



The Role of Sport in Promoting Desistance from Crime

An Evaluation of the 2nd Chance Project Rugby and Football Academies at Portland Young Offender Institution

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Foreword

In recent years sport has increasingly become recognised as a valuable way of engaging and supporting young people from marginalised and socially excluded communities, in turn addressing a range of social issues such as community cohesion, citizenship, crime and anti-social behaviour.

Active Communities Network supports organisations worldwide in using sport to promote social change. The 2nd Chance Project is the Active Communities Network Lead in the South West of England. We are delighted with the results achieved in this project, as they re-define the use of sport in tackling youth crime and effectively reducing re-offending.

The 2nd Chance Project uses sport and a supportive multi agency environment to engage high risk young people, create pathways for personal and social development, and raise aspiration. They offer realistic routes into mainstream education, training and employment on release from custody. For many years, sport has been used in this environment, without fully evidencing how effective it is at addressing the wider resettlement agenda. Having this project independently evaluated fully validates the impact of the project, the overall results and the potential of future contributions from the 2nd Chance Project. Furthermore, the cost benefit identified by the project demonstrates a high financial and social return on investment which provides further evidence for policymakers considering how they should invest in programmes to tackle youth reoffending nationally.

I would like to congratulate the 2nd Chance Project for their vision and investment of time and resources on this project. We look forward to working closely with them over coming years in developing further high quality programmes that will influence strategic development and decisions on a national scale.

Gary Stannett MBE

CEO Active Communities Network



Preface

When I first became aware of the work of 2nd Chance I was looking for case studies of innovative work with violent young offenders. A contact recommended I speak to James Mapstone who had recently founded the 2nd Chance Project, and I visited him at Ashfield YOI (Young Offenders Institution) near Bristol. I was immediately impressed by the aims and activities of the organisation and I was therefore delighted when James subsequently invited me to act as external evaluator for the new Sports Academies at Portland YOI. It was refreshing to see a small community organisation demonstrate such commitment to monitoring and evaluation, and I have been happy to contribute to the development of such an exciting project. Having dedicated my research career to young offenders, imprisonment, and an exploration of the supporting or detrimental factors involved in the transition from custody to community, I was especially excited at being given the opportunity to be so closely involved in the work at Portland YOI, an establishment with a turbulent history of incarcerating some particularly challenging young prisoners. After two years of gathering data at the prison and in the community I now have a large and complex quantitative dataset which has revealed important findings, supported by rich qualitative transcripts which bring vividly to life the stories of the individuals whose futures have been transformed through participation in the initiative.

This project exemplifies why I am passionate about applied psychological research. It has allowed me to contribute to one of the most significant challenges in society today, seeking to understand and reduce the numbers of young people in the criminal justice system. At a time when the prison population is at an all-time high, I am energised by the opportunities that the research has identified as being worthy of exploration. The results clearly confirm that sport can be an effective tool for engaging with young prisoners, and I hope that funding bodies, sporting organisations, policy makers and prisons will commit to developing collaborative efforts to continue this innovative and effective approach.

Acknowledgements

I feel privileged to have worked with so many inspirational individuals in the course of carrying out this research: James Mapstone and Justin Coleman at 2nd Chance have driven the project and worked tirelessly to ensure its success. I am in constant admiration of the way in which they operate with such professionalism, whilst remaining approachable and incredibly effective in engaging with the young people they remain so dedicated to supporting. The prison staff who have gone out of their way to facilitate my research have been extraordinarily supportive, especially given the increasingly pressurised environments in which they operate. Particular thanks go to Alex Browne, Andrew Bastick, Barry Clark, Chris Harrison, Eryl Doust, Heather Bryant, Julian Stout, Kevin Jess, Martyn Peel, Mike Porter and Terry Oldrid for accommodating my frequent requests, escorting me around the establishment, and recognising the importance of the research by prioritising my evaluation activities. I have been fortunate to be assisted by Gwen Lewis in coordinating and managing the huge volume of data generated by the research. Gwen has been a pleasure to work with on this project and was indispensable in drawing together the findings. Most of all, I am grateful to the academy participants who patiently agreed to my regular requests to be interviewed and were willing to complete lengthy questionnaires when they would have preferred to have been out on the pitch. Without their sincere contributions this report would not have been possible.

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Report Overview

More than half of all crime is committed by people who have previously been through the Criminal Justice System (Home Office, 2006) and reoffending rates within the young adult prisoner population are among the highest. Prison therefore presents a critical opportunity to engage with offenders through interventions and programming. Previous research has identified a clear need for specialist delivery and carefully planned methods of motivating offenders to make positive life changes, and sport presents a unique opportunity to engage with even the most challenging of young people caught up in a cycle of offending and imprisonment.

This report summarises the evaluation findings of the 2nd Chance Project football and rugby academy, a two year initiative at HMP YOI Portland which uses sport as a way of engaging with young adult male prisoners in identifying and meeting resettlement needs and facilitating the transition from custody to community. The report is made up of eight key sections: Chapter 1 provides a contextual overview of the role of sport as a crime prevention initiative; Chapter 2 outlines the background to and delivery of the sports academies at Portland Young Offenders Institution; Chapter 3 introduces the evaluation process. Chapters 4-5 present the qualitative and quantitative research findings, and Chapter 6 is dedicated to a discussion of the key results. Chapter 7 explores the key recommendations generated by the research, and Chapter 8 summarises the suggested future research directions. The report concludes with a series of illustrative case studies presented in Chapter 9.



Research Summary

- A total of 81 young male adult offenders at HMP YOI Portland participated over a two year period.
- Participants were representative of the male young adult prisoner population according to offence category and risk of reoffending.
- Of the fifty participants who have been released over the past 18 months, nine have reoffended or been recalled to prison, representing an 18% reconviction rate (compared to a prison average of 48% after one year).
- Statistically significant improvements were observed in established measures of conflict resolution, aggression, impulsivity, and attitudes towards offending following participation.
- Qualitative interviews and testimonies illustrate the positive impact of participation on behaviour within the prison, staff-prisoner relationships and the resettlement opportunities of prisoners in managing the transition from custody to community.
- The evaluation findings have verified that the project has facilitated a unique opportunity for delivery staff and community partners to engage with those prisoners who can be especially hard-to-reach. The initiative has enabled offenders and delivery staff to develop positive support and mentoring relationships, and has motivated individuals to take responsibility for their actions, and inspired them to generate positive aspirations for the future.
- Despite initially being of the opinion that the resettlement component of the academy would merely replicate existing provision, members of prison staff have found the expertise of 2nd Chance an indispensable aspect of their work.
- In providing specialist help that is tailored to an individual's complex needs, the through-the-gate involvement of 2nd Chance has enabled offenders to maintain positive support relationships across the critical transition from custody to community.



Chapter 1: The Academic Research Context

Although a large body of research literature has summarised the benefits of community-based crime reduction initiatives that draw on sport (see Nichols, 2007), there has to date been little formal exploration of the role of sport in prison. In one of a handful of small scale relevant studies, Andrews and Andrews (2003) present a participant observation study which examined physical activity and crime reduction over an 8 month period in the context of a secure unit in England, drawing on research with 20 young people aged 10 – 17 years. The sport was delivered in the form of organised Physical Education classes as well as formal and informal sporting activities, and the authors concluded that the findings supported the use of sporting activities which de-emphasise regulations and winning and permit choice and provide positive feedback. However, despite recognising the way in which sport is both theoretically and practically controllable by social institutions and is thought to 'build character' and provide an environment for acquiring culturally valued personal attitudes, Andrews and Andrews warn that sport can also potentially replicate the institutional settings from which young people are already alienated, and there is a risk that the competitive environment can foster social comparison concerns in individuals already pre-disposed to high levels of such anxieties. Consequently, sport should not necessarily be seen as a universally positive way of promoting the rehabilitation of young people in custody, but it should certainly be considered as an effective way in which to engage with challenging individuals who may be reluctant to participate in traditional classroom-based activities.

Although there is limited empirical evidence of a direct causal relationship between youth sport and youth crime reduction, there are several rationales as to why youth sport reduces youth crime. Nichols (1997) argues that as well as improving athletic ability and employment opportunities, sport can meet a need for excitement and risk-taking, increases feelings of empowerment and connectedness, improves problem-solving and decision-making skills, teamwork, self-esteem and cognitive competencies, and provides positive role-models and mentors. However, Andrews and Andrews (2003) also draw attention to the complex role of staff in relation to offering praise and encouraging the development of self-esteem, while not being patronising or alienating those with less athletic ability. As such, there is evidently a risk that simply participating in sport is not as effective in cultivating principled moral judgement as has been previously suggested in the literature, and further attention needs to be paid to the psychological and social processes underpinning how sport can be used positively in custodial contexts, and under what circumstances sports-based interventions can best be delivered. The qualitative aspects of the present research attempts to explore such critical issues, from the perspectives of the participants as well as delivery staff, and should serve as a useful resource for those aiming to establish similar initiatives.

Within community-based studies, there has long been an academic recognition that robust evaluation methods are often lacking from sports interventions, and there has been relatively little progress in terms of monitoring the effectiveness of sport-based social inclusion schemes in recent years. However, aside from the growing literature on evaluations of generic resettlement and offender behaviour programmes, a small body of evaluation research has developed which focuses specifically on the role of sport, albeit in community settings. Astbury, Knight and Nichols (2005) add an academic perspective to a major commercial evaluation study of the Fairbridge program, an initiative that used sports and other leisure activities to work with disadvantaged and disaffected young people, with programme goals including improved personal and social skills, and consequently long-term behavioural improvements. Fairbridge is a major provider of such programs and the considerable resources available to the evaluation allowed for far more comprehensive research methods than are usually evident in evaluation studies in this context. The evaluation concluded that personal and social skills increased over the initial five-day part of the program, and although these gains were not sustained a year later, they remained good predictors of longer-term behavioural improvement, which included improved performance in employment and education and stable housing arrangements. In discussing their findings, the authors acknowledge the difficulties of determining the extent to which an initial apparent increase in personal skills, or a positive predisposition to the program, was the most important factor determining long-term impacts.

Importantly, and of particular relevance to the current research, Astbury et al. conclude that although initially the nature of the sports activities was important in encouraging initial participation, the development of supportive relationships with programme staff were of key importance in the long-term. The results are consistent with the notion that sport can act as a catalyst for the development of positive mentor-mentee relationships and as a medium for longer-term personal development. Such a process has been observed in the current evaluation, in that football and rugby have served as an effective way of engaging offenders and increasing levels of motivation, which in turn facilitates valuable 'learning moments' and the development of a positive relationship between participants and the professionals involved. Similarly, Nichols & Taylor (1996) evaluated a probation-based sports initiative which, alongside access to vocational training and introduction to a new peer group, identified voluntary participation and the presence of sports leaders as elements

that contributed to the success of the programme. Indeed the data reported in the following pages demonstrates how improvements to crucial criminogenic factors (such as managing aggression, attitudes to offending and victim empathy) actually continued after the academy had concluded and while some of the most intensive casework was being executed between individuals and the 2nd Chance transitions worker.

Although unique in its delivery and content, the 2nd Chance academy at HMP YOI Portland is not the first attempt to combine sporting activities with offender rehabilitation. In 2002, Farrington et al. presented evaluations of two controversial regimes for young offenders introduced by Michael Howard when he was Home Secretary in the Conservative government. The Thorn Cross High Intensity Training Centre in the North of England, and the Colchester Military Corrective Training Centre in the South of England were both military influenced, with regimes including activities such as drilling and physical training and Outward Bound courses. The Colchester Centre operated for only 13 months in the late 1990s and the regime was delivered partially by military staff and overseen by an Army Commandant Governor. The Thorn Cross regime combined military elements with a rehabilitative regime, which included educational, life skills and vocational training, programmes designed to address offending behaviour based on developing thinking skills, and a pre-release work placement in the community.

In addition to studying reconviction rates, the evaluation assessed changes in psychological assessments of thinking styles relevant to criminal behaviour, the ability to control aggression, and attitudes to staff and inmates. The psychological assessments showed mixed findings, with those participating in the Thorn Cross regime displaying improved attitudes, self esteem, and control of aggression, along with reduced reoffending rates. However, the same participants displayed increased pro-offending attitudes, and responsibility and behaviour assessments did not improve. In turn, although the Colchester sample displayed improved attitudes, self esteem, and physical fitness, there was no improvement in offending attitudes, control of aggression, or self-control, indicating that neither initiative was as successful as had been anticipated.

Along with physical health and fitness, according to Coalter (2005) the potential benefits of sports participation include improved mental health, psychological well-being, self-concept, physical and global self-esteem, and increased locus of control, as well as sociopsychological benefits such as empathy, tolerance, co-operation and social skills. Coalter also highlights a broader set of sociological impacts such as increased community identity, social coherence and integration. Coalter suggests that the main questions that remain in this domain relate to what sport processes produce what outcomes for which sections of the population, and in what circumstances. He argues that the lack of guidance for policy and provision in the form of robust evidence has become an increasing problem for sport in an era of 'welfare effectiveness' and evidence-based policy making. The current research seeks to address some of these questions by exploring how the positive impact of the 2nd Chance academy on offenders at HMP YOI Portland has come about, and why.



Chapter 2: Academy Overview

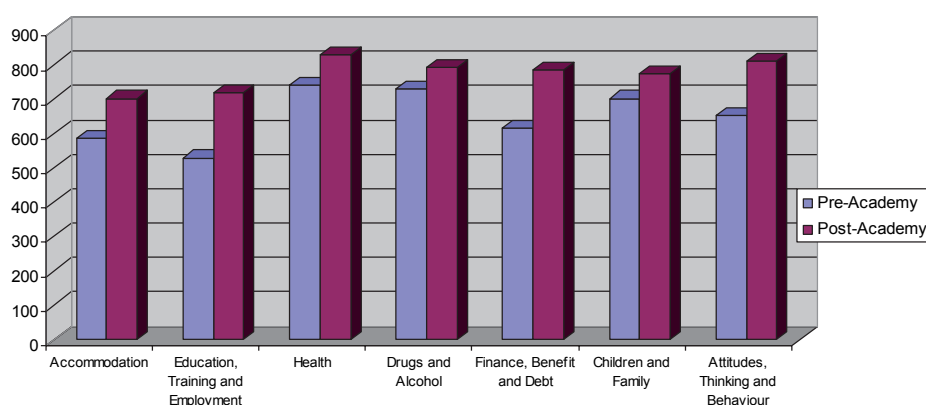
Introducing the 2nd Chance Project

A number of researchers have identified concerns about the importance of designing and delivering sports-based crime reduction initiatives in the most effective way, reflected in a need to develop programmes underpinned by professional expertise and a solid evidence-base. Given the vulnerability and complexity of the young adult prison population, it is clear that any prison-based sporting initiative requires careful planning and specialist delivery. This independent evaluation indicates that the 2nd Chance Project exemplifies these requirements in the way in which they are able to design and manage programmes while acting as an authority in working with offenders, and developing effective partnership working with the sporting and community organisations they connect with in their operation.

The 2nd Chance Project was established at Ashfield Young Offender Institution, South Gloucestershire, as a custodial programme designed to engage offenders and improve behaviour, achievement, skills and attitudes. The model draws on sport as one of several methods of engaging with, educating and training young people in custody as well as after returning to the community. The organisation provides mentoring, offers training and work experience placements and draws on strong links with national sporting organisations, as well as regional community-based clubs. In 2008, 2nd Chance were asked to support the Sky 1 Football Behind Bars televised series starring Ian Wright at Portland Young Offender Institution, a Prison Service establishment in South West England holding just under 500 sentenced males, the majority aged between 18-21 years. Subsequent funding from the Football Foundation¹ enabled the 2nd Chance Project to continue and expand their delivery of football academies in the prison with two further football academies taking place after filming was complete. Following the success of the football academies and in response to widespread opinion of the need to diversify the sporting academies available to appeal to a wider range of hard to reach young people, it was agreed that the final two 2nd Chance Academies at Portland would be centred on rugby and delivered in partnership with the RFU.

According to Jamieson and Wolter (1998), sporting initiatives involving community sports groups and non-traditional stakeholders such as the police and social service agencies appear to be the most effective in a crime reduction context. Accordingly, one of the key strengths of the academy is the partnership working between third sector and statutory organisations, which lies at the heart of academy delivery: the 2nd Chance transition worker delivers the core resettlement elements of the programme whilst working in partnership with prison staff (particularly those from the gym and resettlement departments) and sports organisations (Chelsea FC in relation to the football academies and the RFU Dorset Community Coach in the context of the rugby academies). Casework is underpinned by the 2nd Chance assessment tool, which is partially based on the seven resettlement pathways² and the identification of any additional criminogenic needs, and positive life goals. At the conclusion of the 12-15 week structured academy, the transition worker continued to engage with each client on an individual basis, communicating through letters, phone calls and visits in custody and after release.

Figure 1: Prisoner satisfaction with aspects of their resettlement needs, by pathway



¹ It cost a total of £153,000 to deliver the project for two years, which included funding of the transition worker, equipment, research, participation from the RFU and Chelsea FC, and staff development activities. HMP YO1 Portland provided staffing and facilities to an estimated value of £30,000.

² In 2002, the Social Exclusion Unit's report on Reducing Re-offending by Ex-prisoners (2002) concluded that prisons were failing to turn offenders away from crime, with 58% being reconvicted within two years, costing the state at least £11 billion per annum (for recorded crime). The report identified nine factors that influence re-offending, which were then transformed into the seven reducing re-offending pathways formulated by the Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan (Home Office, 2004).

Recruitment and Selection

Suitable and transparent participant recruitment procedures are a crucial element of the success of any intervention, as well as being a critical feature of the evaluation process. Although Randomised Controlled Trials are widely recognised as the 'gold standard' of evaluation methodologies (Meek, 2010a), these are not necessarily practical or achievable in the context of prison regimes and small-scale programme delivery, and they also raise concerns regarding the ethical implications of denying treatment for those not selected for a particular programme. However, when programme managers or prison personnel select their participants or use some form of participation criteria they may be unwittingly undermining the quality of any evaluation based on reconviction data, or accused of 'cherry picking' participants who may present with low risk of reoffending, regardless of participation in a given intervention. Where possible, these concerns have been acknowledged and addressed within the evaluation process.

Forthcoming academies were advertised around the prison, and prisoners wishing to be considered submitted applications to gym staff. Once applications were collated, the prison's learning and skills manager was then responsible for identifying any offenders who would not be eligible to participate (for example, those serving sentences for sexual offences or those shortly due for transfer/release). Participants were screened by security and the Offender Management Unit and any queries or concerns about suitability for working with children / community groups were raised and dealt with. Despite this process, a number of participants were released or transferred from the prison part-way through their participation in the academy, reflecting one of the inevitable challenges of delivering prison-based interventions. Although it is impossible to prevent participant drop-out in this way, it raises the question of whether specific inclusion criteria should be developed and applied in relation to remaining sentence length or transfer status.

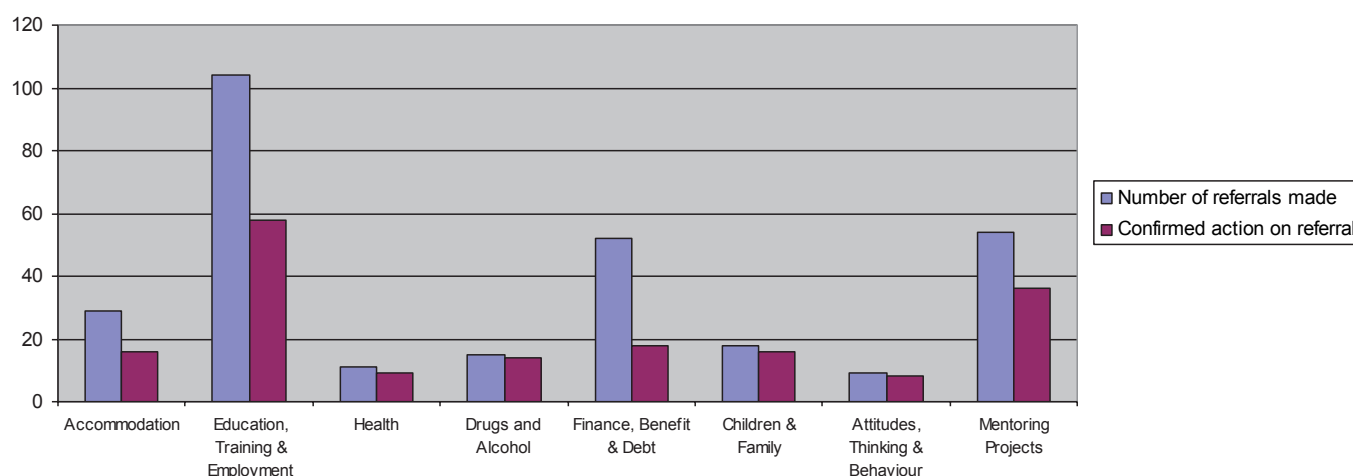


Academy Delivery

Academies were delivered over a period of 12-15 weeks, incorporating intensive football or rugby coaching, fitness training and matches (including fixtures against visiting community and student teams), supplemented with group based activities such as goal setting, thinking skills, team skills training, presentations from guest speakers, and peer review exercises. With support from Dorset FA, football academy participants completed their Level 1 coaching qualification while rugby academy participants achieved a Level 2 in First Aid and the RFU Rugby Ready coaching award. Three of the rugby academy participants also completed their RFU Young Leaders Rugby Award.

Individually tailored resettlement case work was managed by the 2nd Chance transitions worker, Justin Coleman, and aimed to identify and improve resettlement needs, challenge negative attitudes, and establish positive working relationships between the academy participants and a network of professionals, with the ultimate aim of preparing each individual for a successful transition from custody to the community.

Figure 2: Total number of referrals made by 2nd Chance on behalf of academy participants



Box 1: Key Delivery Partners within the Prison and the Community

2nd Chance Project

Responsible for overseeing the academy and management of budgets, individual case management, collating information and collaborating with Criminal Justice personnel and community organisations. Represents academy participants at key meetings, such as resettlement, Child Protection, MAPPA review meetings. Continues to provide through the gate support for those in custody and those released into the community after completion of each academy, including signposting and further referrals specific to individuals' resettlement needs.

Gym Department

Responsible for the core sports delivery of the programme and managing the environment for which the entire programme is delivered. Collates original applications for each academy and submits to the Head of Learning and Skills for selection.

Resettlement Department

Responsible for information gathering and internal referrals. Enhances and acts upon the information collected by, and collaborates with, the 2nd Chance Project transition worker in preparing resettlement provision.

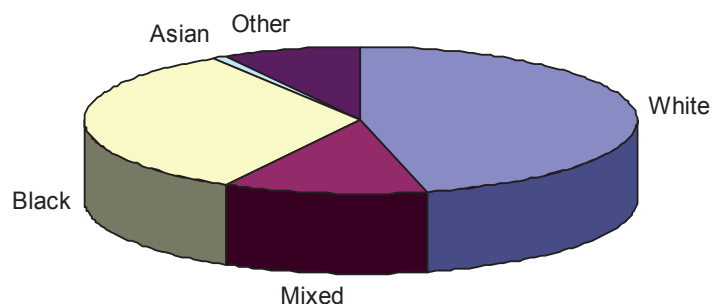
Community Coaches (RFU/Chelsea FC)

Responsible for advanced coaching and facilitating community contacts specific to the sport they deliver.

Academy Participants

A total of eighty-one young men at YOI Portland took part in one of the 2nd Chance sport academies. Fifty four participants completed an academy in full, eleven completed the majority of their academy but were released or moved prior to completion, fourteen participants withdrew or were removed from the academies, and two adults completed an academy whose data is excluded from the current analysis³. Five individuals serving longer sentences completed two different academies, and their data for each academy has been treated as independent. Ages ranged from 18-21 years with a mean of 19 years and 8 months. In terms of ethnicity, 46% of academy participants were White, 33% Black, and 21% were mixed race, Asian or 'other'.

Figure 3: Participant ethnicity



Participants' offence profiles indicated that academy participants were most likely to have been convicted for offences against the person (40%), robbery (20%), drug offences (18%), or burglary (13%), which closely resembles the offence profile of the national young adult male prison population. Table 1 summarises the distribution of participants across the four academies.

³Data for these participants has been excluded from the analysis in order to focus specifically on the young adult population, but it should be noted that both displayed improvements in pre-post Academy responses.



Table 1: Participant demographics, offence profiles and retention rates.

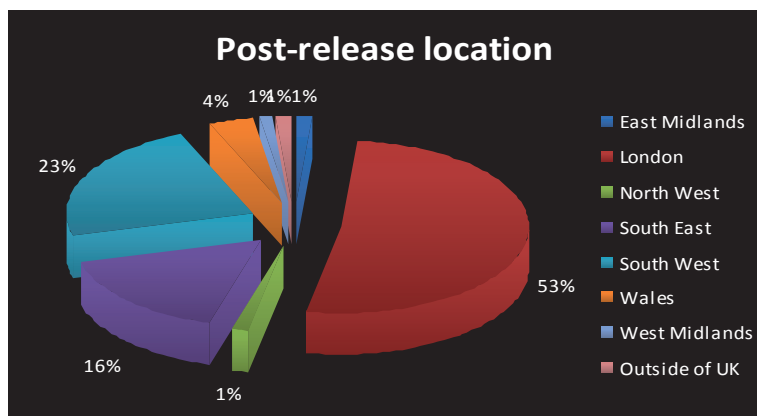
	Academy				All Academies
(Number of participants)	1 (n = 12)	2 (n = 22)	3 (n = 24)	4 (n = 21)	(n = 79)
Age (Mean Years)	19yrs 11 months	19yrs 1 month	19yrs 10 months	19yrs 11 months	19yrs 8 months
Ethnicity					(%)
White	16.7	45.5	47.8	60.0	46
Mixed	16.7	4.5	8.7	5.0	8
Asian	0.0	4.5	0	0.0	1
Black	58.3	40.9	5.0	20.0	33
Other	1.0	4.5	4.0	15.0	12
Offence(s) %					
Violence Against the Person	26.7	24.0	38.7	63.3	40
Robbery	33.3	27.6	12.9	13.3	20
Burglary	6.7	13.8	16.1	13.3	13
Theft/Handling Stolen Goods	0.0	3.5	6.4	0.0	3
Fraud/Forgery	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	1
Criminal Damage	0.0	6.9	3.2	0.0	3
Drug Offences	33.3	20.7	19.4	6.7	18
Other	0.0	3.5	3.3	0.0	2
Retention % (n)					
Completed	100 (12)	50.0 (11)	66.8 (16)	71.4 (15)	68 (54)
Completed majority before being released or transferred	0.0	18.2 (4)	16.6 (4)	14.3 (3)	14 (11)
Removed/Withdrew	0.0	31.8 (7)	16.6 (4)	14.3 (3)	18 (14)

Note: Offences were coded according to Home Office counting rules (2011). Percentages for offence types were derived from the total number of offences recorded (105 offences) since 22 participants reported being sentenced for more than one offence (14 participants reported two offences, 4 participants reported 4 offences and 2 participants reported four offences). Offence type data was not disclosed by two participants.

Academy participants were serving custodial sentences which ranged in length from seven months to indeterminate sentences. In terms of criminal history, each had received an average of four previous convictions before the age of 18 (range: 0-15) and a further two previous convictions from the age of 18 onwards (range: 0-15). The age at first conviction ranged from 12-18 years (mean age 15.9 years) and the age of first contact with the police ranged from 12-18 years (Mean age of 14.9 years).

Over half of the participants were due to return to the London area following release from prison, with significant numbers returning to the South West and South East.

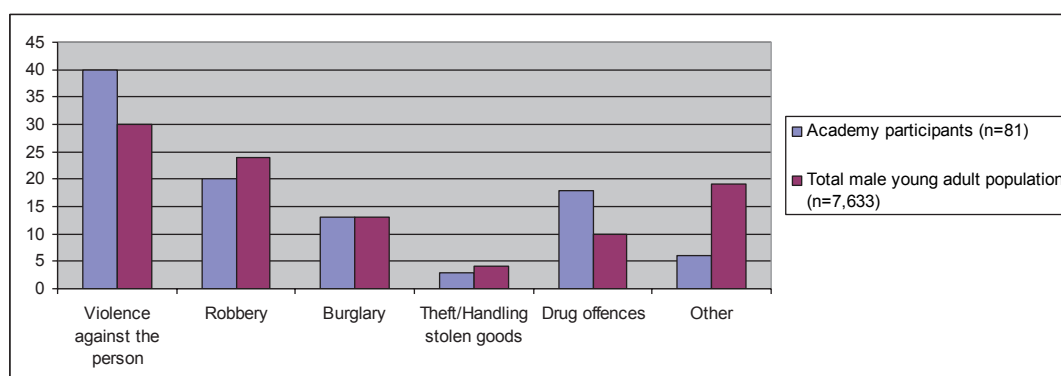
Figure 4: Geographical area participants plan to return to following release



Offender Group Reconviction Scale version 2 (OGRS2) data, number of previous convictions and age at which first convicted/in contact with the police was also collected where available from the NOMS Offender Assessment System (OASys). OASys is the primary risk/need assessment and management tool used for adult offenders in England and Wales, and is used to assess – amongst other things – suitability for programme participation. It has been in operation for ten years, but is not mandatory and coverage is not yet universal. OASys assessments were available for 27 of the participants. The Offender Group Reconviction Scale is a risk assessment measure used to predict the likelihood of reconviction after one year for individual offenders based on static risks (age, gender and criminal history along). For the academy participants, OGRS scores ranged from 17-85%, with a mean score of 50% (identified as medium risk). Although OGRS data was not available for all participants, the scores generated do serve to confirm that participants were presenting with medium risk overall, with half of those presenting as medium to high risk.

In order to evaluate the degree to which any intervention has been successful, it is important to identify the extent to which participants can be seen as representative of the general prison population or whether they represent a particular group of offenders. This is especially important when participation is voluntary, since there are associated self-selection concerns. In order to explore whether academy participants could be seen as representative of the national sentenced prison population of young male adults (aged 18-21 years), the percentage spread of the academy participants' offence category was compared to national figures of the male young adult sentenced population (Ministry of Justice, 2011a). As demonstrated in figure 5, academy participants were broadly representative of the national young adult population according to sentence category.

Figure 5: Offence category for academy participants and national young adult population



Chapter 3: The Evaluation Research Methodology

Aims and Objectives of the Evaluation

This evaluation aims to draw together and extend findings from the three previously published interim evaluation reports on the football and rugby academies (Meek 2010b; 2011a; 2011b) in order to assess the overall impact of the four different 2nd Chance sports academies at HMP YOI Portland. Specifically, the report aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the academies in terms of their impact on participants' behaviour and attitudes over time, individuals' ideographic experience of their involvement, and consequent reoffending rates. Assessment of effectiveness has been evaluated in the context of the project aims, with the overall objective of establishing the viability of continuing and expanding the model beyond the two year delivery which concluded in 2011.

Evaluation Approach

Researchers have drawn attention to the monitoring and evaluation shortcomings of previous initiatives in this domain, highlighting a lack of credible research evidence to support claims about the social and psychological benefits of participating in sport (Sandford, Armour & Warmington, 2006; Smith & Waddington, 2004; Tacon, 2007). In an attempt to avoid the evaluation inadequacies that have undermined previous initiatives, robust evaluation methods were integrated into the current project from its commencement. Ethical procedures and research preparations were instigated before programme delivery, and prison and delivery staff were supportive in facilitating data collection. A mixed methods research design utilising quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted to evaluate the effectiveness of the sports academies, with extended periods of data gathering undertaken in order to capture objective changes in attitudes and behaviours, as well as the concurrent ideographic experiences of the young men and staff involved.

A reconviction analysis was carried out for academy participants who had been released prior to 1st January 2012. The system of measuring reoffending is a complex area and although reconviction rates are acknowledged as being an important indicator of intervention success, they should be used with some caution. One or even two-year reconviction data may prove to be too short a period for those who pose a serious risk to the public and an individual's offending history should be taken into consideration when assessing their success in desisting from crime. For example, the achievement of abstaining from crime for one year may represent significant change for one individual but not for another. Likewise, an individual who participates in a programme and is subsequently reconvicted but for a less serious offence than originally convicted, could still be recognised as achieving a certain degree of success as reflected by their 'improved' offending behaviour. Subsequently, the most appropriate form of measurement for small scale prison-based interventions will depend on what the intervention is aimed at addressing. However, when seeking to explore recidivism rates within a sample, Shepherd and Whiting (2006) suggest that at least six months should pass between release from prison and attempts to follow-up, since that is the average time that elapses before re-offending, even though this figure varies according to offence type.

In order to compliment the reconviction data, a series of psychometric measures were developed, with quantitative data collected before and after each academy. Qualitative data collected before, during and after academy participation was used to illustrate the key findings and trends and is organised according to prominent themes. Lastly, a series of representative case studies of 18 of the participants were compiled in order to offer an illustrative insight into the experiences of the young men who took part in the academy.

Ethical Procedures

Research ethics are especially crucial in prison-based research where there is an increased risk that issues of power and control can undermine the ethical integrity of research. The research process was designed to ensure that the participants submitted informed consent, and remained aware of their right to withdraw from the study. The fact that participation in the research was entirely separate to participation in the sports academy was made explicit, in writing and verbally, at each stage of the research.

Full ethical approval was sought and gained from the HM Prison Service Research Applications and Ethics Panel, the Head of Psychology and Interventions at HMYOI Portland, and the University of Southampton School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee and Research Governance Office. The research was also carried out in line with the British Psychological Society's code of ethics and conduct. The researcher introduced herself to the participants at the start of each academy, and explained her role as external evaluator, the aims of the research, and what the research process would entail. It was made clear that the research process was separate from the project delivery, independent from the Prison Service and 2nd Chance Project, and that participation was entirely voluntary. Information sheets including

prison research contact details in case of questions or complaints, and an explanation of how to withdraw from the study were given to all participants to keep. In verbal and written instructions participants were reassured of anonymity, with the exception of instances where information relating to a breach in prison security or plans to harm themselves or others was revealed in the course of the research (in which case the researcher would be obliged to inform prison staff). Individuals who agreed to take part in the research completed and returned a consent form, and those who were prepared to be contacted after release from prison were given the opportunity to submit their post-release contact details and Probation Officer contact details. Those who were willing to be photographed or filmed completed additional statements of release.

Quantitative Methods

In terms of quantitative assessment, questionnaires assessing attitudes toward offending, behaviours and psychological constructs such as self-esteem and self-concept were administered to participants in small groups or individually at three points in time. The psychometric measures were completed prior to commencing the academies (Time 1) in order to gain a baseline measure and immediately following completion of each academy (Time 2) in order to assess changes in attitudes and behaviours from commencing to completing the academies. Finally, follow-up quantitative measures (Time 3) were collected from 22 of the participants 2-16 months after completion of the academy (mean = 6.86 months; SD = 3.71) in order to establish any longitudinal development of attitudinal and behavioural change. Twelve of the participants who completed follow up measures were still in prison custody at the time of follow-up, and ten had been released.

The range of sentence lengths served by individuals and consequent dispersal of release dates over time, coupled with logistical and time restraints, prevented an experimentally controlled follow up or analysis of reconviction rates for all participants (at the time of publication, many are still in custody or have only been released for a short period of time). Nevertheless, the longitudinal data still represents a realistic insight into the longer term effects of academy participation for those who have been released, as well as those who remain in prison custody. Such insights are unusual in prison-based evaluations and represent a significant accomplishment of the research.

Psychometric Measures

Participants completed a battery of questions in a questionnaire booklet, which had previously been piloted for use with prison populations. Participants completed the questionnaire individually, and help was provided for those who required literacy support. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 95 statements, to which participants indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed. Response were numerically coded and entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for analysis. Statements mapped onto a number of psychometric measures: A score for each construct was created by summing all the numerical codes of responses to statements corresponding to that particular scale. A detailed description of each measure is given below, with reference to their validity and reliability for use with young adult offender populations.

Beliefs about Aggression

The Beliefs about Aggression scale was adapted from Farrell, Meyer & White (2001) for the evaluation of the Multisite Violence Prevention project (2004), an intervention aimed at reducing violence among young adolescents. The scale has since been utilised in psychological research concerning aggression among young adolescents (Zhen et al., 2011). The scale was compiled from responses to six statements and measured individuals' beliefs about the use of aggression in hypothetical situations. A high score on the Beliefs about Aggression scale indicates more favourable beliefs supporting the use of aggression. The scale was found to have satisfactory internal consistency ($\alpha = .69$)⁴ in line with previous research ($\alpha = .72$) (Farrell, Meyer & White, 2001), suggesting that the scale is a reliable measure for use with older incarcerated samples in addition to the younger adolescent population it was originally designed for.

Use of Non Violent Strategies

The Use of Non Violent Strategies scale, adapted from Farrell, Meyer & White (2001), consisted of responses to five statements and measured individuals' endorsement of non-violent responses to hypothetical situations. Higher scores indicate higher levels of support for using non-violent strategies. Consistent with previous research ($\alpha = .72$) the scale demonstrated adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .69$), demonstrating its potential to be utilised as an evaluative measure with older adolescents and young adults.

⁴ Internal consistency refers to how reliable a study or measuring device is. It concerns the extent to which different parts of a test are measuring the same thing and is represented through coefficient alpha (α). The coefficient alpha is the average of the correlations of all the possible ways of dividing the test into two sets and ranges in value from 0 to 1, with values closest to 1 indicating the best internal consistency.

Self Esteem

The self-esteem measure was drawn from the Weinberger and Schwartz (1990) adjustment inventory which reflects an individual's perception of their self-value. The Weinberger and Schwartz (1990) adjustment inventory has previously been utilised in psychological research with young offender populations (Cauffman et al., 2004; Trejos-Castillo, Vazsonyi & Jenkins, 2008) and has also been established as a valid measure among young adults and adult populations (Weinberger, 1997). Answers to seven items are combined to create a self-esteem score ranging between 7 and 35, with a high score indicating low self-esteem. Internal consistency ($\alpha = .77$) exceeded that reported in previous research with young adolescents ($\alpha = .55-.72$) (Feldman & Weinberger, 1994) suggesting that the scale is a reliable measure of self-esteem among young adult offenders.

Self Concept

The self-concept measure was drawn from Phillips and Springer's (1992) individualized protective factor index which was developed for use with 10 – 16 year olds but has subsequently been utilised with older populations (Basca, 2002). The measure was created to ascertain an individual's sense of self-concept and self-confidence. Responses to twelve items were combined to create a self-concept score, with the maximum score of 48 indicating a strong self-concept. In applying the scale in the context of the academy evaluation it had especially good internal consistency ($\alpha = .80$), exceeding previous reliability findings with adolescent samples ($\alpha = .58-.59$) (Gabriel, 1994).

Impulsivity

Bosworth & Espelage's (1995) impulsivity scale is a measure which has previously been utilised in the evaluation of violence prevention interventions among inner-city adolescents (McMahon & Washburn, 2003). Questions relating to impulsivity measured frequency of impulsive behaviours such as lack of self control and difficulty finishing things. Answers to four statements were combined to create an impulsivity score ranging from 4 to 16, with high scores indicating higher self-reported impulsivity. The scale demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency ($\alpha = .60$), consistent with prior findings with young adolescents ($\alpha = .62$) (Bosworth & Espelage, 1995).

Conflict Resolution, Impulsivity and Aggression Questionnaire (CRIAQ)

The Conflict Resolution, Impulsivity and Aggression Questionnaire contains 26 items which focus on impulsivity and conflict resolution and were designed specifically to measure changes in levels of aggression among violent offenders. The CRIAQ measures developed by Honess, Maguire & Vanstone (2001) specifically focus on the features of aggression targeted in prison and probation interventions aimed at reducing offending behaviour, and have been developed in partnership with prison and probation staff. The measures have been found to possess good validity across diverse groups of offenders in the UK (Honess, Maguire & Vanstone, 2001). The CRIAQ measures have also been used in the evaluation of cognitive behavioural therapy interventions aimed at reducing alcohol related violence in the community (McMurran & Cusens, 2003).

Participants responded to 26 statements on the CRIAQ questionnaire (e.g. 'I often find that I have got aggressive without meaning to') stating whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed or disagreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed. Items corresponded to seven psychometric measures (created by summing scores across items corresponding to the same scale): Overall Impulsivity, Impulsivity without Aggression, Impulsivity with aggression, Problems in Conflict Resolution, Aggression in Conflict Resolution, Physical Violence in Conflict Resolution and Lack of Compromise in Conflict Resolution. On all seven scales a higher score indicates a greater identification with that particular mode of operating. Good internal consistency was observed in the current sample for the three Impulsivity based CRIAQ scales, although the coefficient alphas were lower than those found in previous research⁵. Similarly, internal validity for both the Problems in Conflict Resolution and Aggression in Conflict Resolution scales was good, though lower than previously found. Conversely, reliability on the Physical Violence in Conflict Resolution and Lack of Compromise in Conflict Resolution scales was substantially lower than previously identified, suggesting that these scales may be less reliable in young adult offender populations. That said, the current reliability estimates depend on a smaller sample which can negatively affect Cronbach's alpha calculations (Shevlin, Miles, Davies & Walker, 1998).

⁵Attitudes Towards Offending α 's for previous research are based on Honess, Maguire & Vanstone's (2001) British research with a sample of 145 male adult offenders (70 with a violent offending history) and 45 male young offenders (17 with violent offending history).

Attitudes Towards Offending

The final battery of questions represents the CRIME PICS II measures, designed to assess offenders' attitudes towards offending (Frude, Hones & Maguire, 2009). CRIME PICS II psychometric measures are widely used in the evaluation of offender interventions, and have recently been utilised in the evaluation of Enhanced Thinking Skills programmes (McDougall, Clabour, Perry & Bowels, 2009; Sadlier, 2010) and the Going Straight Contract pilot project (Hudson & Meek, 2007).

The 35 item structured Crime Pics II questionnaire was designed to measure individuals' attitudes towards offending on five distinct scales (Frude, Hones & Maguire, 2009). In the first section of the Crime-Pics II questionnaire participants rated their level of agreement with statements on a five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Answers were numerically coded and combined to create four scales:

General Attitude to Offending Scale: a measure of the offender's general attitude towards offending with a low score indicating that an individual believes a offending lifestyle is not desirable;

Anticipation of Reoffending Scale: a measure of the offender's anticipation of re-offending with a low score indicating that the individual does not anticipate re-offending;

Victim Hurt Denial Scale: a measure of the offender's attitude towards his/her victims, such as whether they believed they caused harm, with a low score indicating the individual recognises their actions impact on the victim;

Evaluation of Crime as Worthwhile Scale: a measure of the offender's evaluation of crime being worthwhile, with a low score indicating that the individual perceives the cost of crime as being greater than its rewards.

The second section of the Crime-Pics II questionnaire, the Problem Inventory, required participants to indicate the extent to which they perceived something to be a problem on a four point scale ranging from big problem to no problem at all. Problems with money, relationships, employment, controlling temper, sensation seeking, family, health, boredom, housing, substance use, gambling, depression, self esteem, confidence and anxiety were assessed. Answers to the problem inventory were numerically coded and combined to create a composite scale measuring perceptions of current problems. The higher the score the greater the number and gravity of problems identified. Internal consistency information concerning the CRIME PICS II scales is not available for the current sample due to use of a computerised scoring system. However, previous research with 422 offenders (Frude, Hones & Maguire, 2009) has confirmed that overall, the CRIME PICS II measures demonstrate good internal consistency.



Table 2. Reliability of measures in comparison to previous research

Scale	α Previous Research	α Current Sample
Beliefs about aggression	.72	.69
Use of non-violent strategies	.72	.69
Self esteem	.55-.72	.77
Self concept	.58-.59	.80
Impulsivity	.62	.60
Overall impulsivity (CRIAQ)	.89	.83
Impulsivity without aggression (CRIAQ)	.86	.81
Impulsivity with aggression (CRIAQ)	.83	.79
Overall problems in conflict resolution (CRIAQ)	.82	.78
Aggression in conflict resolution (CRIAQ)	.79	.72
Physical violence in conflict resolution (CRIAQ)	.78	.48
Lack of compromise in conflict resolution (CRIAQ)	.72	.56

Qualitative Methods

In order to expand upon the quantitative findings, participants' attitudes, experiences and perceptions of the academies were explored through individual interviews, focus groups, individual sets of written feedback and observations. Members of staff were interviewed and submitted written feedback on their experiences and observations of the academies. Further in-depth interviews were carried out with individuals following release from custody. Responses from interviews and focus groups were transcribed verbatim and subjected to thematic analysis along with the written responses to identify key themes. Qualitative responses, along with staff and peer observations, were used to inform case studies.

To supplement existing qualitative data, a research event took place at the University of Southampton in September 2011, attended by participants from each of the academies, six of whom were still in custody (and had been granted special permission by the governor to participate) and a further ten who had completed their prison sentences and returned to discuss how participating in the academy had impacted upon their lives after release. Delivery partners including prison staff and representatives from the 2nd Chance Project, Chelsea FC and Cricket for Change also attended. Academy participants were invited to present their experiences to an audience and submit detailed 'video diaries', reflecting on the personal impact and experience of the academies from their perspectives. Additionally, four focus groups were conducted with participants in custody, participants in the community, prison staff and delivery partners, in order to reveal common perceptions and experiences. Data gathered at this event contributes to the qualitative findings of the current report and to a short film which has been produced to illustrate the impact of the academy.

Chapter 4: Quantitative Evaluation Findings

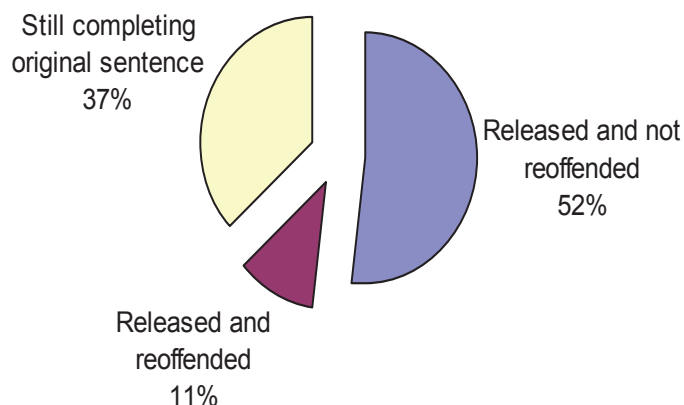
Reconviction Analysis

Of the fifty academy participants who have been released from prison in the past 18 months, 41 (82%) have successfully desisted from re-offending, and nine have been convicted of a new offence or recalled to prison due to a breach of licence conditions, representing a reoffending rate of 18%. Of those who have been released and not offended, as of 1st of January 2012, nine have been in the community for a year or more (maximum 1 year 8 months), 15 have been in the community for between 6 months and 1 year, and a further 15 have been in the community for under six months (length of time since release was not available for two participants).

Table 3: Status of all academy participants (at January 1st 2012)

	Academy				All Academies
	1 (n = 12)	2 (n = 22)	3 (n = 24)	4 (n = 21)	(n = 79)
Current Status % (n)					
Released and desisting	58.4 (7)	72.8 (16)	50.0 (12)	28.6 (6)	52 (41)
Released and reconvicted	33.3 (4)	18.2 (4)	0.0 (0)	4.7 (1)	11 (9)
In Custody at Portland	0.0 (0)	4.5 (1)	41.7 (10)	66.7 (14)	32 (25)
Transferred	8.3 (1)	4.5 (1)	8.3 (2)	0.0 (0)	5 (4)

Figure 6: Location of academy participants at January 1st 2012



Comparative Reoffending Rates

Inspection of raw data released by the Ministry of Justice (2011b) has confirmed that, of the 542 prisoners released from HMYOI Portland in 2009, 48% reoffended within one year. Assuming that the academy participants are representative of the wider prisoner population at HMYOI Portland (and according to offence category and reoffending risk they broadly are), this suggests that academy participants are less likely to reoffend than those who haven't participated in the academy, with two important caveats: 1. Only a small number of academy participants have been in the community for at least one year, rendering one-year reconviction comparisons problematic until further time has elapsed; and 2. reconviction data is not yet available for the general Portland population released throughout 2010 so it is assumed that there was no significant change in the 2009 and 2010 cohorts.

⁶The majority were recalled for relatively short periods of time following breach of licence conditions. Only three individuals have been convicted of new offences.

Box 2: Cost Effectiveness

It currently costs an average of £47,137 (Ministry of Justice, 2011c) per year for each prisoner to be held in a Young Offender Institution (under 21 years of age) in overall resource expenditure⁷. This is a conservative cost of reoffending since it only reflects the cost of imprisonment, and does not include the social and actual cost of criminal offences. Taking this figure in relation to the total cost of £183,000 for YOI Portland and 2nd Chance Project to work with 81 prisoners over two years (£1,130 per prisoner, per year) suggests that if just two of those individuals who would have reoffended are prevented from doing so in one year, the project will have more than saved the initial expenditure.

Measured Improvements

Although reconviction analyses are an important and useful indicator of whether or not a given intervention works, psychometric measures that relate to recognised criminogenic risk factors (such as impulsivity and attitudes towards crime) provide a more detailed measure of how such an evaluation has impacted upon those who participate. In order to evaluate changes in participants' attitudes and behaviours over time, the 17 psychometric measures were subjected to statistical analysis. Initially, paired sample T-tests were used to assess if there were changes in participants' attitudes and behaviours over the 12-15 week time period from commencing to completing the academies, the results of which are illustrated in table 4.

Table 4: Changes in attitudinal and behavioural mean scores from commencing to completing academies .

Psychometric Measure	Immediately before participation	Immediately after participation	T	df
Beliefs About Aggression	14.41	14.05	.81	43
Use of Non Violent Strategies	14.72	14.53	.44	42
Self Esteem	16.52	16.43	.24	43
Self-Concept	38.32	38.16	.27	43
Impulsivity	9.84	10.07	-.69	42
Overall Impulsivity	28.66	28.54	.09	40
Impulsivity without Aggression	15.46	15.46	.00	40
Impulsivity with Aggression	13.20	13.07	.19	40
Overall Problems in Conflict Resolution	32.23	32.03	.16	39
Aggression in Conflict Resolution	14.55	15.45	-1.11	39
Physical Violence in Conflict Resolution	8.02	8.33	-.81	39
Lack of Compromise in Conflict Resolution	9.68	8.25	2.98**	39
General Attitude Towards Offending	38.64	38.36	.23	44
Anticipation of Re-offending	11.29	11.42	-.24	44
Attitude Towards Victims	5.58	5.51	.16	44
Evaluation of Crime Being Worthwhile	12.18	11.71	.97	44
Problem Inventory	23.89	22.87	1.07	44

Note: ** p < .01

⁷The 'Direct Resource Expenditure' includes costs met locally by the establishments. The 'Overall cost' includes prison related overheads met centrally by NOMS, for example, property costs (including depreciation) major maintenance, prisoner escort & custody service (relates to transporting prisoners) and central HQ overheads. This does not include the additional costs of probation or electronic monitoring.

In exploring changes across the duration of the structured programme of the academy, results revealed a significant improvement in the construct 'lack of compromise in conflict resolution' ($t(39) = 2.984, p < .01$) with mean scores decreasing from 9.68 before commencing academies to 8.25 afterwards. This suggests that participants identified less with a lack of compromise in conflict resolution following completion of the academy. Furthermore, trends towards improvement were identified across the majority of the psychometric measures demonstrating moderate improvements in beliefs about the use of aggression, self-esteem, overall impulsivity, impulsivity with aggression, overall problems in conflict resolution, general attitudes towards offending, attitudes towards victims, evaluations of crime being worthwhile and perceived problems. Such results suggest that participation in the academies contributes to positive changes in both attitudes and behaviour – particularly the use of compromise in conflict resolution, in the short term whilst still in custody.

More importantly, in order to identify longitudinal improvements in participants, repeated measures ANOVA analyses (with time as the repeated measure) were conducted on each psychometric measure to assess changes across three critical time points: prior to commencing the academy, immediately after completing the academy and at longitudinal follow-up, which was carried out at an average of six months following completion of the academy (range: 2-16 months; $SD = 3.71$). Table 5 illustrates the results of the ANOVA analysis along with mean scores at each time point.

Table 5: Changes in attitudinal and behavioural mean scores pre-academy, post-academy and at longitudinal follow up .

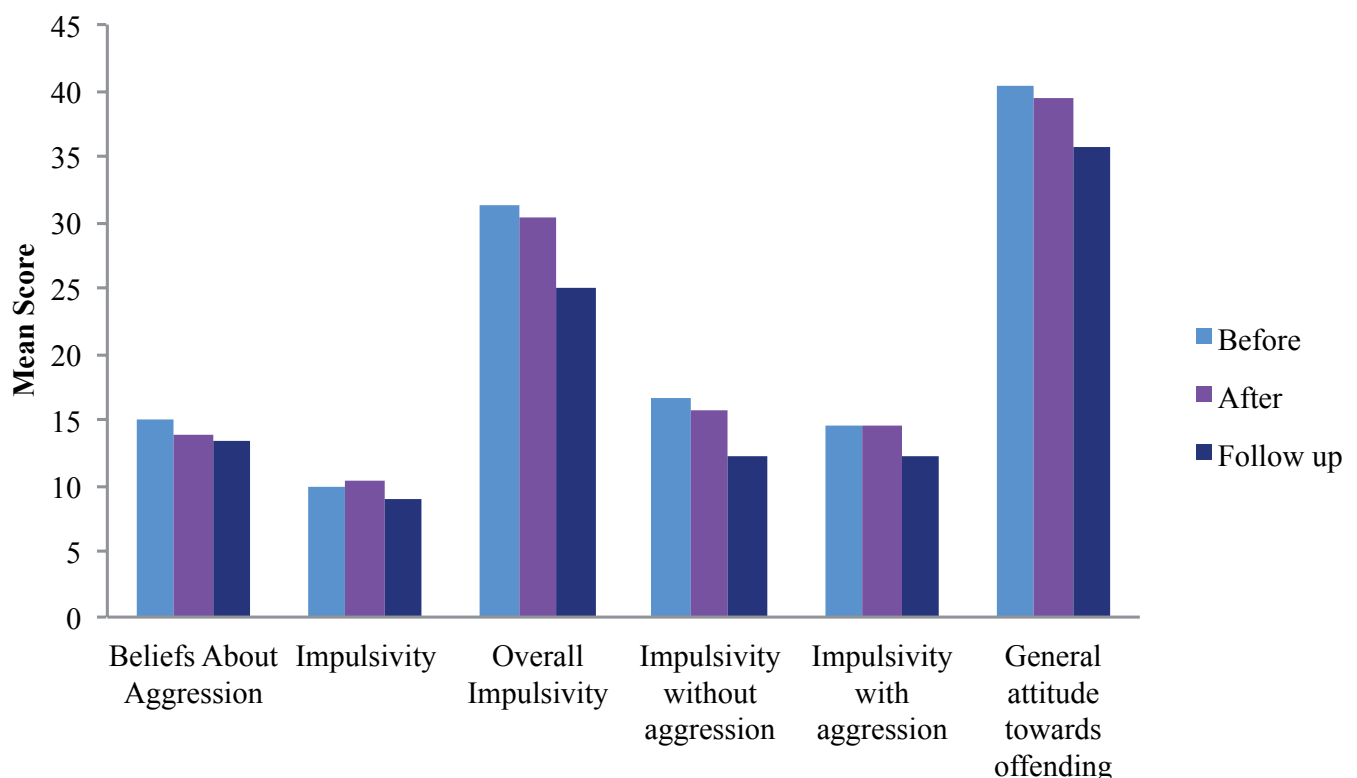
Psychometric Measure	Immediately Before	Immediately After	Follow up	F	df
Beliefs About Aggression	15.0	13.89	13.39	2.98*	2,34
Use of Non Violent Strategies	14.12	14.65	14.41	.62	2,32
Self Esteem	17.39	16.67	16.72	.45	2,34
Self-Concept	37.67	37.44	37.11	.13	2,34
Impulsivity	10.00	10.39	9.00	4.09*	2,34
Overall Impulsivity	31.29	30.36	25.07	4.85**	2,26
Impulsivity without Aggression	16.64	15.71	12.79	4.95**	2,26
Impulsivity with Aggression	14.64	14.64	12.29	3.06*	2,26
Overall Problems in Conflict Resolution	34.36	34.43	30.00	2.54	2,26
Aggression in Conflict Resolution	15.71	15.79	13.5	2.13	2,26
Physical Violence in Conflict Resolution	8.71	9.29	7.29	2.47	2,26
Lack of Compromise in Conflict Resolution	9.93	9.36	9.07	.47	2,26
General Attitude Towards Offending	40.39	39.50	35.67	2.62*	2,34
Anticipation of Re-offending	11.89	11.22	10.50	1.00	2,34
Attitude Towards Victims	5.33	5.67	5.44	.16	2,34
Evaluation of Crime Being Worthwhile	12.67	11.94	10.72	2.49	2,34
Problem Inventory	23.5	22.4	20.6	1.58	2,34

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Importantly, these quantitative assessments taken over longer periods of time demonstrate further improvements of greater magnitude in attitudes and behaviours across a range of psychometric measures than those observed immediately after completing the academy. Significant positive improvements were observed for mean scores on six out of the seventeen measures and are illustrated in figure 7. Three further measures showed improvements approaching significance. Beliefs endorsing the use of aggression decreased significantly from commencing the academies ($M = 15.0$) to completing the academies ($M = 13.89$) and continued to improve longitudinally when measured at the latter follow up ($M = 13.39$) ($F(2,34) = 3.00, p < .05$), suggesting participants endorsed the use of aggression less over time following participating in the academies. Significant improvements were identified longitudinally on both generic impulsivity measures, interestingly scores on the 'impulsivity' measure increased from 10.00 to 10.39 from pre to post academy, before decreasing significantly to 9.0 ($F(2,26) = 4.09, p < .05$), while scores on the CRIAQ measure 'overall impulsivity' also significantly improved ($F(2,26) = 4.85, p < .01$), reflected by mean scores reducing consistently from 31.29 pre academy to 30.36 post academy and 25.07 at the latter follow up.

Longitudinally, a significant progressive improvement was observed in impulsivity without aggression ($F(2,26) = 4.95, p < .01$) which decreased from 16.64 pre academy to 15.71 post academy, reducing further to 12.79 at follow up, indicating less identification with non-aggressive impulsive behaviour over time following participation in the academies. Impulsivity with aggression remained the same from pre to post academy measure with the mean score remaining at 14.64 before significantly decreasing at follow up to 12.29 ($F(2,26) = 3.06, p < .05$), suggesting participation reduced identification with aggressive impulsive behaviour in the long but not short term. Significant improvements in general attitudes towards offending were also observed ($F(2,34) = 2.623, p < .05$) with mean scores decreasing moderately from 40.39 upon commencing the academies to 39.50 upon completing the academies, before significantly decreasing at follow up to 35.67 thus suggesting a decrease in positive attitudes towards an offending lifestyle over time.

Figure 7: Significant changes in attitude and behavioural measures



Positive changes that were approaching significance were also observed for overall problems in conflict resolution, physical violence in conflict resolution and evaluations of crime being worthwhile when assessed over a longer period. Overall problems in conflict resolution increased slightly from a mean of 34.36 before the academies to 34.43 after the academies before decreasing to a mean score of 30 at follow-up - a near significant improvement ($F(2,26) = 2.54, p = .05$) suggesting participation may improve conflict resolution skills in the long run, though possibly not immediately following completion. Similarly, identification with physical violence in conflict resolution was initially observed to increase slightly from pre (8.71) to post academy (9.29) but then reduced to a mean of 7.29 at the latter follow up, a positive change approaching significance ($F(2,26) = 2.47, p = .05$) which suggests a decreased reliance on physical violence to resolve conflict in the long term following participation in the academies. A near significant progressive improvement in evaluations of crime being worthwhile was also observed over the three time points ($F(2,34) = 2.49, p = .06$) with mean scores of 12.67 initially reducing to 11.94 following completion and further decreasing to 10.72 at follow up, suggesting that participants increasingly perceived the costs of crime to outweigh the rewards following participation in the academies.

Finally, trends towards positive improvements in attitudes and behaviours over the three time points were identified for lack of compromise in conflict resolution, participants' anticipation of re-offending and perception of their current problems. No significant changes or clear trends were identified with regard to the use of non-violent strategies, self-esteem, self-concept, aggression in conflict resolution and attitudes towards victims.

The quantitative findings indicate that positive transformations can be observed in participants, not just in the immediate term of participating in the academy, but in the longer term, whilst the individual casework continues and individuals are acting upon the skills developed in the academy as they prepare for and manage the transition from custody to community.



Box 3: Volunteering behaviour and meeting government recommendations for exercise and healthy eating

As an additional quantitative indicator, 32 of the academy participants completed follow-up questionnaires referring to exercise and nutrition following participation in the academy. Of these, 22 were still in custody and ten were in the community. Although pre-academy baseline data is not available on this dimension, qualitative testimonies have confirmed that participation in the academy has resulted in more positive attitudes towards exercise and nutrition. Participants who had been released reported engaging in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise on an average of 4.8 times per week, which is close to the government recommendations of five times per week (those still in custody reported doing so on an average of 3.5 days per week). However, in reporting eating behaviour, only two of the respondents reported meeting the government guideline of at least five portions of fruit and vegetables per day, with the majority reporting consuming one or two portions per day.

Participants were also asked to report any volunteering activities they had taken up since completing the academy. Those still in prison custody referred to positions such as trained prison listener, providing reading assistance to fellow prisoners, and assisting with groups visiting the prison. Those who had been released referred to activities including voluntary work with children, the elderly and in sporting organisations.



Chapter 5: Qualitative Evaluation Findings

A detailed exploration of participant and staff attitudes, experiences and perceptions of the academies was carried out through a process of qualitative analysis. Key themes were identified from the wealth of qualitative data collected via multiple methods over the two year duration of the project. Prominent themes were identified in relation to the impact of participation on attitudes and behaviour, preparation for release, and resettlement issues such as education/employment, health, finance, and family relationships, as well as implications for post release support and reoffending. Findings are illustrated with anonymised verbatim quotes extracted from interviews.

Improvements During Incarceration

Although not a primary aim, participation in the academies was perceived by the young men as well as prison and delivery staff to offer benefits within the prison environment at an individual and cultural level. From an individual perspective, participants reported that taking part in the academies improved their quality of life within prison by providing something to focus on, alleviating boredom and frustration while providing an incentive for good behaviour. At the level of prison culture, those involved described how the academies had served to dissipate barriers between groups of prisoners, as well as between prisoners and prison staff, and were subjectively associated with improved behaviour on the wings more generally.

Managing Emotion

Many of the young men discussed how, prior to the academies, they would have difficulty managing their frustration and anger, which often culminated in conflict and adjudications. The following quote is a typical description of how involvement in the academy had facilitated the development of coping strategies to adjust to prison life as well as to draw upon once released:

‘Well, that’s made me a bit more aware about how I think and where football could take me. Doing football in here it’s taken a lot of stress off my life and working with Justin has made me see certain things in a different perspective... Like he’s made me think more in depth, he’s made me think about stuff that really touches home, I’ve kind of got a way to deal with stuff, how I can get over it.’

The opportunity to engage in sport was seen to be a positive way to deal with the prison routine, as well as manage daily stresses:

‘Within the prison, rugby helped me release anger and stress cos you’re stuck on the wings and it builds up and you can just get rid of all that anger and stress and frustration.’

‘It’s just good, it’s like you’re away from jail, it feels like you are in a different place, you’re just not concentrating on being in jail, and you just release a lot of stresses out.’

‘It made it a lot easier, rather than just stuck in your cell watching tv’.



The Focus of Sport

A key aim of the academy was to promote engagement among prisoners, in order to develop an effective learning environment. Participants reported that the academies not only offered an avenue for stress relief and ameliorated the boredom associated with the daily prison routine, but also provided a goal to focus on whilst in custody, thus confirming that participation was clearly valued within the prison:

'I was on the first rugby academy and at the time I wasn't really doing anything so it gave me something to focus on, something to do.'

'It was something I was looking forward to every day, I'd go to sleep easy, wake up knowing football is there... it's hard to explain but it made it a lot easier cos I was actually having fun.'

Moreover, although participants clearly felt the academies made their time in custody more enjoyable and fruitful, many also reflected on the associated primary health benefits of participating in the academies:

'In prison being banged up all day is obviously going to be quite daunting so being out there and doing something you love is good and improves your fitness.'

'Gave me something to focus on and something to do. You realise how unfit you are and can see how you are progressing. You feel that sense of achievement and you stop eating certain foods and that.'

Incentives for Good Behaviours

In terms of behaviour whilst in custody, participants consistently cited the academies as motivating individual good behaviour and discipline. Staff also reported individual behavioural improvements in addition to the implications this had on behaviour within the prison generally. Participating in the academies required individuals to demonstrate continued good behaviour, thus introducing a new incentive for behavioural regulation:

'Behaviour wise, when I was first sent down I was always on basic for messing around and then the PE department, I suppose they kept me out of trouble in a way. With the academies you have to be on enhanced so you have to be well behaved and work your way up so they give you an incentive to behave.'

'The academy has been good. It's kept me out of trouble since I've been on it, given me something to work for, given me some good chances for the future.'

'I feel taking part in the academy has given me an incentive to stay out of trouble so I can get involved in the rugby more. Before I used to get in trouble a lot now I don't.'

'Gained some friends and that. Just helped me with social skills and just, I don't know, makes you want to behave more in here.'

Specifically, the opportunity to participate in something the young men valued, enjoyed and looked forward to was felt by some to be key in motivating continued improved behaviour:

'My time in Portland wasn't the best time, I got into a lot of trouble. But as soon as I got into the academy it's like something sparked, I'm playing football, I love playing football and I'm playing football every day. And everything that is in my mind is being pushed aside. So once I was in the academy my behaviour started to change, you could see the change in my behaviour.'

'It's great because in that situation to play football in the morning and in the afternoon every day, it's something you look forward to and something that keeps you on your best behaviour to stay on it as long as possible.'

One participant described how participation in the academy, although initially challenging, had allowed him to develop adaptive skills to respond to situations with staff and other prisoners that may previously have evoked negative responses in him. Furthermore, recognition of his progress which resulted in positive outcomes helped maintain such behaviour:

'The football academy teaches you discipline, because it puts you in a predicament that you're not used to and you have to learn to adapt to the situation. At first I thought "this isn't helping me, there's no way this is helping me man, I'm just here to play football" and then I realised one day I got back to the wing and an officer had a

go at me and I kind of adapted subconsciously without knowing. I got back to my cell and thought “hold on a minute why didn’t I react to that?”... Then I started to get things because people started to notice a difference in my attitude, in the way that I would speak to people and it got to the point where I sat there and expected no’s and one day they would come to you and say you have got this and here are the reasons why - your attitude has changed you don’t answer back, you allow people to do their own thing and get on with what you have got to do, and that’s maybe something learnt from the academy’.

Individual improvements in behaviour described by participants were further highlighted by prison staff, who reported that the academies had not only prompted individuals to behave better, but also had a knock-on effect of improving behaviour within the prison population generally:

‘It creates good behaviour and leaders around the jail throughout the perceived standing of the lads involved, leading to lads openly challenging others’ inappropriate behaviour either on the pitch or on the wings. Lads involved with this academy have openly stopped violent incidents and been strong enough to say why and lead others’ (Prison gym staff).

Improved Interactions Between Prisoners

Behavioural improvements among the prison population identified by staff as a benefit of the academies corresponded with participants’ own descriptions of improved relations between prisoners. Several of the young men explained how the academies offered the opportunity to break down social barriers between different groups of prisoners:

‘If you’re on the academy it makes you grow up and like be in a team, because you are split up on the wings, there’s like 750 prisoners, you might only knew 60 people by face, but when you’re on the academy you meet everyone else ... and it makes it a lot easier to get along with your time inside and then also just breaking down social barriers and understanding meeting people from different areas and different cities and towns’.

‘More to the point you interact with other prisoners, rather than just that wing or that wing, it just more of a stable relationship between everyone else’.



Moreover, newly fostered relationships offered a means of peer support which some of the young men found especially helpful:

'Yeah definitely, more sociable. It is always just good to get to know people who have been through the same things as you have who can relate to what you're doing. So yeah there is always someone to talk to'.

Improved Staff-Prisoner Relations

Offenders and prison staff reported that the academies had led to improved prisoner-staff relations. Participants confirmed that the academies brought prisoners and staff together, while staff identified wider cultural shifts in their relations with prisoners.

Participants expressed how the academies facilitated positive relations with staff which many of them did not anticipate or desire previously:

'I never really thought I'd get along with an officer or have any real communication skills cos I come from gangs so the transformation for me is a bit difficult coming from a gang and being on the roads every day and to go to prison, like I never really had any intentions to speak to govs if you see what I'm trying to say. But obviously people change, things change and times change'.

'Even with the govs we get on well now, have a little joke with the govs, so yeah it brings everyone together'.

Consonant with the participants' perspective, staff consistently cited improved prisoner-staff relations as a benefit of the academies:

'Improved staff/prisoner relationships and both have shared in enjoying the success both on and off the field' (Prison gym staff).

Shared achievements allowed for more personalised relationships to be fostered between staff and prisoners:

'You can see the person within the prisoner, and hopefully the lads can see me as an ally' (Prison gym staff).

'Lads see us differently - rather than screws we are screws with individual personalities and interest' (Prison gym staff).

Personalising relations between staff and prisoners was felt by some staff to challenge traditional barriers between staff and prisoners which previously may have impeded rehabilitative efforts:

'From a Prison Officer point of view it's very difficult to say to lads that you're actually there to help them... there's been a lot of barriers broken down and when you say you're going to do something it's important you do' (Prison gym staff)..

Other staff indicated that the personalised approach utilised in the academies cultivated a real switch in the attitudes and practices of prison staffs, thus promoting a more humanistic and person-centred dynamic in their work:

'It has changed staff perception, creating a real interest of how the lads are getting on. Staff now use first names openly rather than having to be told to' (Prison gym staff).

'Before I was a bit of a disciplinarian, didn't have a lot to do with the lads. Now I'm taking lads out to my local rugby club on Saturdays... It's very very different, and from my point of view from having nothing to do with lads to seeing the benefit of it in this environment. It's quality and long may it continue' (Prison gym staff).

Preparing for the Transition from Custody to Community

A key element of the academy model was the one-to-one resettlement support delivered by the 2nd Chance transition worker to prepare the young men for release. Qualitative feedback from participants and staff alike regarding resettlement support was overwhelmingly positive. Feedback confirmed that resettlement brokering conferred not only practical benefits in terms of offering employment options and information, signposting, generating contacts and new interests, but also in psychologically focusing and motivating individuals in resettlement concerns. As the 2nd Chance transitions worker, Justin Coleman commanded a great deal of respect from participants as well as prison staff, and provided inspiration and effective reassurance regarding on-going support.

Focusing on Resettlement

Participants and staff highlighted the unique contribution of 2nd Chance to effective resettlement support. Participants noted how one-to-one resettlement work enabled them to reflect upon their circumstances and focus upon planning for release in a goal-directed manner which many of them claimed not previously to have thought about in detail:

'It was good to actually look at what I'm doing wrong and how I can improve myself and obviously what I want, because most of my life I've just been basically what everyone else wants me to do. So it was basically looking at what I want to do myself and how I can take smaller steps to reach the bigger goals in my life.'

In addition to psychologically directing individuals to look towards and plan for a more positive future, participants highlighted the benefit of receiving personalised information and support to formalise their resettlement goals:

'Basically helping me look into my future. I basically came to 2nd Chance with a couple of views of where I wanted to go when I left and they would research it for me, basically. For example, I wanted to start a business and Justin gave me business information and uni information about what you need, the course that I wanted to start. So obviously just advice and guidance really. Better than advice I get from prison staff because I reckon he [Justin] goes a bit further to bring me advice about something that will actually help.'

'First of all he sat down with me for like an hour and a half and asked me what I wanted to do and I told him and he goes away and finds out information and that and brings information in for you. He asked me about my family life, what that's like and where I want to be when I get out and stuff like that.'

ALWAYS WARM
UP BEFORE
WEIGHTS

ANY INJURY THAT OCCURS
DURING P.E. ACTIVITIES
MUST BE REPORTED TO
THE P.E. LIAISON

ALWAYS
WARM UP
BEFORE
AND
WARM DOWN
AFTER
SESSION



Opening up Opportunity

In addition to helping them to focus on their futures, participants discussed how resettlement work specifically, as well as the qualifications and external contacts gained through the academies, afforded them opportunities and options to pursue after release, which many individuals had not experienced previously:

'Best parts? I'd say overall getting to know people that can help, like these are opened up opportunities you know, that I never had before'.

'It gave an idea of what I want to do when I get out and it's opened more chances for me to do certain stuff so... Coaching, got me links with teams and that so, it's good'.

One participant highlighted the positive affective impact dedicated external resettlement support offering opportunities had on him:

'Well it feels good because of the fact that, you know, they're taking the time out to come and work with us and give us options and opportunities'.

Establishing new Contacts

From a practical perspective, participants and prison staff highlighted the benefits of developing individual local contacts via the transition worker, which could then be utilised upon release:

'Yeah because it's given me some, I don't know how to say it, like some stepping stones to get to where I want to get when I get out, some contacts'.

The participants recognised how the professional referrals made by the transition worker were especially useful in building a positive support network in preparation for release:

'Justin came and chatted and he put me in contact so I got involved with the Princes Trust now. I've got a mentor, he comes in and helps me and that so that's one good thing. When I eventually get out, I'm gonna still keep in contact with Justin and that, maybe go up and see him, or lan up in Chelsea'.

Resonating such views, prison management staff recognised the value of the community contacts afforded through 2nd Chance in resettlement provision:

'An advantage? The resettlement opportunities afforded through the 2nd Chance links with community groups' (Head of Reducing Re-Offending).

'The creation of good relationships with community programmes and employers' (Head of Offender Management and Resettlement).

Introducing Sport as a Resettlement Tool

Several participants expressed how instilling or rekindling a passion in sport through the academies would provide an alternative positive interest to pursue upon release which in turn would help prevent a return to offending behaviour:

'It's got me back into football so, obviously, that's a good thing and it's going to help me to take up more time, isn't it, so I'm not... so when I get out, I'm not just hanging around. So I'm doing something and then not messing about'.

'That's another thing he's sorted out for me, looking for local teams and that just to play like weekend football, just keep busy so I don't end up doing the same things, just trying to keep busy while I'm out there'.

Moreover, participants described how links developed as a result of participating in the academy and through engaging with 2nd Chance supported them in pursuing sporting involvement after release as a viable and realistic option:

'Hopefully I will be able to play rugby when I get out'.

'I'd like to carry on playing when I get out as I feel like I have developed in playing rugby and got a foot in the door'.

Securing Employment

For some participants, support from 2nd Chance had resulted in firm offers of employment whilst in custody, providing a clear resettlement path to follow upon release which was evidently highly valued by the young men:

'When I get out I've got a job with a football club coaching which is good, and Justin's helped me'.

'It helped me in a way of with 2nd Chance and that, like Justin has helped me get a job for when I get out'.

'Justin has helped me get a job for when I get out with Jamie Oliver, they have got a restaurant thing where they help prisoners, people who just got out of jail and that, they help them...so definitely looking to do that'.

Reassurance and Hope

In addition to the direct practical benefits of receiving specialist resettlement support within custody, many participants also cited the affective benefits in terms of feeling reassured that on-going support was available after release, and knowing someone in the community to turn to for help if required:

'Definitely got some sort of back up or some sort of plan when I get out. It feels much better, instead of getting out and chucked outside and there you go on you go, it's sort of more, there's someone there if you need to talk to them about job opportunities or placements for rugby or something like that, so there's always someone there if you need them. It's definitely a good thing to have'.

'Yeah, they done a one-to-one thing where they asked me a load of questions. I found it alright because...it's not like this football academy when it finishes they leave you – they're trying so that when you get out to keep you on the straight and narrow, so it's good'.

Continued contact - both in prison and after release - was specified as a key factor in providing reassurance and confidence that support was available in the long term:

'Keep 2nd Chance involved, if we don't have them we don't have much option or support when we get out, even if it is just a letter. I had a letter from Justin just saying don't forget we're still here. It's good to see it and know that when you get out you've got someone'.



One young man described how on-going communication and resettlement support helped him to maintain psychological momentum and focus regarding resettlement goals:

'You know, Justin, he's been talking to me, taking time out to hear what I want to do and he's given me options and different things that he could help with... Advice and information about other things on the outside... I mean now I'm a bit more driven to do things but sometimes I still kind of slack on, you know, certain things so I'd rather have someone to guide me and help me out whenever I need it. Someone I could talk to and go to for help, you know, so it would be a good thing to keep in contact with people.'

For others, external resettlement support within prison offered hope for the future as well as an inspiration to strive towards positive future goals:

'It's good because it inspires some people to do better things in life and it gives them that hope that they might have something for them outside.'

The Added Value of 2nd Chance in Resettlement Provision

Academy participants consistently highlighted the benefits of receiving resettlement support delivered specifically by 2nd Chance, rather than relying solely on resettlement provision from prison and probation staff. In particular, participants described how 2nd Chance could offer specialist resettlement support, drawing on their existing contacts and knowledge, and were able to invest more time at specifically addressing individual needs:

'I'd say he does more work than my Personal Officer because he can go out and source information and he knows pretty much the stuff already. Everything that I'd want to know Justin's found out for me already... Justin helps you and he finds out information and when he says he's going to do something, he will do it and you know that he's going to do it. You don't have to keep pestering him about it and stuff like that.'

'Just the fact that they're coming out, you know, they're professional and they're coming from the outside to take the time and do things for us.'

Specifically, the resettlement support offered by 2nd Chance was perceived to be particularly useful and engaging due to the independent, personable and dependable approach of the transition worker:

'He's nice, he's good, he's good. Obviously, he's doing it for a good reason. Well down to earth and stuff. You can relate to him more.... And he's chilled out, isn't he? He talks to you politely, doesn't judge you, so he's spot on.'

'He's a good guy cos since I met him he's been saying he's going to do stuff for me and he comes through every time. I mentioned my interest about going to university and that and within about a week of saying it I had prospectuses for universities, I had lists of the courses I want to do and every university that holds it... He puts in work for me and that's a bonus.'

Many participants expressed that the resettlement support offered by 2nd Chance surpassed that available from statutory organisations, since as a voluntary organisation they were directly concerned with post-release support:

'The prison guards look at it as though, at the end of the day, when we're in prison, we're there for them, and when they leave prison, we're not – so it's as simple as that. Whereas Justin's problem is more keeping us out of jail than putting us in it – do you know what I mean?'

'Working with Justin and that 2nd Chance helped me, but the actual jail system they don't help nobody, they make it look like they do but they don't. Its people like Justin, people like that, they're the people that help you - not the prison system, they don't help you. When you're in jail and you're talking to someone who's in and out of the jail, actually working on the outside world not in the prison system, that's when they care about you. When you talk to the prison staff they don't care, they just see it as everyday, I don't know how to explain it, it's just apart from 2nd Chance there's not much help – it's pretty much, me on my own.'

'Probation, they only do their jobs because they get paid for it whereas Justin, he wants to help. He's not just doing it because he has to.'

The Resettlement Pathways

Thematic analysis of participants' views of the resettlement support they received through the academies indicates that the resettlement provision broadly reflected (with the exception of drugs and alcohol) the seven resettlement pathways, which according to the Home Office (2004) define the actual and practical support required for reducing reoffending. This is no great surprise given that the assessment and information tool developed by 2nd Chance for casework draws on resettlement pathways in its format.

Accommodation

Resettlement support offered whilst in custody by 2nd Chance allowed for potential issues regarding accommodation after release to be identified and planned for. For those who had lost their accommodation as a consequence on imprisonment such support proved highly valuable:

'When I was in prison he was making sure that... Well, he tried to make sure that things could happen for me on the out and this is why I'm here today, because of Justin. And he spoke to my mum, made sure my mum was up to date with what I was doing and what I'm doing now. I live with my mum. I lost my flat when I was in prison, but I put my name down on the housing list. So yeah, he's played a big part in what I'm doing'.

Education, Training, Employment

In terms of education, training and employment, participants frequently cited the opportunity to attain coaching qualifications and support to seek employment or further education as key benefits that the academy offered in terms of resettlement.

The opportunity to gain a recognised qualification was clearly valued by the young men, who saw the qualifications achieved on the academy as a positive step towards making positive life changes and a potential route into employment. Gaining initial qualifications also inspired many to aim for further training opportunities in the future:

'Obviously it's good to get the qualifications and obviously that opens up doors for certain things. It opens up for higher qualifications for actual jobs so it is beneficial'.

'It just helped me a lot and I'd like to take this further, Level 2 and Level 3 and that, continue this when I get out'.

Some participants expressed how they planned to use their qualification and skills not only for personal development but for the wider benefit of their communities and families:

'I want to use this coaching badge I got out of this to help communities and organise tournaments for young kids. And not just about football, about life skills and that'

'I'm learning to coach kids and think obviously it could help me. Like all my little brothers play football, they're all playing for football teams, so I obviously trained them when I was out there, but now that I'm in here I don't feel like I can give anything to them. So obviously by coaching I can actually help them properly this time'.



Indeed, following release, a substantial number of academy participants successfully secured employment requiring the coaching qualification gained on the academies:

'I had the qualification and I told them I've just come out of prison and looking to change my life and that's it really, they just took a chance on me I suppose. It's brilliant'.

Employment opportunities have been secured in national clubs such as Brighton & Hove FC and Exeter FC, as well as numerous community clubs and sporting organisations and firms. Clearly, both participants and staff have valued the resettlement significance of qualifications gained on the academies:

'It creates a buzz when matches or awards are happening and the qualifications gained are so useful to the lads when they are released' (Prison gym staff).

In addition to the qualifications gained on the academies, participants were supported to research and pursue other qualifications and training opportunities, with encouragement to consider options they had not previously been aware of:

'Now I'm even considering going to university to do a foundation then possibly doing physiotherapy or something like that, before I never had anything like that in my mind and that all came through working with 2nd Chance'.

With regard to employment, many of the young men described how involvement in the academies provided them with a new area in which to consider employment upon release, thus increasing their chances of successfully attaining employment in an already restricted employment market:

'It gives us different employment options going to the academy... and then when you come out you can choose where you want to go'.

'Obviously the whole coaching level one thing was good for me I've done a little bit of coaching on the outside already... but it's given me experience and more than anything another option'.

Moreover, one participant who had been released explained how using his experience of the academy enabled him to create a positive impression in an interview context thus helping him to secure employment:

'Since I've got out I've got a job... I think because I was able to explain in the interview that I didn't just sit around in jail and I did the academy and was involved in sport and that, that sort of made the employer realise there was more to me than just an ex criminal kind of thing so I think it helped in that way as well'.

Health

With regard to health, the sporting focus of the academies clearly conferred primary health benefits in terms of improved fitness which were voiced by almost all of the participants when discussing the benefits of participation:

'My fitness has improved loads. When I started the Academy I did a bleep test and I was struggling and now I can get to like level 13 quite comfortably'.

'You realise how unfit you are and can see how you are progressing'.

'It's made me a better footballer, made my fitness improve as well, so there're a lot of advantages'.

Additionally, several of the young men indicated that the academy had motivated them with regard to health and diet, prompting them to make healthier choices in future:

'And again, just playing football, fitness and all that, more to understand how your body works, what you should eat, what you shouldn't eat'.

'You feel that sense of achievement and you stop eating certain foods and that'.

Finance, Benefits & Debts

Although most participants who were still in custody did not discuss financial issues as a key area of resettlement need or support, a focus group discussion among young men released into the community highlighted the financial difficulties that they faced after release, and the benefit of having support available following the academies:

‘Some of us said that when you come out it’s harder than expected, you got lots of money issues and whatever, but when you’ve done the academy you get a lot of support and one to one conversations so there’s a bit of hope for you in life’.

Children & Families

Reflecting the over-representation of fathers among the male juvenile and young adult prisoner population, a substantial number of academy participants had children of their own. The individual resettlement support from 2nd Chance clearly offered the opportunity to address issues and receive guidance regarding challenges such as access, which was perceived to be especially helpful:

‘Justin already said that he’ll help get me in contact because I’ve got a little girl I haven’t seen for two years. I wouldn’t have known how to go about doing that. If I can come out, get a job and get in contact with my daughter, obviously it’s a complete opposite from when before I came to jail. I didn’t have anything to do, I didn’t see... My life wasn’t going anywhere. Well, obviously now I met Justin, it’s just kind of helped me’.

Additionally, for those with minimal familial support, participation in the academy provided an external support network to draw upon whilst in prison:

‘Some people say that when they’re in jail they lose a lot of friends, you don’t get contact with the outside world. While you’re on the academy you felt like you’ve got support, that’s great’.

In addition to the individual and wider benefits conferred by the academies, feedback from the young offenders and their families indicates that for some, participation had an affirmative wider impact on their family relationships, both during custody and after release. One participant described how communication from the 2nd Chance Project to his mother helped keep her updated on his circumstances and had a positive effect:

‘At the end of the rugby academy Justin asks if you want a copy of your progress report sent to your families and that’s always a good thing for your parents to see how you have been getting on and being good and what you’ve been up to in general. I know my mum when she saw my report was happy to see it’.



Indeed, parents of the young men involved in the academies have demonstrated their appreciation for efforts made to include and inform them in the academy process:

'We have received the HMYO 2nd Chance report for [name]. The vision, concept, implementation and results of the project are impressive and we are grateful for your efforts' (Parents of academy participant).

Similarly, several parents of the young men involved have spoken of the impact that communication with academy staff has had on them personally in terms of providing support, reassurance and information, so that they in turn are better able to support their child in the transition from custody to community:

'I just wanted to let you know how grateful his dad and I are at receiving his rugby academy report from Portland and yourself. It's been such a difficult time for us but to hear how well he's doing and how well liked he is by others has made us feel so happy. I just wanted to say thank you for taking the time to send us his report and also some contacts we could maybe use when he comes home'... Once again thank you so much for your support and we will look at the websites you have provided for help and support to try and give him the best possible start when he comes home' (Mother of academy participant).

Moreover, testimonials from parents also point to the beneficial attitudinal and behavioural changes evoked in participants as a result of participating in the academy:

'We have equally been impressed with his commitment, focus and team spirit. He seems to have channelled his resources in succeeding and helping others succeed along the way. The 2nd Chance has enabled [name] to freeze his improved state, learn more and conceptualize and solidify his learning approach and attitude' (Parents of academy participant).

'I would say, although he is very likeable he did lack a bit of confidence but after reading his report and what others have said about him it makes me so happy to think he has come out of his shell a lot' (Mother of academy participant).

The parents of one young man highlighted the positive changes they observed in their son after release, in addition to the benefits of participation in custody:

'It's been fantastic, a huge change. We noticed the difference, obviously it's difficult at the start, but once he got settled into the routine, the football academy just saved him. He's always been good at football so to be able to focus on that – it made the time go and it gave something to put in the letters - the games and training. Now he's come out and he's so positive' (Parents of academy participant).

Like staff and participants, parents have endorsed the need for further academies in the future:

'We hope the project is rolled out more widely and continues to produce success stories' (Parents of academy participant).



Attitudes, Thinking & Behaviour

During the course of and after the academies, all of the participants reflected on how their behaviour, attitudes and thinking styles had changed for the better – and prison staff observations corroborated participants' perceptions. Key areas of improvement to emerge from the qualitative data were communication and conflict resolution skills, self-discipline, anger management and self-esteem. Moreover, participants described how they had transferred behavioural and attitudinal changes across contexts, particularly when released. In particular, a significant proportion of the young men involved in the academies identified enhanced communication skills as a key area in which they had developed as a consequence of participation:

'My communication skills, before I wouldn't really talk to someone, I'd talk to someone but it would be like one word answers... now I can have a proper conversation and I'm in my comfort zone at all times'.

Engagement in matches with external teams also allowed for newly learnt communication skills to be transferred to new contexts, highlighting for some the behavioural changes they needed to make upon release:

'Playing people from outside. It's challenging basically cos I have to adapt and understand how I am going to have to do this when I'm out. How I'm supposed to do things, and how I have been doing things'.

'It teaches you manners, to respect others, equality and a better general attitude. Everyone has different skills and we need to respect that and learn to control our aggression towards other people'.

Several individuals recently released from custody reported that improved communication skills developed on the academy had given them confidence in interacting with a range of people, including employers and colleagues after release:

'Now I can actually talk to someone without thinking they are being rude to me or trying to say something I don't want to hear, and get angry about it, I just sit back and think of what he's said before I answer... you can communicate better with people and that's pretty much what my job is about, communication, and you learn that in rugby as well – good communication'.

'It's like given me more communication skills where I can just talk to strangers now quite easily, whereas before I



would have been sort of paranoid to talk to a stranger, and now I can just relax around anyone’.

‘Well I was pretty shy so doing a lot of team exercises all together I came out of my cage a bit became a bit more interactive in the group and that’s helped me a lot in the work I’m doing now too’.

In particular, many participants felt that the academies had encouraged them to be more empathetic and consider situations from other people’s perspectives:

‘I think it’s helped in having to be self-disciplined and to also understand situations in terms of the fact that not everyone’s here for the same reason. Understanding other people basically’.

‘It’s taught me to consider others and work as a team’.

‘I look at things different now and understand people better’.

‘This Academy has been very helpful for me because it’s taught me how to get on with people a lot more’.

For some, the academies highlighted the value of team work changing previous individualistic attitudes and encouraging patience as well as tolerance when working in group situations:

‘It helps me realise that working as a team is sometimes better than doing something yourself. For example, asking for help’.

‘Patience as well, like in the academy you get patience cos there’s a lot of people, there’s no attention for one individual it’s all team work, group work, so you learn to be patient and connect to a lot of people’.

Several academy participants drew attention to how involvement in the academies had encouraged them to develop alternative thinking patterns and behavioural responses to potentially conflictual interpersonal situations:

‘I think I look at certain situations different now, like when people are moaning and stuff like that, they’re doing it for a reason’.

‘Obviously before, when people used to get on my nerves I used to shout at them but right about now, I kind of learnt just to deal with it’.

‘Its changed the way I act. If people don’t understand certain things and what I can do to help them, if someone is struggling or doesn’t understand I can pull them to the side and go through it with them’.

In addition to changes in attitudes, the academy appears to have equipped participants with enhanced skills to modify their impulsive or aggressive behaviour, especially important for those whose offending behaviour is linked to aggression:

‘Since I’ve been out and when people like wind me up and make me angry and that, because of the stuff I learned on the academy like not getting wound up with people I’ve been able to use that on the outside and I don’t usually get violent with people to get my way now, I can speak about it and be like that with people. And it’s stopped me from being recalled at least four times since I’ve been out and I haven’t even been out that long. I think that’s the main thing I got out of the academy is not being violent with people’.

Staff reflections on the academies also identified improvements in communication, teamwork, tolerance and empathy among academy participants:

‘Team working, motivating others. Being able to take criticism. Seeing weaknesses in others and being able to take them into consideration’ (Prison gym staff).

In addition to improved communication skills, the young men (particularly those involved in the rugby academies) remarked that they had developed greater behavioural discipline, thus inhibiting the aggression/violence that had previously characterised their responses:

‘Yeah discipline. My temperament is much more... it’s better, it’s very better. I think about how I should, you know, come across to people. Before I used to just get mad and just lash out and was willing to fight, now I just take my time, be calm and the situations are much better’.

'I found it is good because it teaches you discipline. Rugby the game, the actual game teaches you discipline, cos you can't just lash out, you're getting tackled and taken out but you can't lash out you have to stay calm'.

A few participants specifically referred to developing discipline that enabled them to stay calm and moderate their attitudes towards others' behaviour as well as their own behavioural responses:

'Obviously, there's things like you've got to be disciplined, got to follow your instructions and you got to listen and that... It's made me a bit more calm... If you do something wrong, they'll shout at you but you can take it in a different way. I don't get angry with them back and shout back. I'm calm whereas before, maybe I would have shouted back and got in an argument or fight or something like that'.

'It basically gives me a little bit of discipline, cos as a boy I wasn't really too good with authority, I didn't like being told what to do. It got to the stage where I started to realise things, like how these people aren't just here to be authoritative... the people who were there were just trying to help us in a sense and it helped me tone down a little bit. I wouldn't say I'm perfect now but I'm a lot better than I was'.

Likewise, staff identified positive attitudinal changes among the young men with regard to discipline in interpersonal interactions:

'Witnessed numerous changes in attitude amongst members towards the values of teamwork, responsibility and discipline' (RFU Community Coach).

'Lads keeping their temper when challenged' (Prison gym staff).

Specifically, the young men involved in the academies noted how participation had encouraged them to utilise newly developed thinking skills in order to control impulsive aggressive behaviours:

'It makes me think about situations more'.

'I've learnt to be calm, think about things'.

'It's been a good experience because I've learnt a lot of new things, you know, how to be a team player and how to think before a situation, keeping myself calm if anything was to happen. So yeah, it's been a good experience'.

'I've learnt to think more before I act'.



Some participants described how they had learnt to react in a positive and responsive way to frustrations by communicating and helping others, rather than resorting to aggression:

'Being in the academy, the football gave me a bit of structure and we had to put in 110%... some people were just messing around and I used to get angry when I first got there, it used to stress me out, I used to sit there and my blood would be rushing, I just wanted to hit someone and I'd think "these guys are getting on my nerves", then it got to the point I sat down one day and realised these guys are messing around, if they don't want to make the most of it they don't have to but I will... I tried giving them advice.'

'I've always been patient, but I'm more of a type of person to let things build up and then explode, but that helped me in a sense like when things are getting to me I'll speak up on it rather than wait later and snap about it. So yeah helped me a lot with my temper.'

For others, learning to accept help and listen as opposed to responding aggressively signalled a positive personal behavioural change:

'Controlling aggression and listening to other people's opinions... someone gave me constructive criticism and I accepted it.'

In terms of affective changes, the young men described how their self concept and self esteem had improved as a result of taking part in the academies:

'More positive about myself... More confident.'

'I think the academy has gone good. It's made me think positive. Made me think a lot.'

'It has made me realise that if I try hard enough I can succeed.'

For others, participation had led to increased self-awareness:

'Made me more aware of how people view me as a person.'

Similarly, staff also highlighted the utility of sport in building self-esteem to encourage desistance from crime among the young men:

'The ability to engage offenders in a sporting environment and build teamwork, self esteem, confidence and give them the ability to stop their offending cycle when released' (Prison gym staff).



Preventing Reoffending and Promoting Desistance

The importance of through-the-gate support

Feedback regarding post release support provided by 2nd Chance was unanimously positive from participants and staff alike. Ongoing contact outside the prison gates was perceived to be extremely beneficial, regardless of individuals' varying support needs. Participants clearly valued having a known and trusted person to confide in and seek support from, other than representatives of statutory organisations:

'Probation there is hardly any support, I'm like there for two minutes... then it's see you next month, but when there's people like Justin around there's a lot of contact so I've got someone to confide in and open up and speak to and so Justin is a great support'.

'Justin's helped me a lot on the outside, I'm not going to lie to you and say I've made fantastic changes but I'm getting there, put it that way'.

Even for those with minimal support requirements, continued contact with the transition worker along with confidence in their approachability and expertise was perceived to provide reassurance:

'I'm confident if I ask for any type of help they will help me out, I'm confident of that, cos of the way they've spoken to me... like it just makes me feel like if I needed something, any sort of help or advice they would give it to me, that's how I feel'.

'Justin had been texting me and that, sending me links and information which was good. I haven't really needed help though. It's good to know there are people out there who care though if you need them'.

'If there was a course or something I wanted to get on I would always talk to them'.

Similarly, prison staff expressed the opinion that continued contact and support in the community from 2nd Chance was a key contributor in reducing reoffending and promoting self-efficacy among academy participants. The partnership had also enabled staff to develop a better understanding of effective ways of reducing reoffending:

'The successes are more about if you can keep in contact with boys once they're released, and they think you're interested and they get that feeling from you that you're interested enough to phone them up and see how they're doing, that makes a massive difference to them....That's been quite successful with 2nd Chance obviously' (Prison gym staff).

'The thing that really worked from the first academy on was support in the community when they get out and that's why 2nd Chance have been the driving force really on subsequent academies. The work Justin does on the inside for lads and subsequently when they are released is worth its weight in gold there's no doubt about that' (Prison gym staff).

'Yes, I think the fact that now that we've been in partnership with 2nd Chance, which has worked, it's broadened our horizons in terms of understanding what prisoners need to keep them out of trouble after prison' (Prison gym staff).

Additionally, staff identified 2nd Chance as a vital bridge which provided crucial connections with employers and community organisations who could potentially meet ongoing resettlement needs, thus effectively linking the prison with the community:

'2nd Chance is a massive link to outside' (Prison gym staff).

'Resettlement opportunities are afforded through the 2nd Chance links with community groups' (Head of Reducing Re-Offending).

'I feel the Academy has been a success largely due to the enthusiasm and endless contacts Justin Coleman has in the third sector and with sports clubs through the South of England' (Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer).

The young men similarly identified the resettlement benefits, particularly in terms of employment opportunities generated by working with 2nd Chance.

'I'm not the only one who's come out in this situation, like out of 24 people on the team I'd say more than half of them have benefited from this cos I know that on the last academy there was quite a few people got work and stuff through 2nd Chance, so yeah a lot of people benefitted'.

Despite such positive feedback, attempts to facilitate resettlement needs - particularly in relation to education, training and employment - have encountered particular challenges in light of the scarcity of funding for projects directed at young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 years:

'I've learnt so much in the last two years, some of the young people have got out, they have gone for interviews, been successful at getting the application through for college or work placements. However the major problem I've had in the last two years has been the funding cuts at that age bracket. For example one young person gets a placement to become a motor mechanic which was his dream at one point to do that and then sort his life out, unfortunately he got the position and then they realised he was 19 and said sorry he can't do it anymore as they don't have funding for 19s which then left him high and dry and he went to several other interviews and had similar situations. When you get to 19 there's nothing free, and I'm not saying it should all be free but it's a case of there is no stepping stone to go from so you can't get into that service because their funding is stopped although socially they still need it because they weren't offered that when they were younger in the community' (2nd Chance).

Promoting Desistance

As with all prison based interventions, the primary aim of the academies was to reduce reoffending and promote desistance from crime - by enhancing the young men's skills and opportunities and providing structured post release support. In discussing the key objectives of the academies, staff across the delivery partnerships concurred that these were the primary aims of the initiative:

'To engage young men who may have had reduced opportunities in the past and to offer alternative ways to express themselves through sport. To offer opportunities on release both paid and voluntary and to reduce re-offending rates' (Head of Reducing Re-Offending).

'The key principle, positive change in the sense that young people see something that's different, being part of something that's different within any custodial setting, where they can make a choice rather than being controlled and that's my main, key element. But also then it's providing them with an exit strategy for when they get out so it's about their mindset being ready to get released' (2nd Chance).

Notably, staff were also in agreement that these aims had largely been met:

'To the greater extent I believe they have, most prisoners have had some form of placement from work to helping with community projects. They are far more self assured and willing to consider alternatives to a life of crime' (Resettlement Education Training and Employment Officer).

'Sport, it allows them to open up their mind to the fact that they're able to improve in something that they've got control over. I think that's the major thing in it and also then all of that you can map across to just general life anyway and then when they start getting that concept then it does have a major effect on their kind of outlook' (2nd Chance).

Staff perceptions of the impact of the academies on reoffending rates and desistance from crime and the role of post release support in achieving such improvements were substantiated by participants' reports of their experiences. Many of the young men attributed their desistance from crime either directly or partly to their involvement in the academies, the opportunities offered to them during the academy and the post academy and post release support from 2nd Chance:

'Obviously Mr Browne [PE Officer] helped me a lot, first he put me on the academy, built my future for me. Basically Mr Browne changed my whole life for me, and for me to say this it is a bit emotional... but it's done a lot for me, he put me on the academy then I met Justin and now I've got a job, so probably it's very likely if I wasn't on the academy I would have come back out into gang land, reoffended and gone back to prison'.

Others expressed how the academy had encouraged and supported them to change their lives by increasing motivation, providing opportunities through formal qualifications and on-going informal support once released:

'The football academy helped me loads because it gave me the incentive to go out and get a job, it got me my level 1 which I've now gone out and used. I work full time coaching kids, 3-6 year olds on a Saturday morning or going out to schools and stuff, but I just want to say thanks to Justin and thanks to Mr Browne and the academy teams who gave us the chance to change our lives and it's the level 1 which has got me the most, work wise'.

'Since I've been out I've been from my FA level 1 to and FA level 2, I've managed to get a job in a school looking after children with learning disabilities, children who are autistic or have had ADHD. As well as that in every school holiday I'm a football coach, I started off at team Elite and now I work on my own and I also do voluntary work every Monday night and Saturday morning. I'd like to say thank you to everyone who was involved in the football academy and especially to Justin for his support since I have been out'.

Several of the young men described how involvement in the academies had not only motivated them and provided them with the support to form positive and alternative futures, but how the experience of incarceration as well as participation in the academies had enabled them to challenge their attitudes towards crime, prompting them to adopt an alternative lifestyle upon release:

'I wouldn't stay I was struggling but I was lacking a bit of discipline getting myself in that situation to get myself locked up. If you were a disciplined person you wouldn't be in that situation getting yourself locked up, that's how I feel anyway. Just the whole experience of being in jail and the academy has made me realise that the life that I was leading, is not the life to be in. I always knew what I wanted to do, it's just getting there, being motivated to get there. I never had the motivation to get there, I just thought why am I going to work hard hours when I can make triple that standing on corners, do you know what I'm trying to say? That's what I thought, but that's not a life is it - looking behind your shoulder every two minutes, it's not the way to be. You know the way people think jail is a walk in the park, it's not a walk in the park. Jail's not a nice place, why would you want to be there, why would you want to be locked up in there when you could be out here doing stuff with your life? You won't see me on the street no way, I'm like work, home, work, home, work, home - that's my life now. I've learnt my lesson'.

Some individuals noted that either developing or rekindling an interest in sport to pursue after release helped them structure and fill their time, providing them with a focus, and reducing the likelihood of boredom as well as consequent offending after release:

'Now I get back from work and I'm usually quite stressed but go straight out to rugby and it just makes you feel good'.

'Well I suppose the main thing was before I wasn't really much of a footballer really, I played football a little bit, but then I realised I was quite good in goal, and I got on to the academy and I realised I was the number one goal keeper. Since I've come out I've been playing for a couple of teams, so on the football side it's benefited me... I'm not spending time doing nothing, I'm always doing something, and like when I get back from work I'm too tired to go and make trouble or anything'.

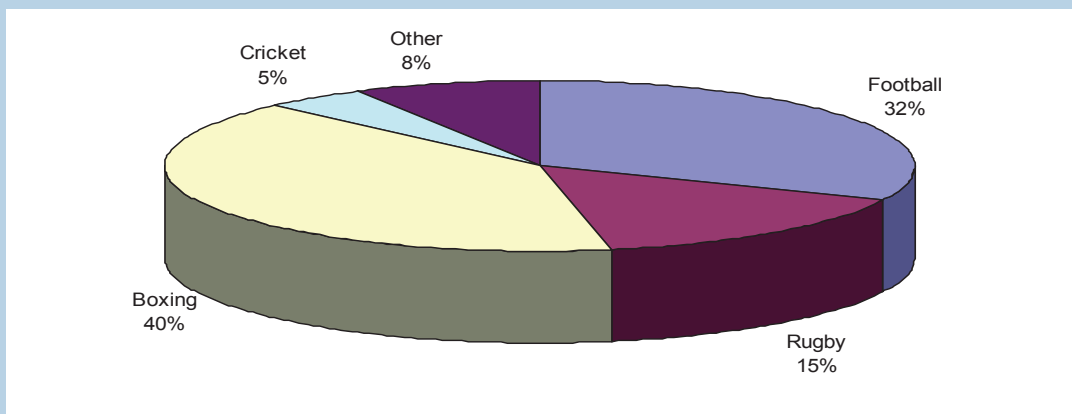
'When I was younger I used to play it all the time but as I got older and started getting into trouble I didn't really play as much as I was always on the streets, but I've been in and out of jail since I was a young man, but football has always interested me.... it's [the academy] made me want to get out and join a football team now'.

Box 4: Beyond Football and Rugby?

A review published by the Audit Commission (2009) refers to the positive role of sport and leisure activities in preventing anti-social behaviour, and highlights the basic need for young people to be able to participate in accessible, reliable, and relevant activities. In order to be successful such activities need to develop from a process of user-consultation and reflect the diversity of young people's needs. From the overwhelming positive feedback generated by participants in relation to the academy, it is clear that sport is an effective vehicle for promoting change in offenders, and although football and rugby have provided especially useful platforms from which to engage young prisoners in resettlement provision, plans to extend or expand the academy initiative should be accompanied by consideration of additional sports.

In order to gauge interest in different sporting activities, a total of 70 prisoners who hadn't participated in the academies were surveyed at an internal resettlement event. Of these, 45 said they would like to attend a boxing academy, 35 said they would like to attend a football academy, 17 a rugby academy, and five a cricket academy. When asked if there were other types of academy they would be keen to participate in, sports as diverse as basketball, running, swimming, golf, darts, snooker and weight training were identified.

Figure 8: What sport academies would you be interested in participating in?



These findings clearly demonstrate that amongst the young adult prisoner population at Portland, there is a high demand for sporting academies, indicating that a great deal of potential exists for engaging with prisoners on resettlement and education issues through sport. Indeed Coalter (1996) has previously argued that the context and process are more important than the actual sporting activity, suggesting that it is the increased motivation generated by participating that is of primary importance.



Chapter 6: Discussion of Research Results

The findings illustrate the strengths of the 2nd Chance sports academy as a means of engaging with young men in prison, improving attitudes and behaviour, and meeting specific resettlement needs. The quantitative analyses confirm improvements to established measures of conflict resolution, aggression, impulsivity and attitudes towards offending. Provisional reconviction data is very encouraging, at 18 per cent (compared to a Portland average of 48 per cent), and testimonies from participants, their families and delivery staff provide a rich illustration of the positive impact of the 2nd Chance sports academy initiative as a cost-effective, innovative and successful intervention.

The research results expand upon and confirm some of the claims previously made by academics in related settings. Although health promotion was not a primary aim of the academy, just as Elger (2009) argues for increased opportunities to practice sports in prison in order to improve offender wellbeing, the young men who took part in the initiative confirmed that participation in the academy led to improvements in their physical health, sleeping patterns, and attitudes to healthy eating. Likewise, the prominent theme of participation in the football and rugby academies as an effective way of managing stress and anxieties supports Frey and Delaney's (1996) original claims - based on questionnaire data from a survey of 1770 prisoners in the United States - that leisure activities in prisons serve as an important form of tension management. However, as Martos-Garcia et al. (2009) have suggested, the benefits of a prison-based sports initiative are limited to providing an interesting way of passing time for offenders, unless accompanied by expert-led resettlement provision. As such, a primary recommendation arising from the present research is that any replication or extension of the 2nd Chance academy should retain the specialist through-the-gate resettlement provision at its heart, rather than being tempted to rely solely on the attraction of sport as a resettlement tool. The research makes no claims that sport alone will prevent reoffending, but the clear message is that sport can be an incredibly effective way of motivating some of the most hard-to-engage offenders in resettlement, education, or psychological intervention.

A prominent theme arising from interviews was that of improved offender-staff relations. Prison officers and management observed the benefits of the academy in instilling increased levels of mutual respect between prisoners and staff, and academy participants confirmed that previous hostile relationships with staff had in some cases transformed into ones characterised by positive rapport. Sidney (1987) has previously identified the benefits of physical exercise on the attitudes of prison staff to their work and the work environment, but this is the first research evidence of its kind to demonstrate the positive effect of a sports initiative on staff-prisoner relationships.

The evaluation has verified that the project has facilitated a unique opportunity for delivery staff and community partners to promote participation among those prisoners who can be hard to engage in other contexts. The initiative has enabled offenders and delivery staff to develop positive support and mentoring relationships, and has motivated individuals to take responsibility for their actions, and inspire them to generate positive aspirations for the future. As a result of their expertise, the 2nd Chance Project staff have worked in collaboration with the prison in providing bespoke support that is tailored to the complex needs of the individuals involved. Crucially, through-the-gate support from the 2nd Chance transition worker has enabled offenders to maintain the positive support relationship across the critical time period when ex-offenders are at their most vulnerable and likely to reoffend. In Farrington et al's (2002) previous evaluation review, a reduced number of reconvictions in one initiative was attributed to the cognitive-behavioural skills element of the programme and the considerable efforts made to find work placements for participants in the final weeks of the programme and after release. Such an observation is relevant to the 2nd Chance academy, where identifying training or voluntary/paid employment opportunities after release from custody is a primary concern.

Effective partnership working is a critical feature of the success of the academy, and despite the initial challenges of establishing effective channels of communication between prison staff and community organisations, at project conclusion the accounts of both prison and community staff were overwhelmingly positive about the impact of the initiative, thus corroborating the claims articulated by the participants.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

The prison estate represents a challenging context in which to deliver innovative programmes, but subject to further funding support and commitment from community partners and prison administrators, the programme could and should develop beyond its initial two year term. As with any small-scale intervention that demonstrates success, replication and extension of the model should be done sensitively and with careful attention to staffing so as not to jeopardise the value and impact of individualised attention from experienced, charismatic and well qualified staff.

Recommendation 2:

The design of the academy affords a strong potential for peer mentoring and ex-offender involvement, as well as providing an opportunity to draw on the skills of prison service and probation staff who are seeking new challenges in their roles. It is recommended that similar initiatives are expanded to other prison establishments, prioritising the young adult estate while exploring development in other aspects of the Criminal Justice System.

Recommendation 3:

In order to maintain programme integrity, programme fidelity and a commitment to evidence-based practice, the movement towards a manualised form of the 2nd Chance sports academy (with delivery overseen by the organisation) could be explored as a way of facilitating expansion to additional establishments nationwide in order to enable a wider range of prison establishments and offenders to benefit from this innovative and effective initiative.

Recommendation 4:

The findings indicate that the extension and continuation of such an initiative will also provide a valuable opportunity for Premiership clubs and high profile figures in sport to contribute to tackling issues within the criminal justice system, and for sporting organisations to expand their playing, refereeing and coaching presence and promote their community involvement. Clubs, organisations and sports men and women – from the community level through to the elite - should be actively encouraged to contribute to schemes such as this one. Just as King (2009) has claimed that the success of a programme depends on the skills and commitment of individuals who hold respect in local communities, the findings suggest that there is great potential for prominent and respected figures in the sporting world to make a powerful contribution as ambassadors to projects such as these.

Recommendation 5:

The research results suggest that introducing academies based on a range of different sporting activities would enable staff to engage with a broad prisoner population. As part of the evaluation research, non-academy participants at Portland were surveyed and findings confirmed that as well as football and rugby, prisoners were keen to participate in academies based on a diverse range of sports, including boxing, cricket, basketball and athletics.

Chapter 8: Suggested Future Research Directions

Given the time and resources available for the monitoring and evaluation activities associated with this two year project, the depth and breadth of analysis is considered proportionate. However, in considering future evaluation activities of a similar kind, the following points summarise the identified future research directions that have been identified:

- Employ a quasi-experimental design whereby academy participants are compared to a matched sample of non-participants (such as those on a waiting list), as done by Sadlier (2010) in the evaluation of Enhanced Thinking Skills programmes.
- Observe the duration of the reduction of reoffending effect in order to explore whether participation has a lasting impact.
- Distinguish between breach of licence conditions and new offences when calculating reconviction data. Take into account seriousness of offence in assessing progress made by participants.
- Previous researchers (for example Falshaw et al., 2003) have suggested that relying on Offenders Index data to assess reconviction can undermine the quality of an evaluation if data is missing or incomplete. It is recommended that data is drawn from the Police National Computer, the official source of criminal conviction histories. This was attempted in the current research but access was not granted in time.
- Explore what works (and for whom) by expanding the pilot and enabling statistical comparison across offence type. As well as different offence categories being statistically more likely to reoffend (for example, those serving sentences for burglary: Ministry of Justice, 2011d), some previous research evidence has suggested that the relationship between sports participation and deviance varies depending on the type of offending behaviour examined (Hartmann & Massoglia, 2007), so future programmes could explore the benefit of targeting specific at-risk groups.
- Incorporate a clearly articulated theoretical rationale into expanded projects in order to maintain a robust and relevant evaluation methodology (Smith & Waddington, 2004; Taylor et al., 1999).
- Incorporate an objective measure of wider behavioural changes within the prison (such as data on numbers of adjudications, positive/negative entries).
- As well as targeting specific types of offenders, the selection of participants could prioritise, for example, those in the last year of their sentence, or those who are serving longer sentences. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation would reveal which groups respond most favourably to different aspects of the intervention.



Chapter 9: Illustrative Case Studies

Case Study – U

U was released in August 2010 on electronic tag following an 11 month sentence. He secured full time manual employment immediately after release, and in describing his experiences of the academy two weeks after his return to the community U was especially positive about the skills and opportunities developed as a result of participating in the academy:

‘Everything about it was good. It got us out of our cells more. Got us working together so we could communicate with people, because some of us weren’t that good at that... Getting to know everyone, team building, playing the matches. I didn’t expect to go in and do something like that, it was good. I’m more confident. I’ve got my shirt upstairs on my wall... I’d like to join a team. I want to play and I might help out at the weekends with my neighbour as he teaches his son’s team. I’m going for a trial too’.

Just over a year after his release U has gone on to complete his FA Level 2 coaching badge, building on the FA Level 1 coaching qualification he gained whilst on the academy. Having initially worked as a coach for a company, U has now started his own football coaching business and employs a teenage volunteer to assist him coaching children during the school holidays, in addition to being employed full time in a Health and Social Care role. In his spare time U volunteers as a football coach for a local junior team.

Although U’s success is clearly a reflection of his motivation and innovation, he expressed his thanks for the opportunities and support engendered via his participation in the football academy:

‘I’d like to say thank you to everyone who was involved in the football academy and especially to Justin for his support since I have been out’.

U continues to contribute to both his own and his community’s development, and is considering pursuing higher education in 2012.

Case Study – D

D completed the majority of the second rugby academy whilst serving a sentence for violent offences but was released a few weeks prior to its conclusion, to serve the remainder of his sentence on a curfew whilst residing in a bail hostel. In reflecting on his experience during the academy D clearly valued the opportunity to re-engage with sport and stay active whilst in custody (‘It is good being active again and playing for a team and getting involved in sport’), and a short time after his release D eloquently expressed that the primary benefit of participating in the academy for him had been learning to control his temper and develop alternative strategies to address interpersonal tension as opposed to violence:

‘Before starting the academy I’d get easily wound up and just hit other people. If something didn’t go my way I’d start throwing my weight around and get bolshy and aggressive with other people. During the academy I didn’t want to do that with the lads because I knew I’d be kicked off the academy and I wanted to play the rugby and we weren’t going to work as a team if I was just going or be bullying people. So as it went on, there were a few times where I might of got a bit lairy or be shouting, but as it went on and time progressed and we became a solid unit it became easier to slow down and be helping people instead of shouting at them. It just sort of planted a seed in my head of how I can be. I don’t have to be like that’.

Interviewed a month later, D had clearly drawn on the skills he learnt during the academy to deal with difficult situations, suggesting that they had already prevented him from resorting to violence and returning to prison on a number of occasions:

‘Since I’ve been out and when people wind me up and make me angry and that, because of the stuff I learned on the academy like not getting wound up with people I’ve been able to use that on the outside and I don’t usually get violent with people to get my way. I can speak about it and be like that with people, and it has stopped me from being recalled at least four times since I’ve been out and I haven’t even been out that long. That’s the main thing I got out of the academy, not being violent with people’.

D has subsequently found work in retail and hospitality and described how using his experience from the academy had been beneficial within an interview context:

‘Since I’ve got out I’ve got a job. I think because I was able to explain in the interview that I didn’t just sit around in jail and I did the academy and was involved in sport and that, that sort of made the employer realise there was more to me than just an ex criminal kind of thing so I think it helped in that way as well’.

As well as securing employment D has also been exploring long term career aspirations, and feels the support he has received from 2nd Chance has been particularly valuable, providing him with practical assistance and encouraging him to explore options that he had not previously considered:

‘Justin is helping me find funding for a personal training course I want to do because I really want to become a PTI. So stuff like that really helps as well like career wise, because I knew I wanted to do something similar to that before but Justin sort of went through a few things with me and suggested stuff - where to look online and now I’m even considering going to university to do a foundation then possibly doing physiotherapy or something like that. Before I never had anything like that in my mind and that all came through working with 2nd Chance’.

In a subsequent interview, two months after release, D confirmed that he was still benefiting from the positive relationship he had built up with Justin at the 2nd Chance Project:

‘I’ve been supported. Justin always checks up, texts me and that to see how I am and if there’s anything I need help with. If I get confused about anything I know I can just ask him.’

At this point D had applied to undertake an apprenticeship in personal training, commencing in January 2012 and feels his experiences of the academy will assist his application:

‘The qualifications I got on the academy will supplement the apprenticeship and probably help me get it’.

Meanwhile, D has maintained his involvement in sport, participating in rugby and boxing and pursuing his goal of a career in the sport industry. D continues to reflect on the benefit of the rugby academy as an effective resettlement and behaviour change intervention, and advocates their continuation:

‘It’s a more hands-on approach of thinking about your behaviour. I’ve heard rumours that it might be stopping because of all these funding cuts and that and I think that would be a real shame and its worth every bit of money they spend on it’.

Case Study - M

M has been in trouble with the police since his mid-teens and was serving a sentence for GBH when he participated in the academy. He impressed team mates and staff alike with the commitment, enthusiasm and progress he demonstrated throughout, in spite of the limitations he experienced due to a physical disability.

During the course of the academy, the 2nd Chance transition worker observed his confidence grow and his communication skills within the team develop. In reflecting on his experience, M expressed how the academy had given him ‘more motivation’ and encouraged him to become ‘more active in general’.

Prior to coming to prison M had limited involvement beyond his immediate community. However, during the course of the academy he developed clear resettlement goals and his efforts have gained him the support of additional community-based organisations. M is currently preparing for an interview with a community initiative within Portland, and although nervous about the new challenges, remains committed to engaging in activities to better himself.

M’s earliest opportunity to be considered for release falls six months after the completion of the academy and he continues to train with the prison rugby team in the meantime. M also continues to engage fruitfully with his transition worker and is exploring pursuing employment as a barber upon his release.

Case Study – L

L initially completed the football academy at Portland with two years remaining on his sentence and was given permission to participate in the subsequent rugby academy. Although L had excelled and made positive behavioural changes during the football academy, he confirmed that the rugby academy helped him to identify and develop self-control and alternative strategies to dealing with conflict and problems:

‘It has helped me to control my temper a bit more. Normally I would get upset with people when they do something wrong but now I give them advice and constructive criticism’.

L’s team mates identified the progress he made - both behaviourally and attitudinally, noting ‘*He’s improved in every way now, not getting angry as before*’, and ‘*He’s staying positive*’. Similarly, L received a positive appraisal from his transition worker, particularly regarding his improved self-awareness and focus during the course of the rugby academy.

L has aspirations to apply his newly developed coaching skills when he is released (Spring 2013) and has been working with his transition worker to look at developing business plans over time as well as making contacts with sporting organisations to gain work experience.

Despite serving a lengthy sentence, L’s experiences have demonstrated the benefits of the sports academies in improving expectations and prospects for longer-term prisoners, as well as those managing the transition from custody to community soon after participation.

Case Study - C

C was a gifted and – unlike many of his fellow academy participants – fairly experienced rugby player when he commenced the summer 2011 rugby academy. C’s natural ability secured him the captain’s band within the academy, allowing him to develop his leadership and team work skills. Although, he was initially criticised by his team mates for failing to integrate and engage with the team, by the end of the academy C’s communication and leadership skills flourished and were reflected in positive feedback from his team mates such as ‘*Helping everyone improve, not just himself*’ and ‘*Good from the start and got better at being captain - great motivation!*’.

C developed a clear and achievable resettlement path whilst on the academy and has pursued this with support from 2nd Chance and the RFU since his release in October 2011. C has subsequently successfully secured employment in outdoor pursuits and is playing county level rugby in his spare time, whilst exploring undertaking further study.

Case Study - H

H was serving a sentence for robbery and had limited previous direct experience of rugby, but developed a passion for the game during the academy. He attracted substantial peer attention and learnt to use this effectively to motivate himself and his team mates (‘*Great motivation from his effort!*’; ‘*Always helping me when I get angry - I have learnt a lot!*’). Staff witnessed H’s leadership skills and confidence flourish towards the end of the academy and when asked whether the academy had changed the way he behaves or acts H reported that the academy had taught him to be more open minded and withhold judgment.

During the course of the academy H focussed on his goal of pursuing employment in the fitness industry. With support, H has identified steps to achieve this including completing his gym instructing level 2 whilst in custody and planning to undertake an Apprenticeship in personal fitness level 3 supported by a community organisation who, impressed by his efforts, are also willing to offer H employment.

H continues to develop his rugby skills whilst playing for the prison rugby team and aims to draw on support to make contact with community teams in his locality upon his release which is expected to be in Spring 2012.

Case Study - S

S has a history of violent offending since a very early age, had accrued eleven convictions as a minor and was considered to be at an extremely high risk of reoffending prior to taking part in the rugby academy. However, S was soon commended by prisoners and his fellow prisoners for his consistent commitment to the academy. S's dedication led to overwhelmingly positive feedback from his team mates (*'always picking the team up!'; 'on the pitch - vocal! Off it, gives me advice and tips to improve!'*) and his new found confidence has improved his communication skills in terms of public speaking as well as recognising the needs of others. Behaviourally, S reported that participating in the academy enabled him to manage his anger, become more attentive to the opinions of others, and more responsive to advice and criticism: *'I'm better at controlling aggression and listening to other people's opinions. When people on the pitch gave me constructive criticism I accepted it'*.

Despite experiencing considerable anxiety whilst awaiting a release date which is expected to be in early 2012, S has succeeded in developing a clear pathway for release and plans to establish contact with a community project he was previously involved with. S is currently working towards a sport leadership qualification to assist him in his goal of securing employment upon release, and he continues to play rugby within the prison and engage with 2nd Chance who are supporting him to explore training and employment opportunities and local rugby clubs to join upon release.

Case Study - B

B was serving a lengthy sentence for violent and drug related offences at Portland following a history of involvement with the police since the age of 15 and several convictions before the age of 18. B was assessed as having a medium to high risk of reoffending and participated in the rugby academy when he had approximately three years of his sentence left to serve. Prior to coming to prison B had not played rugby and valued being given the opportunity to learn a new sport.

For B, participation in the rugby academy improved his quality of life within prison, giving him something to focus on while improving his physical health:

'Before I was on the academy I wasn't really doing anything... it got me fitter'.

Participation allowed B to engage with new people within the prison and fostered improved communication skills, an area which he identified as previously finding difficult:

'It's helped me in a way of talking to people, I was shy, now I talk to people better'.

Moreover, such primary gains stemming from involvement in the academy in turn contributed to secondary affective benefits in terms of changing his self-perception and boosting his self esteem (*'I'm more positive about myself, more confident'*),

Although he still has a considerable amount of time to serve in prison custody, B recognises the benefit of engagement with 2nd Chance and has developed clear goals for resettlement, including exploring an employment option for his release with Jamie Oliver's 15 restaurant..

In light of his sentence, B is not yet sure of the impact the academy will have with regard to re-offending, but acknowledges that the academy has already changed his life and encouraged him to take positive strides:

'Because I've got such a long sentence, 10 years, because I'm here for five whole years I couldn't yet say it hasn't helped me re offending. But I'd just like to say thank you to everyone who's helped me, [it has] changed my life'.

B explained that his new found interest in rugby was something that he could continue and share with his two young children once back in the community, and expressed his motivation to change his life for the better, inspired in part by his participation in the sport.

B continues to play rugby for the prison team and in addition has recently gained special permission from the Portland governor to play for a local team whilst released on temporary licence. Nine months after completing the rugby academy B continues to be focused on pursuing a career as a chef and is confident he has the support to maintain the positive changes he had made.

Case Study - J

J has a history of being in care and has had contact with the police since he was 14 years old. He was convicted on several occasions as a minor, some of which were for violent offences.

JR participated in both the football and the rugby academy and was clear that both had helped him, particularly in terms of improved behaviour within prison:

‘When I first got sent to prison I was all over the place, but it sort of gave me an initiative to behave myself’.

Moreover, J recognised that the academies provided a chance for more than just sporting development, offering him the opportunity for personal development in terms of social and life skills:

‘Some people go there just for football and have a laugh but it’s not just about that. Yes it is about enjoyment and kicking the ball about but you have got to want to learn something out of it, social skills, life skills’.

For J, support from staff during the academies had provided him with reassurance and hope that a positive future was attainable, thus challenging the negative outlooks that he had previously internalised:

‘Quite a lot there is the mentality of lock them up and throw away the key. I don’t know if faith is the right word, but they still believe that there is something there, do you know what I mean?’

Whilst participating in the academies J planned for his release and with the support of 2nd Chance and the qualifications he attained during the academy, secured an offer of employment to commence upon his release:

‘I got a job with [name of football club] football club coaching which is good, and Justin’s helped me’.

J has worked closely with the transition worker to finalise accommodation arrangements and ensure he has a robust support network in place for his release. He was released in December 2011 and commenced work a few weeks later, whilst living in hostel accommodation.

Case Study - K

K participated in the rugby academy. As a team captain K saw not only his rugby ability improve, but his leadership skills and his capability to organise and motivate the team:

‘The rugby academy helped me in a lot of ways. When I first started I was an alright player but it helped me develop and mature as a player and I think it helped everyone become a team because when we were first in there, there were little sub groups and people were just sticking to people they knew but by the end everyone was together and kind of friends’.

K’s progress was recognised by academy staff and widely earned him the praise of his team mates (*‘You’re not our captain for no reason, you always motivate me!’; ‘When the team gets down, he picks us up again!’*).

K developed a clear resettlement plan during his time on the academy and secured a considerable support network ready for release in August 2011. Upon leaving prison he began proactively searching for employment and was rewarded seven weeks after his release with a position with a rail company. Although he felt he had not needed a great deal of support to secure employment, he referred to reassurance presence of the 2nd Chance Project:

‘Justin had been texting me and that, sending me links and information which was good. It’s good to know there are people out there who care though, if you need them’.

Case Study – T

T participated in the rugby academy and described how it offered him an effective way of dealing with some of the emotional pressures of prison life:

‘Within the prison, rugby helped me release anger and stress cos you’re stuck on the wings and it builds up and you can just get rid of all that anger and stress and frustration’.

T was released in summer 2011 and immediately secured employment as a labourer via a family friend. He quickly decided he wanted to achieve more and approached his employer to enquire if he could complete an apprenticeship in carpentry, which he is now successfully undertaking.

T had not previously played rugby, but in his leisure time he now participates in club rugby several times a week. After returning to the community he expressed how, as was the case within prison, rugby continues to be beneficial to him, offering a release from daily stresses:

‘Now I get back from work and I’m usually quite stressed but go straight out to rugby and it just makes you feel good’. Participation in the academy helped T plan for his release and solidify his future goals. In reflecting on post-release support, T recognised that he was privileged to have a wide support network awaiting him, meaning he required little extra help, but appreciated it was there and acknowledged it would be of particular benefit to others in a less fortunate situation:

‘Support 100% I’ve had plenty of support, I haven’t needed for anything. I’m lucky I’ve got good family support and that. Justin’s been offering me stuff and that, but to be honest I haven’t needed much support but I know it’s there and most lads don’t have all the family support I have so for them it’s really good’.

T’s focus, coupled with his supportive environment, has clearly enabled him to pursue and maintain a positive lifestyle since completing his prison sentence:

‘I haven’t had a sniff of trouble since I’ve been out, I’ve been keeping myself to myself and I think I know where I was going wrong with my life, now I know what I should be doing with it and what I shouldn’t’.

Case Study - E

E participated in the rugby academy and was released during the summer of 2011. He had not played rugby prior to coming to prison and in reflecting on his experiences of the rugby academy identified that rugby had offered him an effective outlet to relieve stress:

‘I’d never picked up a rugby ball in my life before I went to prison, but I got loads of stuff out of the academy. It helps you get stuff off your mind and lay out some stress’.

Within prison, involvement in the rugby academy had clearly improved E’s quality of life and allowed him to interact with a diverse range of people:

‘It was really enjoyable, just getting out there you know. I met people I would never have met before, I’m still in touch with a couple of people from the academy’.

Although E recognised that initially interacting with a diverse group of people was challenging, as the team developed he described how his and his team-mates’ social skills and patience improved:

‘It’s like teambuilding, at first everyone was getting pissed off when people made mistakes and stuff...and it’s like we had to learn people don’t do mistakes on purpose and I suppose start to look at it differently and not just get angry, try and understand’.

Moreover, the social skills E developed were reflected in feedback from team mates and academy staff alike, who highlighted how he had developed to be a prosocial force within the team (*'His improvement is an inspiration!'; 'Massive inspiration and a good friend on and off the pitch!'*).

For E, the social and cognitive skills he developed during the academy had proven especially useful upon his release:

'It makes you think more. Think before you say something. Like before I went to prison I was in trouble all the time, but since I haven't been in trouble at all, it's not worth it'.

After approximately one month back in the community E secured employment through a family contact and has been employed continuously since. When asked whether he had received sufficient support upon release, E relayed that although he had support from family and the St Giles Trust, ongoing communication with 2nd Chance had been especially reassuring:

'2nd Chance always keep in touch, Justin is always texting to see how I am, it's good, I know if I need anything he's there and he's been supportive, but I haven't really needed anything'.

E is now playing rugby for his local team and goes to the gym regularly.

Case Study - N

N was released in September 2010 after serving a nine month prison sentence, during which he participated in the football Academy. Prior to his imprisonment, N had played semi-pro football and in prison N hoped to use his enthusiasm for football to develop discipline, but did not originally anticipate further educational elements:

'I'm hoping to you know just get discipline and that and get better at football... Educationally I'm not really expecting nothing but I'm hoping to learn'.

When later reflecting on the academy, N reported that the academy experience had granted him what he had hoped, instilling in him the discipline to reflect on his behaviour and how to change it, sustain his motivation and achieve goals:

'I think about the people that I met, you know, how I'm going to change. I think about what I'd have been like if I didn't go to prison, think about where I'd be now if I didn't go on that. The academy gave me a lot of discipline so I think to myself, like, "If I didn't have that discipline, where would I be?" If I didn't have the discipline I wouldn't be working, I wouldn't have had my licence, I wouldn't have... There were a lot of things I wouldn't have had. But, you know, just being on that academy made me stick it out. I came out straightaway and I thought I'm going to get my licence, booked my test, done my lessons, got it, saved for my car, now it's all been going smoothly'.

N claimed that the support and opportunities offered by 2nd Chance and partner organisations whilst in prison had provided motivation to behave in prison and instilled some hope for his future:

I wouldn't have got out of jail 'til late, 'til like next year. Yeah, I wouldn't have got out. Because I had something to look forward to when I was getting out, you know, they said they were going to help me. So I thought, "Let me just do my best behaviour". Yeah, it motivated me while I was in there to be good, you know... When prisoners start seeing there are people out there who actually have a concern in their future, you know, a concern in what they do, then they will see that people start being more motivated and that, because this place has changed me a lot'.

Upon his release N quickly secured employment at an organisation 2nd Chance had referred him to whilst in prison. N described how creating such contacts before release was key to making a successful transition back to the community:

'Like, if hadn't have done that it would've been hard for me to get a job and then I reckon I would've ended up drifting like the way I used to and then, you never know, I would probably have ended up back in prison, so this has kind of laid me on the right track now, you know. It's been a big help... They welcomed me with open arms and despite my past, you know, what I've been in prison for, despite all of that, they just saw me and thought,

“Oh okay, he’s a guy who wants to work,” they saw me for that and that’s how they treated me, no one treated me like a criminal... Obviously I’m one of the lucky few that got an opportunity, that’s why I’m going to grasp it with all I can, you know, but it would be good for other people to get the same opportunity’.

For N the football academy provided him with the behavioural activation and discipline to seek employment as well as a qualification which has helped him in his role, spurring him on to obtain his level 2 coaching and to strive for further qualifications in the future (‘I want to go to University’).

Case Study - W

W participated in the football academy while serving a 15 month sentence. Prior to imprisonment, W was active in sports:

‘I always had a passion for football and sport as well. I used to do ice skating on a weekend as a hobby and football, I used to Sunday league football’.

On commencing the academy W described how he hoped the academy would improve his fitness and crucially, help him deal with his aggression:

‘What I’m hoping for from the academy is discipline because sometimes I lash out on certain things, that’s about it really’.

Following completion of the academy W felt his hopes had been fulfilled stating:

‘Yeah discipline. My temperament is much more... it’s better, it’s very better. I think about how I should, you know, come across to people. Before I used to just get mad and just lash out and was willing to fight, now I just take my time, be calm and the situations are much better’.

For W the academy encouraged positive behavioural change and enabled him to develop transferable teamwork skills:

‘It’s made me realise how I’m supposed to be, like structure wise in a group and in our academy’.

Reflecting on the resettlement element of the academy and anticipated transitional support immediately after completion, W positively endorsed the support offered, despite noting that it was not initially expected:

‘I just thought it was just football, football, football but there’s more to it than just football. There’s work as well ... as well as other things... I haven’t really seen anything at the moment because I haven’t been released from prison but he [Justin] seems quite good, he seems like he wants to help so yeah, I put trust and faith in it’.

A week after W’s release and return to London in June 2011, he reflected almost nostalgically on his experience of the academy, the support network it provided for him in prison and the opportunity to help others as well as develop himself:

‘I loved it. This team, I just miss it. Yeah, yeah, I do miss them, I miss all of them. We weren’t just a team, we were like a brotherhood. We were a family, man, definitely was a family... ‘You meet new people in the academy and then certain people might not be on the same level as me or I might not be on the same level as them and you can help them, like keep pushing, keep pushing. Like for example [name of team mate] is not a football player but he’s willing and he always tries and then me and him started talking, because at the time I was a left winger and he was a left back so he was behind me, so if he missed out on a tackle I made sure I covered him and crunched that guy to the ball so he could come back. Then we started gelling and from there we was the best of mates. We used to see each other and make each other laugh and that. Yeah, it was good’.

In addition to providing a positive experience, W attributed his successful transition back into the community to the support and networking provided by the academy transition worker who assisted him in securing accommodation and employment:

'He's played a massive role in... Like not as much in the prison but outside. When I was in prison he was making sure that... Well, he tried to make sure that things could happen for me on the out and this is why I'm here today, because of Justin. And he spoke to my mum, made sure my mum was up to date with what I was doing in and what I'm doing now. I live with my mum. I lost my flat when I was in prison. So yeah, he's played a big part in what I'm doing'.

Within a week of release, W had begun working on a temporary basis in a role which he enjoyed and felt would create further opportunities for him, providing him with a positive outlook on the future:

'As much as I can get out of this, good enough for me, keeps me occupied. I don't mind that it's three months, it could be six, eight months, maybe a year, and it doesn't bother me. I love doing this, so... It opens the doors, doesn't it, for something else?' 'Things look bright, yeah. Things look bright'.

Six months later W is waiting to be rehoused and is playing football in two leagues, boxing and going to the gym regularly whilst seeking employment. He noted that:

'It's been hard with a criminal record, lots of places don't want you and then sometimes you feel like there's no point but I keep putting my CV about everywhere and I'm trying to get back into semi pro football'.

W is maintaining his positive attitude and has continued to maintain contact with 2nd Chance which he feels is useful, but expressed frustration with the support he has been receiving from probation particularly surrounding accommodation

Case Study - P

P has a history of offending behaviour since his mid-teens and completed the academy whilst serving a sixteen month sentence for robbery and burglary. Following completion of the academy and prior to his release, P reflected on the social skills he had developed as well as the motivational impact of the academy on prison behaviour and attitudes towards life:

'Helped me with social skills and just, makes you want to behave more in here'.

P contrasted the positive experience of the academy with the lack of support he had previously experienced in another prison:

'In there, they don't really help you with anything, it's just go to gym, play football, come back and that's it. But here, you'd get on a football academy and they actually try and help you ... it's just there, you do your time and then when you go, you go out and that's it'.

P was optimistic about the support he had received from 2nd Chance in preparation for release, which he felt had eased the anxiety he experienced in relation to returning to the community:

'He's helped quite a lot. He's looked into some stuff for me for when I get out. Like, because I like doing music, he's looked for some studios near where I live and sorted out where I want to go back to college and finish my mechanics course so he's got that sorted for me... Another thing he's sorted out for me, looking for local teams just to play weekend football, just keep busy so I don't end up doing the same things, just trying to keep busy while I'm out there'.

P was subsequently released in January 2011. Several months later, despite still seeking employment, P felt the academy continued to have a positive impact on his behaviour:

'Taught me a bit of patience, and taught me to be tolerable. Taught me how to treat people when you disagree, rather than having to lose your temper and stuff like that'.

After his release P continued to play sport regularly, while he explored voluntary and paid employment opportunities and cared for his son who had been born while P was in custody:

'I play five-a-side football every Wednesday. I was trying to get that sport apprenticeship thing but there's no funding so I have to talk to the Prince's Trust people next week...I don't know about my mechanics thing anymore, I need something sooner with him [son]. It's been nice to spend time with him and get a bond with him cos he didn't really know me, just seen me on visits, so now that I'm out I can actually be there and do things for him'.

Despite P's optimism regarding the skills he developed on the academy, he was reconvicted in October 2011 and sentenced to a further 6 months at Portland, though for a breach offence he has subsequently been released for.

Case Study – R

R is a care leaver with a young son of his own. While serving a 2.5 year sentence for arson, he participated in the football Academy at Portland. Interviewed after his release, he described the positive impact of participating:

'I came out six months ago, and I got a job after a month of being out with the football club. I really enjoy it, coaching. Got the qualification whilst I was in prison and now I can use it for my job'.

R attributed his success in securing employment to the coaching qualification he gained while participating in the Academy:

'The academy helped me one hundred per cent, well I wouldn't have had the qualification, I wouldn't have had the guts to go into a football club and say I'm unqualified but it's something I want to do, but I had the qualification behind me so I went in there and just told them and so yeah a hundred per cent, the football academy has done a lot for me'.

Although R demonstrated a great deal of self motivation, the positive relationship he had built up with the 2nd Chance transitions worker was clearly a valuable and supportive one, not least since it contributed to him securing the work placement:

'I still speak to Justin every now and again so it's been really good...To be honest I did the tough bit on my own, I had to learn to do it myself really, but if I need anything then I know there's always going to be someone there and Justin sent a good email to the football club telling them about me'.

Because of R's history of offending and the nature of his new role in the community, staff at 2nd Chance were instrumental in ensuring that all the necessary communications and risk assessments were carried out with relevant individuals.

Just over a year after his release R remained employed at the football club and found his work gave him purpose and was extremely rewarding. He returned to Portland as a guest speaker to discuss his experiences after release with consequent academies. Participants who engaged with R offered feedback that his talk had been inspirational, making them feel hopeful and motivated ('This is a great reminder you can make something of your life!'; 'What he has achieved is amazing and great to hear'; 'Made me think seriously about my future!').

Despite the evident positive changes and pro social actions R achieved following his participation in the academy, he was recalled to prison in the second year of his release, although for a significantly less severe disorder offence.

Case Study - A

A was released from Portland having served a sentence of 3 years and 9 months. He participated in the football academy and was involved in peer-coaching of the subsequent academy. Following his release from prison A was referred by 2nd Chance to a partner organisation, Cricket for Change, and began volunteering for them a week after his release:

'So I tried to really fill my week up with sessions and helping the coaches out and stuff'.

Subsequently, A was offered further employment working with children at risk of crime which he found extremely rewarding:

'It's right up my street I have to admit. I get to work with kids, younger kids that are very much like me I would say, very much like me... I feel so privileged to be part of that. In terms of courses now, I'm also on an FA level 2 course, so that's great. You have to get a very good pass to be competent go on to do the UEFA B. So I know that there's a lot of work involved but I'm motivated and I'm inspired to get that'.

Despite A being clearly motivated and committed to making a positive change in his life he describes how such changes were facilitated, and made longer lasting through the opportunities opened up by the academy:

'I mean I'm speechless on the opportunities that have been given to me. I've come out of jail and Cricket for Change, and Justin, they just encouraged me to go out there and get so many things. And I've kind of got that self-belief now, that I can take on the world, and I am taking on the world, slowly but surely. If Justin wasn't there for me and he never led me to Cricket for Change, I think I would have struggled a lot more than I have... I would never know if I would have been caught in a rush, and all that self-reflecting that I did inside, I would have forgotten it'.

Although A recognises that his journey has not been entirely easy, for example when paid work was not available, he highlights how having opportunities made available to him and ongoing support from academy contacts has made it easier to resist negative influences when times have been hard:

'I did look at phone numbers that I shouldn't have been looking at thinking, ooh maybe, but then I kind of just held my nerve and thought, well no that's not even... I mean you're doing well, you've been doing well so why would you want to go down that route, you know'.

Over a year after his release, A continues to develop further affirmative personal goals for the future, with aspirations to study an Access to Higher Education course.

Case study - G

G participated in the first football academy and was released during the summer of 2010. After release he returned to hostel accommodation in London and quickly secured full time work in a telemarketing role:

'Things are going well. I wake up about 6am, go to work, finish at 6pm, go to my mum's house for some food and then go back to the hostel to sleep. It's alright'.

Two months after his release G partially attributed his success to the changes that came about from being part of the Academy:

'If I could go back in time and change things I wouldn't. I'd take six months off my sentence but I learnt a lot about myself, about other people, about life. The discipline was good, the different activities got us thinking about certain stuff. Being part of a team. I'm normally not very social, I like to be by myself but now obviously I have to work in a team for my job so it has helped me with that. I can listen to people better as well. I wouldn't express myself so well if it wasn't for those activities we did'.

G suggested that the most significant achievements gained from participating in the academy were related to his interpersonal skills, but he still acknowledged the sporting element which inspired him to try and maintain his sporting involvement after release:

'It helped my fitness too. I'm still trying to pursue football. I still intend to. I'd like to go on a trial but it's an overnight stay and I need to be back at the hostel each night for my curfew. It was nice to be part of it. I've got the Academy photos in my room'.

Despite G's successful reintegration into the community and employment he was subsequently recalled to prison in November 2010 and sentenced to a further 8 months in custody, though for a lesser offence (possession of cannabis) in comparison to this original charge. G was released again in Summer 2011 returning to a hostel in London. Once again he quickly secured employment as a driver, however was laid off several months later.

G is currently looking for employment and despite recognising this is a difficult time is maintaining motivation and a positive outlook:

'It's hard but I'm staying positive, just keep looking for work and that'.

G continues to have fond memories of the academy and the skills it provided him with, and is hoping to join a local football club when his curfew is raised. In the meantime G is enjoying spending time with his mother and girlfriend, whilst seeking employment.

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Portland Football Academy



If successful you will Start 30th November and pass out 14th March 2010

Opportunities available:

- The Academy is looking for **20** young people who are ready to commit to a life of sport
- Football Coaching, fitness and team construction delivered by the PE dept and Chelsea FC
- Football fixtures against community football teams
- Opportunities for ROTL (if eligible) in the community or work experience in the PE dept
- Life skills workshops delivered by a range of internal and external partners
- Emotion management, thinking skills and body awareness training
- FA Level 1 Coaching certificate, including first Aid, and child protection
- Holistic support focusing on your resettlement back into the community
- Links to employment, further education and training on release from custody



Who can join the Academy?

- Anyone who is on minimum standard regime
- Anyone in Portland for the duration of the Academy
- Anyone who's offence allows them to work in the community on release

(ask PE staff for details)



How can I join the Academy?

- Collect an application form located in the PE department.
- Once fully completed, hand it back into the PE department before 20th November
- Show a positive attitude on and off the pitch



2nd chance project