

The Centre for the Study of Crime, Criminalisation and Social Exclusion

Liverpool John Moores University

EU PREVENTION OF AND FIGHT AGAINST CRIME



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Reducing Reoffending Research Project

Action Learning Set 5 – The Hague, Netherlands, 5th February 2015

1. Introduction

The penultimate Action Learning Set (ALS) saw a return to The Hague and a city where the first gathering of partners was staged. With the venues of the 5th and 6th ALSs switched to allow the Life Change Programme in Italy the opportunity to fully bed itself in and recruit more participants the emphasis here was about allowing partners to delve deeper into the workings of the Safety House structure(s) in The Hague and provide opportunities for shared learning. With this objective in mind the emphasis was on showcasing Safety House projects that seek to reduce reoffending behaviour.

The first presentation focused upon the approach to aftercare support to recently released prisoners. The case was made for identifying and engaging individuals prior to their release from prison and building in support for their resettlement and reintegration needs. With evidence of success in terms of reoffending rates of those service users who have been engaged through the service it was a presentation of a model of working that encouraged partners to explore the possibility and potential of implementing similar approaches in their proactive intervention work. The very clear emphasis on sharing practice continued with the morning's second presentation of a case study analysis of Safety House intervention work. In addition to the presentation, shared learning was stimulated by small group discussions of how national partners' criminal justice systems would respond to the case study scenarios presented.

Throughout the lifetime of the project it has been evident (and reported in these ALS Reports) just how the challenge of responding to the threat of extremism has come to increasingly shape the Dutch delegation's working priorities. To that end, the third presentation of the day (shifting the original focus away from localised re-offending) explored the Safety House's response to restricting the growth of organisations within The Hague involved in the glorification and promotion of violently radical interpretations of Islam and to tackle the incidence of people leaving for (and returning from) conflict in Syria and other parts of the Middle East.

The fourth presentation from the LJMU research team and then the three update presentations from the national partners re-focused the project partners on the project objectives and drew attention to the need to record and document progress/impact. The LJMU research team outlined the approach taken to monitor the impact of the Life Change Programme (LCP) in Merseyside and introduced some brief case study analysis to demonstrate how available data will be used to illustrate the impact of the LCP on individual's offending profiles.

Following partners reflections on the progress that had been made since Action Learning Set 4 in Liverpool, the day concluded with discussions taking place about the end of project conference and the final report that will be produced from the research to help explore the practice sharing that has taken place. The concern was not only to ensure that both outputs – conference and report – accurately cover the experience of all partners involved in the project but that sufficient attention is paid to the lessons and learning others within the EU can take from this project.

2. Learning Activity: The Hague Approach to Aftercare for Ex-Offenders

Sabine Sniders from the Aftercare team (linked into The Safety House) gave an overview of the pre-release intervention work they undertake with prisoners. The two core objectives of the aftercare team are to prevent repeat offences and to increase employment and 5 identified principle issues were listed as needing to be addressed to help support ex-prisoners and simulate case work;

1. **Identity papers** – where appropriate financial support is provided to help access the services required to help acquire proof of identity;
2. **Accommodation/shelter** – at a base level this means provision of night shelter but also extends to support to secure longer term housing;
3. **Income from work and state benefits** - support provided to gain access to benefits where appropriate (via a fast-track system) but also to help access to employment where often partnership work with specialists in ex-offender employment is required;
4. **Debt counselling** – specialist support for those who need help in managing their financial affairs;
5. **Care** – the support needs can range from medical complaints/conditions, to drug intervention work, through to psychological help.

All services in the five key areas are provided in collaboration with service provider partners. This includes Probation Officers, Youth Intervention Team (notably in the Netherlands this is for people aged under twenty-seven years), Central Coordination Point who help with access to secure night shelter and medical care, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment services who arrange access to benefits and work and finally the Premature School Leavers unit who specifically support those who left formal education early to return to work. The project's operation was covered as follows;

- Procedurally, the Aftercare Team recognise that **the first 72 hours post release for prisoners are crucial in the prevention of reoffending**. To this end the team conduct weekly visits to two local prisons where they try to engage all prisoners aged eighteen and over from the Hague (and, as of 2014, the surrounding areas) who are situated in the two local prisons. As the prisoners leave the establishment, the Aftercare team immediately provide living essentials to reduce the likelihood of reoffending (including supermarket coupons, debit cards and travel coupons to get to the benefits office) as well as working with the Homelessness Team to secure housing.
- For 2014 **the Aftercare Team have demonstrably impacted on reoffending rates**, facilitated by their collaborative approach and partnership work. 25% of those interviewed by the Safety House in prison reoffend in the twelve months following their release as opposed to 60% reoffending rates for those who do not see them (all reoffending that results in a return to prison is counted in these results).
- **The Safety house is publicly funded and their provisions are statutory, but participation by ex-offenders is voluntary**. The aftercare team engage both short and long term prisoners and work with people who do and do not also have probation officer support. As in the UK, housing and support for addiction are two of the biggest problems experienced by the Aftercare team in attempting to support their service-users. The issue is made particularly acute in the Netherlands by the system of fines for those caught drinking on the street, as many are homeless and dependent. These fines accumulate resulting in further criminalisation of the cohort and imprisonment as they have no money.
- **The voluntary nature of intervention facilitates good relationships with and cooperation from their service-users**. In many instances, the contrasting but collaborative relationships of the Probation Officer as enforcer and the Safety House as service provider results in high levels of effectiveness in reducing reoffending.

3. Safety House Victim Centred Approach - Sharing Good Practice Across Borders

Staff from the Safety House (SH) worked through a case study to illustrate the nature of their intervention work. It was explained that most SH cases start with a referral from the probation service who raise concerns about one of their service users and in the interests of shared learning the following steps were identified to help explain the sequence of work that commences;

Stage One - a 'screening' to gather evidence and build a picture of the case. Information gather here includes offence type and context, action(s) already taken by the Probation Officer (to avoid duplication of work), and determining what has happened so far in the sentence. This can involve partners from the SH, Police, Public Prosecutor, Prison, Probation Services, mental health, youth care office. The case study was a serious crime and a complex case concerning a man who murdered his wife, was under influence of drugs, had learning difficulties and failed to understand the impact of his crime on the victim, their child or her family. Partners in the case were the Municipality (Council) and Aftercare team.

Stage Two - developing information on the case with regard to victims, the family and the offender's needs. In the case study, the offender was physically well, had accommodation available with his off-spring (who was his only support network) and no formal daytime activities or employment. The family of the victim had custody of his young child (who did not want contact with him) and were angry and fearful about the offender's release (the SH do not normally deal with victim families but in this case it was important to work with them to avoid new criminality as they were threatening the offender which was not helping them or him).

Stage Three - set short term goals of the intervention and develop a multi-agency reintegration plan. The goal in the case study was to achieve early release of the offender (to facilitate close monitoring, prescribed conditions and intervention to facilitate gradual reintegration) without generating unwanted public attention/unrest. Each partner is prescribed challenges and actions to facilitate achievement of the end goal. In this case the respective roles included: The Probation Service to work on getting the offender to face his crime; the Police to talk to the family of the offender; the judge to invoke an order to prevent the offender entering the area where the victim's family lived; the Youth Care Centre to provide support for the grandparents in raising the child, the Probation Service and Aftercare Team to jointly provide support and enforcement to ensure the offender complies with conditions; the municipality to find him a place to stay (as his daughter's house was too close to the victim's family); Aftercare Team to provide money for moving and travel, Forensic Clinical Services to help with finances and administration; the probation service to help access employment and a Mental Care Organisation to provide psychological intervention. Importantly time is taken to gauge the impact of the short term plan to explore levels of reoffending, offender engagement with services, to determine if there are any on-going drugs or alcohol concerns and to establish the individual's current accommodation and employment conditions.

Stage Four - longer term forward planning for the end of the sentence when formal intervention ends. In the case study this meant Probation arranging continued employment; the Aftercare Team organising benefits; Probation and the Municipality providing a 6 month voluntary programme of aftercare, the Municipality (Mayor) continuing the condition for the offender to stay away from the victim's family, and long terms psychiatric intervention from the Mental Health Team.

Final Stage - evaluate impact of long term intervention. In the case study, success was demonstrated in all outcomes: no reoffending or trouble with the police or family of the victim, the offender works as a volunteer within a used goods shop and values the social contact. He receives benefits and help with his finances and long-term treatment and help with addiction. The case will soon be closed but can be reopened as necessary meaning all active parties can call on the Safety House in future should further risk of reoffending arise.

The Action Learning Set split into mixed national groups at this point to consider how the case study would have been approached in the respective partner countries. The results are arranged by topic;

- **Sentencing and case management** - In the UK the offender would have received a life sentence (which could equally happen if this was classed as manslaughter since the man was intoxicated and has no recollection of the event), compared to the actual sentence in the Netherlands of 12 years, released after 7 for good behaviour and completion of specified programmes in the prison. Similarly in the UK the offender would only be released once they had completed set programmes in the prison, but additionally following an assessment at which all professionals (including the prison governor and probation officer) agree to the disposal. The presence of a young child in the case, the learning difficulties and the related lack of remorse would place this case as high or very high risk, meaning custody time would be prolonged in the UK until sufficient interventions have been undertaken to ensure that risk is manageable in the community. This could have been similar in the Netherlands had the courts considered that the man was not 'treatable' due to the level of learning disability as such cases are generally kept in secure accommodation indefinitely. In the UK, licence would continue for life (albeit that contact reduces significantly if it is assessed that risk has significantly reduced), unlike the six month period received in the Netherlands. In Italy the sentence for the murder would have been long term imprisonment, and on release (assuming the person was over 25 years of age) there would be no provision apart from Social Services, but only in areas which have this service. In areas without Social Services offenders simply serve longer in prison.
- **Balance of public protection and offender need** - In the UK the offender would be subject to MAPPA (multi agency public protection arrangements) which take a more restrictive approach than the rehabilitative strategy employed in the Netherlands: the emphasis is more on public protection than offender need. MAPPA arrangements are prescribed by a set agenda, rather than the more flexible approach in the Netherlands (although since the offence was committed the stringency of conditions and imposed statutory probation for such cases has increased).
- **Housing** - In the UK the offender would always be released to a probation hostel for 6-12 months before other housing arrangements were considered. Both the UK and the Netherlands shared similar difficulties in that there is a lack of housing and particularly for ex-offenders. In the Netherlands this difficulty is principally caused by structural issues in that offenders cannot afford private housing, and this is compounded by the fact that there is a lack of social housing and what is available has up to seven year waiting lists.
- **Approach to victims** - In the UK, MAPPA arrangements makes it statutory under the Victims Charter to work with the victim's families, which carries the same responsibilities as in Netherlands law (i.e. to inform families and consult them around release dates). In the UK there would have to be a Domestic Homicide Review by an independent reviewer (which goes to the Home Office) to consider the interventions of all parties and work out whether the case was predictable or preventable.
- **Funding** - In the UK, funding for the Probation comes from the Ministry of Justice (there is no specific budget for the social care aspects), whereas in the Netherlands the intervention was funded by the Urban Security Unit (part of the Municipality) which provides a budget for such work to the Aftercare Team at the Safety House. The latter is done because the municipality recognises that such investment is offset by reductions in the amount of benefit the offender is likely to draw over his lifetime.
- **Media coverage** - There were differences between the UK and Netherlands in terms of media coverage in that the former would have been likely to draw significant attention, whereas in the latter, the Mayor asked the family not to talk to the press meaning that coverage was limited.

4. Safety House Approach to Countering Extremism

Hatice Durmaz and Sjoerd van der Luijt gave an overview of drivers behind the establishment of project work taking place in the Safety House (SH) in response to the increase challenges posed by radical Islamic extremist groups. The presentation outlined the ambition and objective(s) of the project work; their methodology of working; and identified developments in their field of working. The delegates then discussed the issues raised by the presentation and the key emerging themes from those exchanges are listed below:

- **Goals and target group** - The aim of the project work is to develop a case management approach that contributes to decreasing the terrorist threat through the weakening of the Jihadist movement in The Hague. The target group is individuals with a Jihadist conviction who have intentions of travelling to Syria or Iraq (potential Jihadist traveller), have travelled to Syria or Iraq, have returned from Syria or Iraq and/or are recruiters and/or facilitators.
- **The local approach** – As discussed earlier, the first official notice received from the General Intelligence and Security Service in the Netherlands identifying a potential threat from Jihadists, especially those returning from those areas engaged in the conflict came in July 2012. This development raised a number of issues and challenges for the authorities because, as with most European countries, there was a lack of information in terms of how many individuals were involved and what messages they had received from other extremists. A range of factors had to be considered including how traumatised is the individual following their experience of been involved in a conflict situation? What risk does the individual pose to others in the community?

Working together, the Mayor and representatives from the municipalities and Public Prosecutions Department developed an information sharing agreement which given the status of the public officials involved gave legitimacy to the process. A programme of action was established in 2015 and is funded until 2019. It is targeted at potential Jihadist travellers and detainees and those who are sympathetic to this cause. The main focus of the programme is on gathering intelligence and intervening in an appropriate manner. The approach builds on the policy of the prevention of polarisation, radicalism and Jihadism already adopted in The Hague and is developed around the following four strands:

1. Networks and communication
2. Knowledge and skills
3. Social resilience
4. Approach with a personal focus

- **Methodology** - Once an individual has been identified as potentially falling within the remit of the target group a meeting is scheduled by a process director and relevant professionals. The success of the approach is about building cooperation at both the local, regional and national levels. A guiding principle to the work is that it is preventative and not solely repressive in its outcomes. The working method adopted consists of the following:

- Case discussion (individual and family focussed plan of action)
- Alignment discussion (Prioritizing, qualitative and quantitative data)
- Tactical discussion (Develop regional cooperation)
- Triangulation (Mayor, police, public prosecutor)

Due to the growth in the number of cases identified in the target group a dynamic assessment framework has been developed by the professionals involved and tested on existing cases. This provides an objective means of building up a profile of the individual and supports planning suitable interventions with the partners. There are 54 risk factors identified which cover behavioural aspects, terms of reference, personality and personal biography. The framework is also reactive to international developments.

- **Developments** – Two case studies were then introduced to the group that helped to highlight the challenges involved in working with the target groups:
 - The first case study concerned an individual involved in recruiting others to the Jihadist case. Here the emphasis was on disrupting the individual's activities through restricting their income, exploring their accommodation status, exploring their involvement in criminal activity and researching assistance for children.
 - The second case study involved an individual returning from the conflict, the approach was more supportive and focussed on providing practical assistance and stabilising their situation to help with their re-socialization but it also involved an element of control also. Practical assistance with housing and employment was provided, as was psychological support, help with benefits and rehabilitation advice. The element of control came with establishing contact with the police and examining the individual's involvement in criminal activity.

The case studies helped the presenters establish the 4 key areas for development in the strategy as 1) maintaining and developing good links at the local, regional, national and international levels; 2) ensuring agencies are constantly developing and updating their intelligence sources and training in this fluid and evolving climate; 3) developing appropriate mental health provision to respond to the large percentages of people involved in extremist activities identified as having some form of mental health problem (estimated at 60%) and 4) increasing the involvement of the judiciary to ensure that legal safeguards are adhered to.

- In the **discussion** that followed the presentation, the following points were raised;
 - The system employed for working with the target group was developed for a different offending population (i.e. to reduce reoffending amongst prolific offenders). This presents a new set of challenges as many of the individuals involved are not already in the criminal justice system and in some cases haven't committed an offence;
 - The system is dependent on the individual's voluntary cooperation and only works because most individuals are willing to cooperate and accept the services provided for re-socialization;
 - Those most at risk of radicalisation in The Hague fall within the 15-27 age group but identifying individuals is a complex process. At present this is mainly done through police intelligence and the application of a dynamic risk assessment tool by the Municipality in respect of those individuals who exhibit significant signs of radicalisation. At the time of the presentation the tool had only been used in several dozen cases. The tool is not used for far-right and other extremist groups which Knowsley delegates felt compromised the tool's ability to be used on Merseyside;
 - In the absence of 'a standard profile' of those who engage in extremist activities, professionals have to be alert to the dangers of stereotyping individuals and indeed of disadvantaging whole social groups;
 - In England and Wales there is a duty on the police to produce a counter-terrorism profile to identify potential risks so that resources can be targeted appropriately and as the ALS meetings best/good practice has covered previously (from the UK experience) networking and liaison with agencies and Muslim communities is essential;
 - Concerns were raised about the role of social media as a mechanism to recruit vulnerable people.

5. Presentation by LJMU on Evaluation

Representatives from the LJMU research team gave an overview of the evaluation (data collection and analysis) to date in Knowsley.

- With a clear focus on the overall and binding project objectives and outcomes, the presentation began with a reiteration of the original planned agenda for research activity to evaluate the impact of the Life Change Programme. The evaluation of the Life Change Programme was intended to include both a process evaluation of the programme and baseline data on reoffending rates but, as previous ALS sessions and reports have covered, these efforts have been thwarted by the delay in implementing a case management system; issues around the completion of the progress inventory forms; and the general destabilising of the climate of offender management in England and Wales induced by the widespread changes taking hold under the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda (namely the splitting of the probation service and devolving of the bulk of probation work to newly established and privately run Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs)). This latter issue has impacted upon the number of cases being referred into the Life Change Programme and at times has made identifying the lead professional/practitioner on cases difficult;
- The lack of fully coherent case management system has compromised the ability to accumulate data on reoffending and 'pathways' (i.e. interventions from statutory and third sector agencies who are partners in Integrated Offender Management) whilst the tailing off in the completions of the bespoke project progress inventories has not generated the anticipated basic social impact measurements. The result is that analysis is proving to be problematic due to broad differences in interventions (i.e. each offender receives a range of services meaning causality behind changes in offending rates are almost impossible to demonstrate). To seek to address the shortfall in data generation the evaluation team has adopted two strategies;
 - 1) *to conduct a process evaluation of the Life Change Programme and by extension increase knowledge on policy transferability through detailed consideration of the process, mechanisms and outcomes of the intervention.* The Life Change has been running in HMP Liverpool and the evaluation team have undertaken focus groups with each cohort to explore both current impacts, and longer term impacts for the earlier cohorts. This has included encouraging participants to reflect on aspects of the programme curriculum and delivery that need development, that work well, and to explore aspects of the course design that cover such things as the frequency/intensity of sessions, one compared to two facilitators, compelled versus voluntary engagement, different settings and levels of support from the prison, the impact of facilitator background (ex-offender versus none) and the impact of different members on the group dynamic (for example those with different categories of offending history, those from one versus a range of geographical locations, those nearing the end of their sentence versus far off). The evaluation includes this detailed description of context both to contextualise the findings as well as to facilitate a more nuanced understanding for those using the evaluation so that they can make considered decisions on what may (or may not) work in their own context;
 - 2) *the use of case studies to delve deeper into individual offending profiles before, during and after involvement with the Life Change Programme.* The use of case studies to achieve this is vital as change can be short term (i.e. limited to the period of contact with MALS) but it is important to contextualise to demonstrate the importance of intervention even if outcome is short of full desistance. Case studies rather than simple outcome evaluation are sensitive enough to illustrate that even reductions in offending

severity or regularity mean potentially high cost savings (as the offenders are ordinarily so prolific), and the fact that the intervention may have sown seeds for longer term change. This process has involved the construction of detailed case histories of 15 offenders to date (those with most exposure to MALS intervention have been selected so far). The case studies are constructed from arrest, conviction and prison data, and intervention data from MALS. For each case, offending data is tracked back three years from the date of first contact with MALS to get a baseline offending rate. This is mapped against MALS intervention dates to evaluate impact. Seven pathways data (i.e. interventions from other agencies) data would also offer context to the reoffending data, although this is currently proving difficult as there is currently no computer system which collates such information (and many of those who access MALS are not included in the IOM cohort so have no data on the Police's CORVUS system). The case study process requires complex case tracking, triangulating data from a minimum of six sources - CORVUS (IOM offender database, including 7 pathways data); NICHE (Merseyside wide but each force has their own which contains all police intelligence); Police National Computer (all arrests and sentences); PINS (for imprisonment records); the old Prolific Offender Programme database (for those who never transferred to CORVUS through inactivity at the time of the system changeover and MAPPA paper files for some clients).

- Two examples of the case study representations were presented, to demonstrate the current capacity of the data. A number of themes emerged from the analysis and follow-up discussions;
 - Notably in both cases there were reductions in either incidence or severity of offending in the periods around which they had contact with MALS. In the discussion that followed the presentation, the needs of commissioners were highlighted in terms of requiring certainty that change is attributable to the Life Change programme itself, MALS input in terms of mentoring, other interventions from Probation, Police or other partner agencies or indeed age curve impacts or other personal life incidents. The difficulty of the demand for certainty is demonstrated by the complexity of both cases, each of whom had experienced victimisation themselves and a range of other events in their personal lives as well as a broad range of interventions from partner agencies around housing, employment and so on.
 - The lack of centralised and coordinated data management means accessing this information and being able to present it in the case study representations is problematic. Even with such data in place, proving causality of impacts on offending behaviour is challenging. It was recognised that follow-up interviews with service users may go some way to achieving this, but these are not objective measures as incidents are interpreted differently by different individuals in different contexts.
 - It was noted that in trying to measure intervention impacts, it was appropriate that the dates used in the case studies were the offending dates rather than the conviction dates as there is a significant time lapse between the two. There was a discussion on appropriate measures of reoffending and it was confirmed that that eventually there will be national measures for reoffending rates in the UK (due to the need for CRCs) to demonstrate effectiveness due to Payment by Results) which are most likely to mirror those of the project in using reconviction data.
 - It was recognised that CRCs will have similar difficulties to the project in demonstrating the extent to which change is attributable to the programme as opposed to other life factors or other interventions.

6. Update Presentation from MALS and Knowsley

This workshop activity was designed to allow delegates to report back on progress related to reducing reoffending within the three jurisdictions. The presentation from the UK delegates focused on the work of MALS and the Life Change Programme;

- A total of eight programmes have now been delivered in community and custodial settings (with the majority (six) in the custodial setting). In total seventy-six people have now completed the LCP.
- More recently, MALS have extended their reach via the LCP into HMP Kennet, a category D prison on Merseyside, where an iteration of the LCP has been conducted to date.
- In terms of data management, MALS have streamlined their data capture systems on their clients through the implementation of a new user-friendly database.
- MALS have also gained approved mentoring status from the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation which allows MALS to use the Foundation's kite mark on its website and materials which further cements the credibility of MALS and the mentoring they deliver.

In recent months, the volatility of the climate in HMP Liverpool and on-going staffing issues in the face of declining resources within the prison has delayed arrangements for the next LCP programme. However it was reported that these logistical difficulties had now been overcome for the next cohort but in the medium to long term it is clear that these deep-seated problems facing the criminal justice system in the UK and manifest within the prison system in the form of increasing episodes of violence between inmates and between inmates and officers compounded further by staffing shortages poses a significant challenge to the planning of future LCPs in custodial settings.

A more streamlined and systematic approach to how MALS works with the National Probation Service (NPS) and the CRC is required and the update presentation presented flow diagrams to show how this might be operationalised in future in terms of mentoring and the LCP. Pivotal to this new set of working arrangements is ongoing communication with the CRC and NPS and the relevant offender manager for an LCP or mentoring nominee. Equally, processes for reporting across and up were also clearly stipulated along with an action plan for troubleshooting problems (whether they originate with probation staff, mentee, volunteer mentors etc.) and finding an effective resolution. The update presentation by MALS concluded with an illustration in the form of client testimonials received from the latest LCP cohort at HMP Kennet. There was a call from around the table as to whether these letters might be made available to the offender managers so they can see the impact on and personal reflection by service users which was portrayed vividly in the letters

7. Update from ERI

The ERI update presentation briefly outlined the latest figures on participation in the Italian LCP;

- Currently eighteen ex-offenders have been involved in the programme divided between two iterations of the programme. Both of these groups have included both men and women.
- The ERI managed to persuade most of the first cohort to stay on as mentors for the second cohort. What was distinctive about the second cohort was their high levels of social isolation compounded further by their age profile (typically around fifty years old).
- The ability to make progress with the LCP cohorts and to achieve an element of sustainability with the participants is hampered seriously by the Italian economic situation which means employment and jobs are few and far between and the terrain simply gets harder for those who have a criminal record. In addition, the LCP received little or no financial backing from the state and its closest state institutions, Social Services, are also bedevilled by funding shortages.

- In terms of employment, the ERI have attempted to raise awareness of the benefits of employment by arranging a talk around the skills required to get a job and practical demonstration from the managing director of one of the region's largest waste disposal companies. Though real opportunities to get employment in this sector are a distant prospect for LCP participants owing to now strict regulation in employee recruitment following years of corruption and nepotism.

As an organic and radical response to the dearth of suitable employment opportunities, members of the second LCP group have turned to self-employment and the pooling of their skills. With the help of the ERI in developing their ideas and a business plan, members of both the first and second LCPs have a unique opportunity forthcoming to pitch their idea to one of the country's largest banks to gain funding. Developing the germ of a business idea and now having the chance to get that business idea funded as raised the self-esteem of the group and gone some way towards breaking down the social isolation/exclusion that some members feel.

The ERI presentation went on to raise some fundamental questions around how we measure the success of an intervention, what counts as desistance, and how this can be evaluated. The ERI felt full participation in the LCP could be an indicator of success because the programme is voluntary and it was made clear to participants at the outset that there was no obligation upon them to stay with it. Securing employment could also count as an indicator of success a job despite the fact that the ex-offenders will still require ongoing support. Given the varied complexity of the people that the ERI deals with (a similar situation prevails for the LCP in Knowsley) a case study approach must be a key instrument in the toolkit for capturing participants' chaotic lives and the incremental changes in people's lifestyles and behaviours or the impact of small interventions. Questions were raised about the point at which the interventions should stop and indeed whether they can ever really be stopped for some people. This raises a broader and more difficult question about when evaluation begins and more crucially when it ends.

8. Update from The Hague

The update from the host delegates in The Hague centred upon an issue which was discussed at some length earlier in the day, that of Jihadist fighters and anti-extremism (please see section 4). The Safety House's approach to Jihadism is remarkably different from any work they have undertaken before, centring on prevention, risk identification and risk management. This means the Safety House has shifted markedly from its previously core focus on tackling reoffending through multi-agency safeguarding. Nonetheless the Safety House has applied a crisis solution model (BOB) previously used in the area of offending. This model involves collecting all the information available before attempting to undertake any actions and implement any plans. Ways of working around the new focus on Jihadism is not without teething problems in terms of inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional practices. Growing professionalization in inter-agency working is helpful but not a complete solution. For example, Den Haag needs to work co-operatively with surrounding smaller cities and these small municipalities need to contribute to the cost of this new initiative. However pricing the unit costs of the varied interventions is a very difficult task and communicating the complexity of this to neighbouring municipalities has proved challenging.

9. Summing Up, Closing Remarks

- **The ambition and objective(s) for ALS 6**

The final action learning set is scheduled to take place in Turin (9-11 September 2015). The ERI will lead on the project and will circulate ideas about how they intend to schedule the meeting beforehand. The overarching focus of the day will be the main emerging themes for the project (taken from the previous 5 action learning set reports) as a precursor to identifying the potential shape of the final report.

- **End of project conference**

Paula Sumner outlined the program for the conference to be held on the 19 November 2015 in Liverpool. It is hoped that around 250 academics, practitioners and other interested parties will attend from across Europe. The partners from Italy and The Hague have been asked to nominate possible contributors by 31 March 2015 so the conference agenda can be formalised.

A key part of the final conference will be how those who attend are made aware of the on-going work to reduce reoffending within the three jurisdictions and to explore the lessons the different partners have learned from the experience of working collaboratively this past three years. To that end the agreed conference structure has a time set aside for three 10-minute videos that will enable the partners to showcase their work and allow attendees to generate a real understanding and appreciation of the work taking place in Knowsley, The Hague and Turin through short, concise and visually stimulating presentations by the partners themselves. The medium of self-made video/DVD presentations allows partners great control and flexibility in how they project their voice and their operations to the audience.

In the interests of the learning objectives for the conference and in the interests of ensuring the content delivered on the day is consistent and coherent, there are below a set of prompts that should be used to help structure the presentations that are produced. As collectively agreed, these presentations help explore the broad areas of respective partner's **roles** in reducing reoffending; the challenges they feel they experience/overcome in working towards reducing reoffending; and then, in respect of involvement in the project, the **highlights** of working with international criminal justice partners; the **learning** that partners feel they have taken from the project, and then what they feel the **sustainable outcomes** are for their efforts to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. However, recognising that the interventions featured from the three partners areas are funded, structured and operate very differently, each national partner have their own bespoke prompts built around the core themes stated above.

Though each national partner has prompts that should be followed to help keep the presentations ordered and purposeful, the actual design, character, and delivery of these video/DVD presentations is very much left to national partners to decide upon. As a base line the videos could be a simple engagement of speaking directly to the camera and answering the set prompts. However national partners are encouraged to use creative freedom to help visually capture the nature of their work/organisation to help attendees develop a more complete understanding of the intervention work being analysed.

The images may include direct address to camera from MALS staff and potentially someone who has been through the LCP in answer to the questions posed. The images may also be of the LCP being delivered in prison, Anthony/Clare accompanying service users to appointments or food banks for example.

- Who are MALS and what work are they involved in to reduce reoffending?
- What works best in reducing the likelihood of those leaving prison reoffending again?
- What barriers do you feel mentoring programmes like yours need help to overcome to improve their ability to reduce reoffending?
- How transferable do you feel the LCP is to other EU members?
- Drawing upon your experience as a partner in the Reducing Reoffending project how realistic is the possibility of international criminal justice policy transfer (try to be as explicit as possible in identifying the opportunities for and barriers against policy transfer to help the audience understand the full context of making policy transfer happen)?
- What will be the key learning you'll take from your involvement as partner in the Reducing Reoffending project?

The visual image could include Safety House staff speaking to camera in response to these questions and it may be that at times their answers/narration can take place against the back drop of pictures of multi-agency meetings and of liaising with the individuals they are seeking to develop interventions for at the Safety House.

- What is the Safety House and how does it operate to reduce reoffending?
- What works best in reducing the likelihood of those leaving prison reoffending again?
- What barriers do you feel multi-agency interventions like yours need help to overcome to improve their ability to reduce reoffending?
- Drawing upon your experience as a partner in the Reducing Reoffending project how realistic is the possibility of international criminal justice policy transfer (try to be as explicit as possible in identifying the opportunities for and barriers against policy transfer to help the audience understand the full context of making policy transfer happen)?
- What will be the key learning you'll take from your involvement as partner in the Reducing Reoffending project?

The use of 'to camera' contributions from staff will help give a feel for who ERI are and what they do. As with MALS it may be that we hear from people who've been through the programme and it also may be that there is the potential to have sight of the LCP in action.

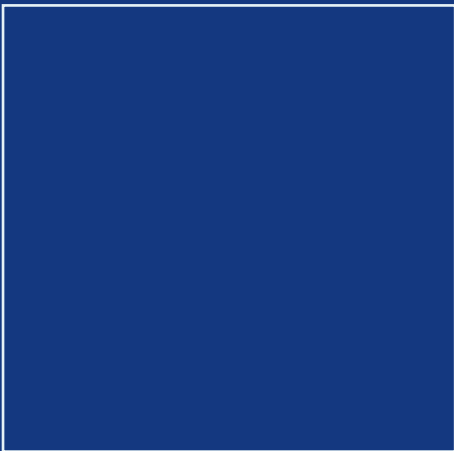
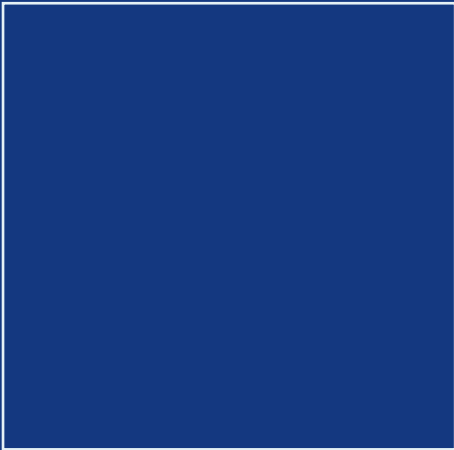
- What is the ERI and how does it operate to reduce reoffending?
- What works best in reducing the likelihood of those leaving prison reoffending again?
- What barriers do you think third sector/non-statutory interventions like yours need help to overcome to improve their ability to reduce reoffending?
- Drawing upon your experience as a partner in the Reducing Reoffending project how successful has the introduction of the LCP been?
- What do you think the future holds for the LCP in Italy, will its delivery be sustained?
- Drawing upon your experience as a partner in the Reducing Reoffending project how realistic is the possibility of international criminal justice policy transfer (try to be as explicit as possible in identifying the opportunities for and barriers against policy transfer to help the audience understand the full context of making policy transfer happen)?
- What will be the key learning you'll take from your involvement as partner in the Reducing Reoffending project?

10. Appendix 1: Participants

All participants in the Action Learning Set were provided with information sheets about the European Reoffending Research Project and consent forms were completed.

Morning session attendees were:

- Hans Metzmakers – Department of Public Order and Safety, The Hague
- Sjoerd van der Luijt - Safety House , The Hague
- Heidie Pols - Safety House, The Hague
- Sabine Sniders – Aftercare Team, Safety House, The Hague
- Hatice Durmaz – Safety House, The Hague
- Iskender Forioso – Researcher, European Research Institute
- Federico Floris – Practitioner, European Research Institute
- Paula Sumner – Manager of Community Safety Services (including KIOM and Domestic Violence Victim Groups), Knowsley Borough Council, UK
- Paul Farrar – Inspector, Merseyside Police, UK
- Yvonne Mason – Temporary Project Coordinator, Knowsley Borough Council, UK
- Stephanie Richmond – Probation Officer, National Probation Service, UK
- Peter Hughes – Probation Officer, Merseyside Community Rehabilitation Company, UK
- Clare Donohue - MALS manager, Merseyside, UK
- Anthony Evans – MALS , Merseyside, UK
- Giles Barrett, Helen Beckett Wilson, Matthew Millings and Lol Burke, Liverpool John Moores University, UK



Contact Us

If you would like to find out more about The Centre for the Study of Crime, Criminalisation and Social Exclusion and how we can help you organisation meet its research, training and information needs, please visit our website:
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