

# Editorial

This general edition of Prison Service Journal offers a diverse mix of articles, interviews, and book reviews that discusses a range of themes, and empirical research that offers a rich selection of topics for those with an interest in prisons and for those working in the prison system.

The opening article is a theoretical piece by **Dr Lauren Hall**, from the University of Nottingham, **Dr Linnéa Österman** from the Gothenburg University Sweden, and **Dr Lyndsey Harris** from the University of Lincoln. Their article explores how supporting desistance can be experienced differently by women in different roles. They utilise two theoretical mechanisms of identifying the emotional burdens of desistance: Desistance Emotional Work and Emotional Capital, to argue that incorporating these two mechanisms into practice may illuminate how gendered roles influence the emotional investments in supporting desistance.

Despite the prevalence and impact of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) on children having been studied in depth, little is known about its impact on young adults (aged 18 to 25 years) within the criminal justice system. **Alison Coyne** is from the University College Dublin, her article provides an overview of the potential effect of DLD on children and young adults who are in conflict with the law. She emphasises the importance of effective communication in the criminal justice system and presents a possible way forward.

The following two articles incorporate the arts within their papers to illuminate the positive impact this can have on prisoners' experience of incarceration. Studies have shown that the arts, especially theatre, have produced remarkable and effective results to transform people's lives in the criminal justice system. The founder of Shakespeare UnBard, **Dr Rowan Mackenzie's** article examines the establishment of a permanent theatre company and the provision of Creative Workshops in a specific prison. This article explores how the drama work can help to alleviate the pains of imprisonment, enable 'positive autonomy' and support participants to rebuild their often-shattered sense of self-identity. **Claudia Vince** and **Emily Evison** are from the Prison Reform Trust. Their article begins with a powerful poem by Katie. The article discusses the collaboration of the Building Futures programme with long-term prisoners. Focussing on the experiences of women serving long prison sentences — including life sentences, Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences and Extended Determinate Sentences (EDS)

— and the impact that the sentence has had on them. This article shows how the programme provides long-sentenced prisoners with a platform for self-advocacy through consultation, research, and opportunities for leadership.

The article by **Dr Gregory Davies** from the University of Liverpool and **Dr Robert Jones** from Cardiff University article identifies a plethora of issues that prevent prisoners in England and Wales from voting in elections. They draw upon their empirical research and the wider available evidence to explore the various ways in which eligible prisoners can be denied the right to vote. They argue that The Representation of the People Act 2000 failed to deal adequately with the various ways in which administrative disenfranchisement can occur and highlight the need for prison officials and policymakers to take steps to minimise this. They put forward three possible reforms: automatic voter registration for prisoners; formal information-sharing between prison and electoral services; and the introduction of electoral infrastructure within prisons, including election hustings and the 'booth and ballot' system.

The final article is by **Jeffrey Pfeifer** from the Swinburne University of Technology, Australia and **Connop-Galer** from Melbourne, Australia. They assert there has been a lack of empirical attention paid to extending knowledge on the wellbeing of corrections-based professionals, highlighting a tendency for the focus to be on prison officers. Their paper provides additional insight into the issue of Community Corrections Professionals wellbeing through a methodology informed by research on prison officers.

This issue's interview sees **The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP**, Minister for Prisons and Probation in the spotlight interviewed by **Dr Amy Ludlow**, Chief Executive of SHiFT, a youth justice charity. Followed by **Dr Susie Hulley**, from the University of Cambridge interview with **Pia Sinha**, CEO of Prison Reform Trust. Both interviews explore how the interviewees apply previous experiences from past roles to their current positions to improve outcomes for prisoners. The prison minister discusses how he applies his previous experience and ideas from being Employment Minister to his then role to drive up employment outcomes for people who are imprisoned. While Pia explains that she brings her 'deep understanding of how the system works' from her experience of working in prisons and as a senior manager in HM Prison and Probation Service to influence change. The third interview is with **Andrea Albutt**, the

first woman president of the Prison Governor Association. She was interviewed by **Rachel Bell** from HM Prison and Probation Service, her interview provides an insight into her career within HMPPS.

We are keen to provide an independent and honest review of recent works which will be of interest to readers. This edition includes four book reviews. **The Older Prisoner** by **Diete Humblet** was reviewed by Karen Harrison. This book is an exploration of how older prisoners experience prison life with a particular emphasis on two prison units in Belgium. The second book — **Doing Indefinite Time: An Ethnography of**

**Long-Term Imprisonment in Switzerland** was written by **Irene Marti** and reviewed by **Lynn Saunders**. She describes the book as providing a fascinating and powerful exploration of the experiences of people detained in two closed prisons in Switzerland. The final book — **Stains of Imprisonment. Moral communication and men convicted of sex offenses** by **Alice levins** was reviewed by **Karen Harrison**. This book is very timely because it looks at the function of prisons for people with sexual convictions but also importantly how they act as moral communicators.