Australia, Brazil and New Zealand, 2014
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/carlenefirmin2014>

Vicki Helyar-Cardwell

Young fathers in the criminal justice system - a hook for desistance? In the USA, 2013
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/vickihelyar-cardwell2013>

Lynn Jolly

Support provision for people with learning disabilities in the criminal justice system in Canada and the USA, 2013
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/lynnjolly2013>

Andy Laidlaw

The impact of effective mentoring on community safety and reducing reoffending in the USA, 2015
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/andylaidlaw2015>

David Martin

From custody to community: a more realistic & helpful approach, in Canada and Finland, 2011
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/davidmartin2011>

Ronald McMaster

Special needs - recognising the symptoms and assisting desistance from crime in the USA, 2015
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/ronaldmcmaster2015>

Sakira Suzia

How restorative justice can be used to prevent juveniles from reoffending in South Africa and the USA, 2014
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/sakirasuzia2014>

Mark Walsh

Peer courts UK: 'Restorative justice for youths administered by youths' in the USA, 2013
<http://www.wcmt.org.uk/users/markwalsh2013>

WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT) was established in 1965 on the death of Sir Winston Churchill. The WCMT funds UK citizens from all backgrounds to travel overseas in pursuit of new and better ways of tackling a wide range of the current challenges facing the UK. For more information visit www.wcmt.org.uk.

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The Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR) is based in the Law School of Birkbeck, University of London. ICPR conducts policy-oriented, academically-grounded research on all aspects of the criminal justice system. ICPR's work on this briefing was undertaken as part of the ICPR World Prison Research Programme, a new programme of international comparative research on prisons and the use of imprisonment. Further details of ICPR's research are available at www.icpr.org.uk and www.prisonstudies.org. ICPR's new book, *Imprisonment Worldwide: The current situation and an alternative future* (Coyle, Fair, Jacobson and Walmsley) is available from Policy Press.



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The Prison Reform Trust works to create a just, humane and effective penal system. It does this by inquiring into the workings of the system; informing prisoners, staff and the wider public; and by influencing Parliament, government, and officials towards reform. For more information visit www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk

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