

## Editorial Comment

This special edition of the Prison Service Journal is dedicated to the subject of 'engagement and co-production' with people living in prison or who are under supervision in the community. Engagement and co-production include a range of collaborative practices which involve 'professionals and citizens making better use of each other's assets, resources and contributions to achieve better outcomes and/or improved efficiency'.<sup>1</sup>

We start the edition with a synthesis of the existing empirical evidence on the subject, by Nicola Cunningham and Dr Helen Wakeling. The authors describe the varied forms of engagement and co-production, and through their review of prior research they succinctly describe the potential benefits of these activities in Criminal Justice settings. Their identification of factors that are more likely to make engagement and co-production activities a success (presented in both text and infographic form), as well as barriers to this, provide a particularly helpful resource for readers wishing to develop their own, or others' practice.

The next three articles present examples of co-production in practice. Firstly, Jason Morris and Zack Haider focus on the role of co-production in the development of digitally enabled interventions in justice settings. The authors share four exemplars and reflect towards the end of their article on considerations for doing this work well and safely. Secondly, Professor Beth Weaver writes about User Voice Prison Councils. Her article provides a fascinating consideration of the concept of 'epistemic justice', referring to a particular type of injustice that an individual suffers in their 'capacity as knower' because of their social position and association with a specific social group.<sup>2</sup> Weaver revisits prior research conducted with User Voice Prison Councils to explore the potential of this model as a mechanism for enabling epistemic participation in prison settings. And thirdly, Dr Sarah Lewis and Emma Hands' article introduces their evolving Integrated Model of Prison Engagement. They illustrate and bring the model's steps to life with prison-based case study examples.

The next article, authored by a young man in prison, Dr Isabelle Cullis and Annaliza Gaber, describes Project Future, a community based holistic mental health and wellbeing service for young people aged 16-25 who have experiences of the criminal justice system and/or are affected by serious youth violence. Project Future is a co-produced service, and in this article the authors reflect on their experiences as part of it; themes of trust,

respect, truly listening, and respecting choices appear often in their accounts.

As several of the previous articles point out, co-production and engagement in prison and probation settings is still in its infancy. The next article, by Ruth Walters, provides an account of some key milestones in developing this in HMPPS over recent years. In addition to describing areas of good practice that exist, Walters describes achievements including the development of Standards of Excellence for lived experience engagement work, the delivery of lived experience engagement events, and the creation of a national lived experience engagement network.

This edition includes two interviews. Firstly, Ian Walters, Beccy Archer, Carl and Dion (Governing Governor, Treatment Manager, and two Champions) are interviewed by Flora Fitzalan Howard about the 3Cs initiative at HMP Guys Marsh. This initiative aims to take collaborative working between staff and people living in prison a step further than more traditional schemes. Together the four reflect on their experiences, both positive and challenging, along the 3Cs journey from inception to present day. They identify suggestions that could help others develop similar schemes. Secondly, Karen Kendall, Participation Lead in HMI Probation is interviewed by Dr Marcia Morgan, about the dedicated role created by HMI Probation to support participation activity across all of probation inspections (adult, youth, and thematic).

This edition concludes with a book review, written by Dr Marcia Morgan, on 'Conviviality and Survival: Co-Producing Brazilian Prison Order' by Sacha Darke. The book maps the Brazilian prison system that is centred on co-governance and conviviality, drawing on data from ethnographies, biographies, and fieldwork to illuminate how order is co-produced by prisoners who have to collaborate, organise and self-govern to function within an environment that is overcrowded, understaffed, and underfunded. Morgan describes the book as 'compelling and discerning'.

We hope this edition will be a valuable and inspiring resource for people living and working in prisons, policy makers, and others with an interest in this field, and in engagement and co-production especially. Together, the contributions to this edition illustrate the value in more collaborative engaged, and co-produced practice in prison and probation settings. This special edition showcases some excellent examples of this and hopefully inspires us to further develop this practice.

1 Clinks and Revolving Door Agency. (2016). *A guide to Service user involvement and co-production*.

2 Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford University Press.