Report from the Discovering Desistance workshops held in Sheffield (10 May and 14 June 2012)

For further details about the project see http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/
Introduction

This report is an output from the Desistance Knowledge Exchange (DesKE) project led by Fergus McNeill (University of Glasgow) and funded by the ESRC. The project team also includes Stephen Farrall (University of Sheffield), Claire Lightowler (IRISS) and Shadd Maruna (Queens University Belfast). For further information about the project see: http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/.

The report is based on the contributions of those who attended two workshops about “Discovering Desistance” in Sheffield, on 10 May and 14 June 2012. Attendees were a mixture of policy-makers, probation officers, current and previous service users, people who have offended, family members of people who have offended, and researchers. The workshops followed an appreciative inquiry methodology, focusing on the positive and what works well. There were four key stages involved in the process - Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny – details of each stage are provided in the relevant section of the report. The Sheffield workshops were facilitated by Stephen Farrall (University of Sheffield) and Claire Lightowler (IRISS).

The report presents the outputs and notes from the two days without offering analysis or comment. For this project workshops have also taken place in Belfast, Glasgow and London, between April and June 2012. The project team will be analysing the data emerging across the workshops and producing a more analytical and thematic report, to be made available here: http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/. Via this link you will also find copies of the slides used at the workshops.

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Sheffield workshop 1 (10 May 2012)

Workshop Structure
10-10.10 Welcome, introduction to project and workshop
10.10-11.00 Film Viewing
11.00-11.30 Group discussion: Reflections on the film
12.00 - 12.45 Lunch
12.45 - 2.00 Discovery phase
2.00 - 2.15 Tea/coffee
2.15 - 3.45 Dream Phase
3.45-4.00 Sum-up and close

Reflections on the film

Following a screening of the film The Road from Crime – see http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/documentary/ - attendees were invited to offer any comments or reflections.

- Anger of mark Johnson valid - we have profited from the system, give us our lifestyle balance between usefulness of professional and the service user.
- I starting as a volunteer and then built on it, now paid - is there something about a mixture, making sure you've got the balance between voluntary and paid work?
- Interchange in south Yorkshire - lots of little reformed offender led organisations
- We have gone through an over focus on risk, balance was wrong but don't now throw baby out with the bath water – just challenge the risk averse.
- You can unpick it - sets themes, you have to be a bit simplistic in 50mins but the film has strong themes
- I found myself popping into different roles as each person talked, almost like having a row with myself through different identities
- I can see Mark's anger, and see both sides, if you've not had help with probation its understandable, but they can have something to offer too.
- A probation officer is only as good as the time they have
- NOMS were asked - when are you going to employ someone who is a reformed offender?
- Peer to peer mentoring not allowed, system acts as a barrier though it says it wants to happen. How can we gain access to make this happen, and allow former users to play a part. Professional standard always overrides the reformed offender input. Give us real access or not but don't give lip service.
- Thanks for the film, I spent time in Baltimore. Film helps conceptualise my position.
- Desistance good for society but society not interested. The argument hasn't been made or won.
- The voices of the offender are so often missing. There is little support for people to change.
- I want to give politicians the film and say you need to watch this, you're undoing the work that these people are trying to do.
- Powerful video for an ex offender. I want to speak up for Mark, it's passion. We struggle to articulate ourselves. Its there for a reason, the anger, we have to all of us be part of the change. Maybe we need to be angry.
- Film needs to go out to the wider society.
- The film didn't explore victims. The message needs to be there that this isn't just for offenders it's also for victims.
• Restorative justice can be a vehicle for desistance, provides the victim and the ex offender with a role.
• Many of the ex-offenders are also victims. Nobody really looks at their victim hood.
• This film is a rallying cry for a paradigm shift.
• So often the policy focus is on big crimes - terrorism etc.
• So glad I've got something that isn't reading a paper. This (the film) has transcended the needs of academics.
• Individuals prepared to make change but society won't let them - frustrating. Some of the assumptions are that society is this good thing but it's more complex than that.
• There are lots of people that need to be part of this - what can I do- politicians and all of us.
• The film is useful - confirmed that what we're doing is right, supporting authentic one to one support. Use action learning, don't use labels.
• A lot of things go in cycles - people don't know what skills they have. Support for getting off drugs, but once you are off them, then what are you going to do - no services to support you from a to b. how do you find where you fit in, how do you fit in to what's out there.
• We recruit reformed offenders, lots of people with skills- don't come across too many critics but if we do they say don't paint these people as victims but through supporting them to get to know the individual, issues are resolved.
• The individual story - when you see the person, it's a powerful thing.
• We are concerned that the political focus is on immediate results, direct results. Policy is pushing still in a punitive way, and there is a danger that the third sector swayed by this.
• Concerned about payments by results - not going to track back enough time, focus on short term.
• Really using all the knowledge we have at hitting people at the right point with the right thing, when you're ready. Now fine tuning what we do. Some of this can't be done quicker.
• I'm almost 40. What do I do? They (the together women project) sat me down with a piece of paper and said what are your skills, I didn't have a clue.
• Often services there but once you make progress then you're cut lose.
• Never not seen some change as a result of being involved in the (together women) project.
Discovery phase: What supports desistance?

This session focuses on exploring and appreciating ‘the best of what is’. Attendees were asked to identify good examples from their experience of desistance/supporting desistance. They were then asked to think about what were the factors that supported desistance. Attendees were asked to record on post-it's these good examples and there ideas about what supports desistance. They also explored this as a group, identifying further suggestions. Below is a list of all the factors identified, and immediately below is a word cloud, which helps to visualise the key issues emerging. The size of the words in the diagram below relates to how many times the word was recorded at the workshop.

What supports desistance: Frequency of words mentioned

List of all notes about what supports desistance (from post-it and group work exercises)

- Taking on a new responsibility (in family, prison setting, group activity)
- Re-integration
- Positive role models
- Feedback from a very violent offender that I had made him think about what he’d done, accept it and move on with his life
- Someone going from almost hospitalised, homeless, virtually friendless, to having good housing, friends, a holiday, and a cat, and happier
- Getting GCSEs grade C and above at 31 years of age
- Thanks for visiting and talking, on time, as agreed
- Letter from Mr C. Thanks for….as I had my head up my ….
- Starting mature masters degree
- Setting a task for a young person to do a project about their skill (musical instrument)
- Army guy – learning from the person sat with me
- Someone cracking a joke, making eye contact when they never used to – confidence had got better
- Supported a client into rehab and into their own housing (for the first time)
- Reviewing sentence plan while walking along the beach back to rehab where the guy was doing really well
- Having someone give you a pat on the back, saying well done, you have achieved. Breeds future achievement
- Identifying with it
• Cutting down drinking
• Positive role models that enable an individual to reflect and produce good life goals, and find one’s true self
• Voluntary positions
• Employer took a chance on someone
• Arts – particularly theatre and drama is custody
• Education achievement
• Driving licence
• Detox and rehab
• Reframing masculinity and self concept
• Accessing SC file
• Employment and training
• Community projects which can offer focused, targeted support (e.g. mental health, women and other groups)
• Getting clean from substances
• Restorative justice in Dinnington
• Jaime’s kitchen
• Ex-offender coaching
• Change of environment
• Staying off drugs
• Finding a new activity (e.g. sport, drama)
• Finding a “good” relationship
• Stopping smoking
• Giving hope
• Listening
• Gaining qualifications
• Being able to see a positive future
• Realising there are opportunities out there (even with a criminal background), and how it can be used in a positive way
• Getting first job
• ESF role
• Intervention pack
• Financial independence
• Getting an old fashioned grant to go to college
• Acceptance
• Communication
• Sit side by side
• Flexibility
• Sticking with “difficult” people
• Genuineness of probation officers
• Inclusion in community
• Persistence
• Having someone believing in the possibility to desist
• Education
• Work once outside
• Open mind
• Formal relationship on a human level
• Understanding triggers of crime
• Making sense of emotions
• Having a mentor
• Focus on self – getting back in contact with self
• Make intervention programme personal
• Experience – make the connection
• Challenge stereotypes
• Supporting the change
• Create the belief/hope of change
• Being ready
• Accompanying to the first appointment
• Adequate funding and motivation to sustain project through difficult times - good roots
• Person that is prepared to believe, take a chance on individuals that are often perceived as risky
• Mentoring service
• One addict helping another
• Health scare – doing it with someone else
• Using money saved for something important
• Looking at friends exercise, realizing potential worth, building confidence
• Money to decorate flat (previously brick wallpaper)
• Realisation comparison logic
• Art exhibition
• Allowing staff permission to dream
• Support from a small group of people – different levels of input at different times
• Support from someone who sort of knew what the experience was like
• Excellent drug rehab services, and someone agreeing to fund it
• A safe place to learn and trust, and shared responsibility, democratic delivery style and fun, enjoyment, play
• T.W.P showing me and helping me gaining basic skills and pointing out what skills do already have
• Relationships of trust/motivation
• Oversight of implementing joint objectives
• SEED
• Opportunity for jobs
• Change in attitude
• Focus on what he wanted to achieve
• Employer with an open mind
• Being patient, consistent, loyal to the working relationship you've both created
• Managers supporting recommended changes
• Seeing what it could offer
• (My) Maturity – what the hell!
• Really wanted to do it
• Input from service user groups – giving their feedback
• Training
• Supervision reflection
• Changes to practice
• Improved housing and getting housing support/adapted housing
• Confidence of probation staff
• Value base that people can change
• Commitment and dedication of staff
• Someone who believes in you – takes a risk – believes you can change
• Acknowledgement of progress made
• On-going support
• Academic theories
• A judge that was willing to take a risk
• Colleagues supportive
• Relationship with client
• Housing took a risk
• Support from managers
Client’s openness to change/determination
Listening and having open dialogue – probation officer and client
Appropriate empathy and sharing
Really wanted the change (but very hard to do)
Lots of support from friends and family...over a long period
The right type of services available e.g. cognitive analytic therapy from skilled professionals
Having good facilities and access to activities/educational programmes
Not seeing old associates
Saying ‘No’
Relocating
New routines, new role
Secure funding CDRP for “extras”
Being supported and encouraged by trained staff and or mentor figure
Seeing the positive in someone
Non-judgemental acceptance
Seeing person rather than the behaviour
Training experience
Peer discussions
Availability of service support – individual. 3 way
VAR
Staff motivation and willingness – a belief that things can change
Doing more than the day job
Support, confidence and trust
Supportive manager
Less technical nature of work
Being able to do home visits
Introduction of a rite of passage process
Setting up of process time to asses
Previous encouragement
Volunteers
Attending the together women project and their support and continuous guidance
Supportive family
Supervision training
Experience
Strength-based person centred empowering support
Personal development groups
More time vs paper filling
Approach on a human level
Listening skills
Time and commitment on both sides
Luck
Professionals with imagination and willingness to go the extra mile
Open minded employers –specifically family business that have the power to act as they see fit
Addressing ideal future – how do you want life to be? How do you get there?
Starting to work with partner before release
Contact, support and communication
Having a reason and motivation to change – family/kids
Trust in your professionalism
Alcohol – sat in cells realising I could lose my children, what impact it would have on their lives
AA
Knowing it was down to me to stay positive
Being honest with myself
To help others
Knowing when to ask for help
Interest paid
Financial incentives
Access to resources
Consequences of failure being meaningful
Fear of failure – don't let people down
Having time to get to know my caseload
Seeing people's other dimensions
Motivation and desire to achieve
Family who was proud
Peers success/failing
Finding resilience
Not being too future orientated
Not being preoccupied with 'but what if…'
Taking a leap of faith
Positive relationships
Wanting to pass exams and/or fear of failure
Positive role models to support risky decisions
Patience – not wanting to let people down
People having time to listen
Expectation of parents/wider family
Being allowed to be creative
Expectations – own expectations of self and others expectations of self
Financial resources
Being open and enthusiastic, relating positively to people and establishing relationships
Confidence and desire to succeed
Gaining confidence
Wanting knowledge
Being realistic that there will be challenges to change
Take a risk
Everyone is different
Hope that things can change
Recognising what I have to lose/lost if I don't change
Knowing when to ask for help
Motivation, support, resilience
Someone believing in you, that you can do it
Wanting to be a good role model
Having support, knowing who to go to when you need help
Letting other people down
Access to resources
Develop positive relationships with agencies/support workers after order/licence ends
Being secure enough with oneself to overcome failure/the fear of failure and being able to acknowledge you don’t have all the answers
Being able to engage with the other person and being on the journey together
Recognising when to intervene
Becoming comfortable with changes and overcoming stereotypical roles
Recognising risks – due to self-awareness. Knowing when to take risks. Developing strategies to deal with risk
Knowing one can deal with risk
Feeling rewarded
• Having hope
• Probation officers who know their patch
• Probation managers who can allow and support staff doing one to one work
• Team working
• Someone who shows that they trust the person seeking to change (and vice versa – trust that the other can help)
• Enduring unconditional support and commitment
• Empathy and understanding
• Looking beyond the offence
• Accepting of relapses
• Realising that change is possible
• Identifying role models
• Residential change and developing new routines, getting new opportunities
• Developing an on-going conversation which recognizes failure / incomplete success as platforms to success
• Informal approach
• Gaining employment
• Want rather than need
• Someone having belief in you
• Someone showing they care, have time
• Willingness to try
• Believing that something possible
• Working with the whole family/wider group
• Use of appropriate language
• Questioning styles/ informal relaxed atmosphere
• Focusing on positives
• Reinforcing positive behaviour
• Recognising that change is hard and lonely
• Recognising, supporting and building resilience
• Not using labels
• Allowing self expression
• Celebrations – recognition of positive change
• Opt in and opt out
• Building of confidence
• Giving new opportunities
• Making things fun / good experience
• Examining self, attitudes, experiences
• Reshaping masculinity
• Intergenerational support
• Identification of the real issue
• Listening
• Meeting person in their own environment
• Seeing something positive for the future
• Recognising opportunities
• Step by step approach
• Continuity
• Flexibility
• Choice
• Knowledge of what's available
• Localized services
• Child care
• Building trust
• Creating/experiencing something different
• Joint responsibility
• Building relationships
• Time
• Strengths based, person centred, empowering support
• Individual setting own goals
• Safe environment / secure funding
• Education – passport to other desirables (work, accommodation, experiences)
• Having a good mentoring relationship
• Sorting life issues out
• Challenging views
• Thinking skills (outside the box)
• Empathy and understanding
• Meaningful job with real prospects
• Employment referrals and follow up
• Accommodation, even short term, to move on
• Non judgemental approach
• Understanding service users
• Passing exams
• Gaining qualifications
• Birth of all of my children
• Winning my fight with alcohol
• Passing fork lift tests
• Getting my family unit back
• My garden and all the work I’ve put into it
• My son's first school report
• Attitude – resilience in the face of set backs
• Bouncing back
• Optimism
• Engagement with psychiatrist to address post traumatic stress
• Volunteering
• Family support
• Education
• Self-identity
• Children
• Community service
• Supportive friends who believed in me
• Meeting reformed offenders in the shops
• Building relationships with my caseload
• Contact in prison
• Having a probation office in the area
• Knowing the area and families
• A teacher who believed that I could go to college
• Rounded relationship which includes person's good and negative qualities
• Element of mandatory support and support which is voluntary and chosen
• Education
• Rehabilitation
• One to one counselling
• Opportunities to talk
• Opportunities to be a person (rather than offender)
• Non-criminal activity
• Focusing on young person's skill – musical instrument
• Recall project
• Not making assumptions
• Art exhibition project
• Guitar group
• When all the services join up
• When the community supports rather than judges
• Peer to peer
• Speak to other people who have been through the
• Groups - people going through the same thing
• Partner
• Partner involved
• Home visits
• Community links
• Allowed to see people within the communities
• Getting a holistic picture
• Individual focused planning
• Keeping family informed and involved
• Family as advocates
• Creation of a team to support the person who has offended
• Listening (shutting up and listening)
• Find the things that make sense to the person
• Treat people with respect
• Understand where people are coming from
• Legitimacy
• Clear and open roles and limitations – contract
• Ability to make contact
• Decent accommodation
• Equipping people to meet their own needs
**Dream Phase: Provocative propositions**

This phase draws on the examples of innovation or good practice/experiences that have been discussed in the discovery phase. Attendees were asked to develop ‘provocative propositions’, aspirational statements that realistically sum up ‘what could be’, if services, practices, policies were redesigned to support desistance.

Within groups attendees identified provocative propositions are were asked to record those they identified as being the most important. At the Sheffield workshop 24 provocative propositions were identified.

**Provocative propositions:**

1. Make prison work

2. Rethink probation (bring it to a human level, service user focused, more community involvement, flexible, creative and individualised)

3. De-politicise criminal justice, detach from political discourse

4. All employers (over a certain size) to interview people in prison for potential employment

5. Rehabilitation of offender act works in practice

6. All staff working with offenders have a shared integrated continuous development framework

7. Reformed offenders have a stronger role in the criminal justice system

8. Support, in the way it’s wanted, is easy to access if requested

9. Good news stories are shared to highlight that people can and do change

10. Redistribute resources to meet basic needs for all

11. Launch a campaign to promote positive change through desistance

12. Reformed offenders are represented on CJs boards, to have real policy and practice influence

13. All service users engaged with to design a client-centred process

14. We imprison fewer people and improve the resettlement process

15. We develop different ways of dealing with conflict and resolving problems which support rather than exclude people

16. We educate the general public about the process of desistance/lives of offenders in order to break down the ‘them’ and ‘us’ mentality
17. We have meaningful service-user involvement to improve policies and provision and improve language/terminology, and there are clear career routes and recognition of skills this involves.

18. Practitioners in all sectors have a good awareness of processes of desistance.

19. Criminal justice services are not a 9am-5pm service.

20. We have an integrated approach.

21. The inspectorate follow the person who has offended (not the service).

22. Change the rehabilitation of offenders act to ensure that, where appropriate, all convictions are spent after 5 years (tailored to risk).

23. Greater use of reformed offender mentoring.

24. Shared decision making around recalls to encourage consistency and less risk aversion.
Sheffield workshop 2 (4 June 2012)

Workshop Structure
10-10.20 Welcome and film re-cap
10.20 -10.40 Reflections on first workshops;
- Have you done anything differently as a result of the first workshop?
- Update from all stage 1 workshops
10.40- 11 Voting for Provocative propositions to be prioritised
11-12.30 Design Phase
2.30 – 1.30 Lunch
1.30 - 2.30 Destiny Phase
2.30-3.15 Tea/coffee
3.15-4.00 Sharing reflections from, and about, the process and sum-up

Reflections on the first workshop
Attendees were invited to reflect on the first workshop and think about whether they had started to do anything differently as a consequence of being involved in the project.

Reflections on the first workshop/film

• Slight concern from feedback from practitioners about desistance, that let’s then chuck everything else out
• Liz Dixon and I are piloting work together around desistance. We have a troubled families fund and it seems to be working, building on some of the ideas from the film
• A lot of the stuff we’re talking about has been working on an individual basis, now there seems a willingness to accept this as an organisation, so gives legitimacy to things that people have been doing
• Feedback from officers in the field, in the current climate with the jobs market. There is a lot of hopelessness about. But it’s interesting because I used the story about Allan, who was an offender and is now a probation officer, to give a bit of hope. But is it possible to be a probation officer after committing violent offences
• I’ve been clean for 12 years – and a worker asked me write down what skills you have, and I didn’t have a clue. A lot of offenders don’t realise what skills. I thought it myself – what is the point doing this diploma is I can’t use it due to CRB check.
• The probation officers became very risk averse – used CBT as a basis for probation recruitment tool (taken from Canada). We used a very narrow tool for assessment. We’ve just been writing a response to the probation consultation at the moment. The right challenge to us from this film is what should be the balance of the risk. It’s a balance.
• Using a range of tools and approaches etc.
• One of the opportunities in probation review is the third sector, so you stage the return in. Doing some type of project work, voluntary. Part of this culture of risk averse.
• Ex-offenders working in probation. There was a change in recruitment but also the job became less - because it became more about enforcement.
• PQF – training degree for probation officers – positive focused practice. There is a feeling that this literature and ideas are being introduced to practitioners, but
people taking it in a very piecemeal way and think they ‘are doing desistance’. The issue as a paradigm shift is not coming through- people are looking for tools.

- A lot of people say they are doing desistance because they are not calling an offender an offender to their face.
- Not happy with the term ex-offender. Any ideas? We need a word to indicate why we are working with.
- We asked people who are offenders – I think we get hung up on it. Its about the intent and the respect behind it
- Probation officers about to be co-located with police and drugs. Hoping that desistance will provide a bridge and shared vocabulary. They are using a recovery language – maybe that is a way forward.
- I’m not being horrible. I’ve gone from being a service user to a service provider. Who are you, what have you done? My work is voluntary – you should be able to move on – in stages. Need to make it more realistic, in an ideal world what would you like to do. I was amazed at the opportunities out there. Turning negatives into positives.
- There’s a lot of money, there’s a criminal justice industry. We earn our living from this. I would like to see some of this money to go to people who have been service users.
- Maybe offender getting to a stage where they’ve been clean, not committed offences – then when they’ve reached that stage then move them on to the next stage.
- Service user – people are too hung about the language.
- Talking about the job being attractive – if it is because the role is attractive
- I found the video quite encouraging. It made me think that’s why I came into the job 30 years ago. What we are thinking of doing is using it as a management team to encourage them to be creative. We’ve taught them to process people and we need to help them to shift their thinking.
- It’s challenging that offender manager's practice – the film was so stimulating for me.
- It’s going to take time to do this. Its not going to change
- We’ve put the insight booklet on our intranet – on the front page for everyone to access. We’re using the DVD for training. But we’ve also buying artwork from art groups.
- We’ve been quiet about good practice; I kept quite about guitar group we’ve been running. We’ve just hidden this. We should just be more confident and creative.
- We still think its us doing it, rather than doing it alongside people. That’s the next step change we
- It’s the piece of legislation. That matters to me. Rehabilitation of offenders act doesn’t’ allow me to move on with my life. It’s not the term but the legislation that matters to me.
- A missed opportunity on entry to prison, that stage of ambivalence, pre-contemplation. There’s nothing for those people who decide immediately that they don’t want to be there.
- Paying lip service to desistance – concerns I have about budget cuts, and staff going under workload wise, because staff just churning people out. Focus on group work not because it’s right for the person but because it’s cheaper. We’re calling it desistance but some of its not.
Prioritising provocative propositions

Each attendee had five votes to cast for the provocative propositions they thought were most important. See the Dream Phase section above for a full list of provocative propositions. People could allocate their votes as they wished, i.e. they could allocate all five votes for one proposition or split their votes across several.

Percentage of votes cast for the provocative propositions created in Sheffield

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provocative propositions</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>% of votes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Imprison fewer people and improve the resettlement process</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Educate the general public about desistance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rethink probation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Change the rehabilitation of offenders act</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. We have meaningful service-user involvement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Reformed offenders have stronger role in the criminal justice system</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Greater use of reformed offender mentoring</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Shared integrated continuous development framework</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. De-politicise criminal justice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Practitioners have a good awareness of processes of desistance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Make prison work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. We support rather than exclude people</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. All service users engaged with to design a client-centred process</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Criminal justice services are not a 9am-5pm service</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Launch a campaign to promote desistance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Shared decision making around recalls</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. We have an integrated approach</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Redistribute resources to meet basic needs for all</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>104</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Design Phase**

The third stage in the appreciative inquiry process focuses on designing a more ideal approach to supporting desistance, based on the examples that have emerged from the successes and achievements of the past. Attendees were required to think about what policies, practices and services might look like if they were designed in such a way as to better support desistance and to achieve the provocative propositions developed in the dream phase.

We selected seven provocative propositions to work on during this (and the following phase). Four groups focused on the top four propositions (14, 6, 2 and 22), one group then focused on the next three most highly voted propositions (17, 7 and 23) which were all focused on the role of reformed offenders in the criminal justice system.

**Provocative proposition 2. Rethink probation (bring it to a human level, service user focused, more community involvement, flexible, creative and individualised)**

- Training and retraining people as needed. Including management, its about leadership as well as practitioners.
- Talked a lot about the time spent with people.
- More flexible and imaginative sentencing, post-sentencing assessment. Agreeing with the service user what you are going to do together.
- Permission to sack staff – we have to get rid of people who are in the wrong job. Talking about a small percentage of staff. Then open up vacancies to employ ex-offenders.
- Better performance management.
**Provocative proposition 5. Rehabilitation of offender act works in practice**

- Big debate – started with all sentences spent after your sentence. Then settled all sentences spent after 3 years.
- We want to broaden the rehabilitation of act – a legal requirement on insurers and housing to abide by it
- Happy to retain declaration of offences after a certain amount of time, but have a legal requirement on employers to why past offences do come up
- Is failing to disclose still an offence after a certain number of years?
- We are anticipating outrage – especially amongst murders, sex offenders.
- This is about the positive employability issue; this is not in the risk processes. Interesting that even we were conflating these issues.
- Talked about young offenders

**Reformed offenders provocative propositions (7, 17 23)**

*Provocative proposition 7. Reformed offenders have a stronger role in the criminal justice system*

*Provocative proposition 17. We have meaningful service-user involvement to improve policies and provision and improve language/terminology, and there are clear career routes and recognition of skills this involves*

*Provocative proposition 23. Greater use of reformed offender mentoring*

- What constitutes a reformed offender? And what constitutes a mentor
- Mandatory strategy about the role of mentors - it is mandatory to have a strategy about mentors, but the details of this are flexible and voluntary. Perhaps some opportunities for accreditation etc.
- Access into training didn’t use to just be graduates. I think we’ve lost something here. Used to have a mixed people
- What sorts of pathways do we have for lots of volunteers, training but then are struggling to achieve paid employment at the end of it. New probation review provides opportunities – so there is something already going on.
- Support groups for prisoners – there is very little in the community for those with no statutory provision
• Role of reformed offenders as consultants
• Difficulty retaining reformed offenders - how do we bring them back into the fold
• The probation review – very punitive language – does it support the process of desistance
• The importance of key stakeholders buying in to desistance – police etc.
• Current restrictions about ex-prisoners not able to go back into prison to continue mentoring work they were undertaking within prison
• Experience of prior learning and experience – recognising previous life experience.
• Don’t come to me with problems – try stuff out

Provocative proposition 14. We imprison fewer people and improve the resettlement process

• Have some powers – getting more experienced people into courts, improving court reports etc.
• Fundamental problems in the current system. Prison should just be for dangerous – for public protection. You should remove all aspect of punishment from custody.
• For small minority – custody. For a lot of people constructive punitive sentences – work placements, and community sentences.
• Making more use of health interventions. Increasing drug rehabilitation, psychiatric services.
• Opportunities to give back – using sentences they’ve already got.
• Particular sentences around contributing to community
• In terms of custody – there would need to be legislation, so if people breach community sentences you don’t need to revert to custody
• Enforcement and recall – different more creative approaches to non-compliance.
• The people who are in prison – make sure as local to home as possible and keep the links – more but smaller prisons. Especially for women.
• Only dangerous women should go to prison. If they are dangerous they need intervention.
Provocative proposition 16. We educate the general public about the process of desistance/lives of offenders in order to break down the ‘them’ and ‘us’ mentality

• Broken down national and local level. Talked about how we could use the film to help break down the language of desistance.
• The issue was always about getting attitudes to change, cynical about the media so thought about lobbying politicians
• We then thought that the local community was actually more important – giving service users the opportunity to be citizens. Volunteering, giving work opportunities etc. Breaking down the them and us – service users talking to the public more effective. People respond to individuals positively.
Destiny Phase
This session is about ‘making change happen’. Here we focused on what needs to be done to achieve the vision of the future established in the dream and design phases. Attendees focused on identifying what participants can do to move towards better practices, services and policies, and identified what others also need to do to make this happen.

Provocative proposition 2. Rethink probation (bring it to a human level, service user focused, more community involvement, flexible, creative and individualised)
- Training
- Local workshops on desistance – rolling out and making in mandatory
- Feedback for the VQ about occupational competencies
- Introducing daily team briefings – matching service users with the best person
- Asking practitioners about what have you done to promote desistance – so people feel confident about their role in this, and sharing good practice in this
- Setting a number of home visits as a target
- Identifying community bases where you can
- Love letters in the hand – hand written letters to prison
- Making more before and after, record for service users of what they have done
- Getting staff to do community sentences
- Service user recognition – award – something to mark and acknowledge process
- Having a nominated person to go out and find out about community resources

Provocative proposition 5. Rehabilitation of offender act works in practice
- Creating a movement to change people’s attitudes to the act
- Raising awareness – coordinated by Fergus McNeill:
  1) Power group
  2) Practitioners (probation officers, prison)
  3) Prisoners, ex-offenders
  4) Lobby groups
  5) Public and victims
Using social media as a way of educating people
Talking to students (future practitioners, solicitors, prison officers)
Talking to employers – having the personal narrative about the barriers when desisting
Us going to seminars, conferences and raising awareness of this issue - "before this event this issue hadn’t figured in my thinking so much" so there
On-line petitions – if you get so many signatures – we could create one around the rehabilitation of offenders act

Reformed offenders provocative propositions (7, 12, 23)

Provocative proposition 7. Reformed offenders have a stronger role in the criminal justice system

Provocative proposition 12. Reformed offenders are represented on CJs boards, to have real policy and practice influence

Provocative proposition 23. Greater use of reformed offender mentoring
• We would have reformed offender mentors co-facilitating groups, to help the people feel more comfortable
• Making a film within the prison
• Respect mentors – can push people into a role they perhaps didn’t want to do
• Allow for situations where mentors can meet with others
• Power to revoke a court order when not ready, courts put people in groups – take up all places – so no places for those ready
• If someone has a programme on their order and at a review point if they are s
• Banish psychometrics – measure this its painful for people – then intervention then you return to it. Not treatment. Need to find something better. Alternative measurement which also has some use for the people completing it

Proverbative proposition 14. We imprison fewer people and improve the resettlement process

• Continue to improve cross agency working – in terms of re-settlement
• Sharing learning between agencies in innovative ways
• More pre-emptive, pro-active activity in courts driven by experienced
• Emphasis on improving court reports
• Need to clarify purpose of OASIS
• Trusts making use of new national standards, to make use of sentence planning
• Practitioners play more of an advocate role
• More creative approaches to enforcement, rather than court
• Trusts arguing for the provision in legal aid act in terms of breach
• Quality of parole reports – thinking ahead about
• Lobbying prisons to try to get people as close to people as possible
• Influencing sentencers and parole board
• Feedback about OASIS about capturing positive as well as negatives to the people reviewing OASIS
Provocative proposition 16. We educate the general public about the process of desistance/lives of offenders in order to break down the ‘them’ and ‘us’ mentality

National:
- Creation of a set of education tools which explain desistance – tailored for different groups (schools), includes film
- Education programme for schools (part of citizenship lessons)
- Desistance training for criminal justice
- Using discovering desistance site to share good practice in desistance
- Think tank (service users, academia)

Local level:
- More vocal about desistance practice
- Some opportunity for public to feed in about the needs of their community
- Onus on commissioners to promote good practice
- Local criminal justice boards have some community representative
- Meaningful support for multi-agency working in areas
- Meaningful opportunities for designing, and delivering services, and contact with the general public
- Best practice events for employers
- Useful when you know people who have written stuff – the role of the academic