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Editorial Comment

There is increasing attention being given to the notion of 'rehabilitative cultures' in prisons. A rehabilitative culture is one where all the aspects of the culture support rehabilitation; they contribute to the prison being safe, decent, hopeful and supportive of change, progression and to helping someone desist from crime. The aim is for everyone to feel safe from physical and verbal violence and abuse, for prisons to be places of decency, where everyone treats each other with respect, and people's basic needs are understood and met. While this term has current organisational currency, it is underpinned by a set of values that have a long history. They reflect a liberal-humanitarian tradition in prison practice, the view that prisons should reflect the values of wider society, including detaining people in conditions that are humane and offering opportunities for people to lead a successful life after prison. While not specifically commissioned for the purpose of promoting 'rehabilitative cultures', the articles in this edition reflect those positive aspirations and values.

The opening article reports a study in a Dutch prison, holding Belgian prisoners, in which a self-catering facility was introduced. The research is the product of an international collaboration between Dr. An-Sofie Vanhouche, Dr. Amy B. Smoyer and Dr. Linda Kjaer Minke. The article draws attention to the social aspects of food in prisons. The authors conclude that too often food is viewed by practitioners, policy makers and researchers as simply a source of nutrition and fuel, but in fact it has an emotional and social dimension that can be harnessed in order to improve quality of life.

Two articles are included that reflect on the experiences of mothers and fathers in prison. Natalie Booth explores the response of women to children's visits or family days and makes recommendations for their improvement. Geraldine Akerman, writing with two residents at HMP Grendon, Charlie Arthur and Harley Levi, reflects upon the experience of fathers in prison. Together these articles describe the

importance of the parent role for both child and imprisoned parent, and the ways in which prisons can ameliorate the harms and enhance the better aspects of practice.

Dr. Kimberly Collica-Cox from PACE University, New York, contributes a substantial article focussing on HIV peer educators. This research pays attention to the ways that such constructive roles provide a benefit not only to the recipient of the service but also to the peer educator. Collica-Cox shows how this can contribute to more positive self-identity and enable people to move beyond offending identities towards more prosocial ways of seeing themselves.

Natalie Herrett, from Birmingham City University, contributes a study of the benefits of creative psychotherapies, in particular art therapy and psychodrama. Herrett describes how participants report that this can be a core part of their work in a therapeutic community. The benefits reported included gaining better insight into themselves and their thinking and behaviour; accessing subconscious trauma that has often been deeply buried but shapes thinking and actions; creating a space in which they can be supported and are willing to accept this help, and; improving their ability to manage their own behaviour. This article contributes to the understanding of creative psychotherapies in prison.

The final article, by Dr Matthew Maycock, Debbie Pratt and Dr. Katrina Morrison, assesses research undertaken in Scottish prisons. This illuminates the interests of the organisation and academic institutions in particular populations, and indicates the ways in which research can be a tool for nurturing progressive practices.

This edition of *Prison Service Journal* reflects the liberal-humane values that have always been supported and advocated through this publication. *PSJ* is concerned with contributing to better practice, not necessarily in terms of greater efficiency or management control, but in terms of the role that prisons have in wider social justice.