Horticulture, hypermasculinity and mental wellbeing: the connections in a male prison context.

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Central Lancashire

September 2019

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the interconnections between horticulture, hypermasculinity and mental wellbeing. It focusses on male prisoners and staff experiences of engaging with a North West horticulture programme called Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP) in a category B prison in North West England. The study forms part of a wider, regional programme aiming to tackle health inequalities amongst various population groups funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). Masculinities and horticulture are both well-researched areas within prison settings in particular; therefore this thesis provides an original contribution to knowledge by combining the two themes and exploring the interconnections.

The study was underpinned by a social constructionist epistemology and informed by symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry. In terms of methodology the research utilised a critical ethnographic approach using a range of qualitative data collection methods: active participant observation, guided conversations and individual in-depth interviews. Using a critical lens for the study allowed the research not only to explore 'what is' but also 'what could be' within the criminal justice system.

The main period of data collection was conducted over a 17 week time frame, with a sample of 34 prisoners and seven members of staff. The critical ethnographic approach and combination of methods used generated rich data capturing the lived experiences, personal journeys and stories of those involved in GOOP – revealing findings based on complex meanings and interpretations.

The findings contribute to knowledge and understanding of the importance of engaging in horticulture with particular reference to community, trust, green environments, biophilic design, experiencing hope and reducing hypermasculine behaviours through responsibilities, nurturing and the presence of females. With GOOP offering a small, community-like atmosphere within prison, this invoked trust, friendships and positive interactions between prisoners and staff. The hypermasculine norms so often prevalent in prisons were notably absent on GOOP, with connections made between caring for plants, healthily re-establishing the male role and interacting with females. The

range of tasks available for GOOP prisoners offered opportunities for prisoners to develop personally and socially, a chance to improve their mental wellbeing with specific mental illnesses addressed. This research offers an original contribution to knowledge as it combines three highly researched concepts; hypermasculinity, horticulture and mental wellbeing with pertinent connections established through reductions in hypermasculine behaviour when interacting with nature. It highlights the potential for positive masculinities in prison, the creation of community through horticulture and, as a result, the enhancement in mental wellbeing.

The recognition and reach of GOOP horticulture programmes is growing, with increasing interest in applying the programme in regions outside of the North West. This highlights the relevance and significance of the research findings and their potential to impact future policy and practice. Recommendations arising from the findings – for example, working outside in the fresh air, creating a small community and encouraging creativity – will be shared with relevant stakeholders within the GOOP network and wider prison system to ensure reach and enable the impact of the research is maximised.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Conducting this research project has, overall, been a fantastic experience however the journey of completing a doctoral thesis does not come without challenging moments. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those who helped make it possible and to whom I am greatly indebted. First and foremost, huge thanks must go to my incredibly supportive supervisors, Prof. Mark Dooris, Dr. Michelle Baybutt and Dr. Alan Farrier. Your advice, suggestions and encouragement throughout the study have been invaluable and made the PhD experience all the more enjoyable. I've loved working with you all for the last three years or so and will forever be grateful for this opportunity.

Secondly, thanks must go to the National Institute for Health Research Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care North West Coast (NIHR CLAHRC NWC) for funding this research which is one of many studentships in the quest to reduce health inequalities in the North West. It's been a privilege to be just a small part of such important research.

I am also extremely grateful to Alan Scott (CBE, Executive Director, HMPPS Public Sector Prisons – North), John Hewitson (former Governing Governor) and Steve Lawrence (current Governing Governor) for approving and supporting this research. Also, particular thanks must go to the horticulture staff, for your continuous encouragement, invaluable advice, for making the data collection period so much fun and for teaching me to make a 'proper' brew…!

Further, I am especially appreciative to all those on GOOP who participated in my research. Obviously, their identities cannot be disclosed due to the need for confidentiality and anonymity, but without their openness, honesty, respect and cooperation, for and with me and my research, and the commitment to the horticultural work, this study would not have been possible. Listening to their thoughts, life stories and experiences in prison was a complete privilege and I hope that this thesis has done them justice, or will help in some way.

Thank you to Steph, Alison, Naoimh, Amy and Martin; all fellow PhD students, albeit in very different subject areas, who have provided support in the form of

shared rants and frustrations about completing a PhD! It's a bonus to have people around who understand the process and lend an empathetic ear.

Ste – in weeks which involved seemingly endless writing, watching Corrie or The Inbetweeners with you for half an hour made everything better! You won't want anything sentimental so, simply, thanks for being there, you're the best.

Huge thanks to Nessa for being the most affectionate dog in the world, providing welcome distractions during much needed breaks and endless cuddles.

Last, but not least, my parents. A few words of acknowledgement could never be enough but thank you for always remaining so loving, reassuring and supportive in everything I've chosen to do. Mum: thanks for your honest advice, always listening and for being the best baker ever - having your bread and butter pudding to look forward to at the end of a writing day really kept me going. Dad: thanks for all the tea and coffee, football chats and for being my proof reader – it saved me great expense; so drinks are on me from now on. Love you both loads.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ART	Attention Restorative Theory
CLAHRC	Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care
CRCs	Community Rehabilitation Companies
DoH	Department of Health
GOOP	Greener on the Outside: For Prisons
HIMM	Health, Illness, Men and Masculinities
HiPP	Health in Prisons Programme
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMPS	Her Majesty's Prison Service
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IEP	Incentives and Earned Privileges
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NHS	National Health Service
NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NOMIS	National Offender Management Information Service
NPS	National Probation Service
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OCD	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
PPT	Personal Protection Techniques
PE	Physical Education
PSI	Prison Service Instructions
ROTL	Released on Temporary License
SRT	Stress Reduction Theory
UCLan	University of Central Lancashire
WHO	World Health Organisation
YOI	Young Offenders' Institute

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Introduction

This thesis focuses on a therapeutic horticultural project in a North West Category B prison establishment for men. It explores the connections and interactions between horticulture, hypermasculinity and mental wellbeing in the context of the selected male prison, and aims to contribute to the growing field of research about how male prisoners' mental health and wellbeing can be addressed. Using active participant observation and individual in-depth interviews, a rich, detailed picture has been created of both prisoners' and staff's experiences and interactions whilst engaging with nature and green spaces within prison.

This chapter firstly outlines the research problem, providing a rationale as to why this study was necessary. It highlights the health inequalities faced by male prisoners, how adopting a masculine persona can influence their health and the role horticulture and green spaces can play in mediating such behaviours and attitudes. Secondly, the chapter discusses the funding and wider scope of the research, with a specific focus on health inequalities followed by a description of the horticultural project and its position within the selected prison research site. Thirdly, it provides an autobiographical section to explain my background in academia and what led me to complete such a research study. Finally, an overview of the thesis is outlined with a description of what each chapter contains.

It is also important to acknowledge the terminology at this early stage of the thesis with regards to how participants will be described and referred to. Over recent years, attention has been drawn to how we refer to those held in custodial settings with debates over whether this should be prisoners, people in prison or offenders (Mulholland, 2015). It has been argued that by utilising the phrase 'people in prison' this avoids issues of dehumanisation, reminding others they are still people regardless of their crime (Public Health England, 2018). Whilst the humane argument is understood and considered, for the purpose of

this research participants will be referred to as either 'prisoners' or 'staff' in order to differentiate. By using the phrase 'people in prison' this may refer to prisoners, staff or visitors as there was a need to distinguish between those serving a sentence in prison and those employed to work for and with the prison service.

The Research Problem

Health in Prison

It has become widely accepted that the health and wellbeing of prisoners is significantly worse than that of the wider population and is undoubtedly in need of further attention (Woodall and Dixey, 2017). The number of prisoners from communities where drug use is prevalent, where there is excessive alcohol consumption, low income and general social deprivation, is overwhelming (Plugge et al., 2017). This not only influences the health of prisoners on entry to custody but also exacerbates the unhealthy nature of prisons themselves, with arguments implying that prisons are the worst places to send people when considering health (de Viggiani, 2007).

Health is of huge concern in custodial settings rife with communicable diseases (Møller et al., 2007). If such physical health concerns are not addressed in prison, then prisoners will return to the community with them and the conditions are likely to spread through risky behaviours (Tavoschi et al., 2018). Further, prisons are places of high social and health inequalities and it is estimated that 90% of the prison population in England and Wales have at least one mental health or substance related disorder (Jack et al., 2018). Mental wellbeing has been defined as a state in which each person can cope with stresses, work fruitfully and contribute to your community (Stephan, 2018). In the case of this research, this would be dealing with imprisonment, contributing positively to the horticulture project and enhancing the community.

Over recent years, budgetary constraints, austerity and understaffing in prisons have all contributed to an increase in suicide, self-harm and diagnosis of mental illnesses (Ismail and de Viggiani, 2017; Limb, 2017). Interventions including

physical treatments, psychological therapies and charity involvement through Samaritans have all been implemented in an attempt to improve mental health and wellbeing in prison (Fazel et al., 2016) but governmental and financial instabilities have rendered this challenging. Furthermore, creative interventions such as music-based therapy to enhance mental wellbeing have been trialled in some prisons with positive outcomes (Daykin et al., 2017) as have sport-based programmes for both physical and psychological behaviour change (Woods et al., 2017). Although an acceptance of mental ill-health is more prevalent and services are better equipped than ever to identify such issues (Pilgrim, 2017), problems still remain and are worsening (Yi et al., 2017). One argument is that despite the understanding of mental health, the right resources are not always available and/or commissioned for people in prison, or unavailable between prison and community (Watson and van der Meulen, 2018). Therefore, it is valuable to increase the amount of research in this field.

Men and Masculinities in Prison

Men comprise approximately 95% of the prison population across England and Wales (Ministry of Justice; MoJ, 2017) However, it has been argued that the research and policy discourse tend to prioritise women and specific sub-sections of the population, such as young offenders and minority ethnic groups (Sloan, 2018). Within society as a whole, men are seemingly reluctant to seek help for mental health problems that are now so prevalent in contemporary culture (Appleby et al., 2017); however, for prisoners this problem is exacerbated because of the intensity that exists in a male dominated setting. Men are renowned for being unwilling to accept support for mental ill-health, which remains one of the last great taboos in our society (Conrad and White, 2018). This partially derives from masculine norms and expectations of internalizing emotions through fear of appearing weak (McDermott et al., 2016). Unsurprisingly, the problem of masculinity is heightened whilst in prison, as the high number of men incarcerated in close proximity to one another, jostling for a position at the top of the hierarchy, renders the environment hypermasculine (Toch, 1998). Male prisoners face the challenge of losing their liberties and internally battling mental health problems as well as maintaining the pretence of

being strong men. As a result, male prisoners' behaviours can become increasingly violent, aggressive and risk-taking as they seek to affirm themselves as 'not to be messed with' and 'strong enough to survive' whilst in prison (Butler, 2008, Doude, 2014; Karp, 2010). Hypermasculinities can therefore be considered a social determinant of men's health, particularly in prisons, and consequently it has recently been suggested that future clinical practices tackling men's health should follow a masculinities model of health care that is gender sensitive and diverse for all men (Seidler et al., 2018).

The foundation of said model, however, is yet to be authenticated; therefore further research investigating what works for men and mental health is essential for informing future practices.

For the purpose of this research, the word hypermasculinity is used to represent the male behaviour aspect of the study. It could be argued that the term 'hypermasculine' presents toxic male behaviours at the most extreme level which may not necessarily be the case for all male prisoners (Dolovich, 2018). However, given the breadth of research and media suggestions regarding all-male prison settings and the evidence of bitterness, gangs and toxic behaviours, I thought it was appropriate to assume that the prison environment was hypermasculinised and to research how horticulture could offer opportunities to mediate hypermasculine behaviour, following evidence of change in other respects. Further, masculinities and such behaviours can also be considered healthy or, on the other hand, using masculine behaviour as a coping strategy as illustrated through studies with religion (Micklethwaite and Winder, 2019), animals (Fournier, 2016) and sport (Stover, 2017). Ultimately, it is imperative to acknowledge that whilst many studies imply that hypermasculinity is purely a negative concept, appropriate interventions have the potential to elicit positive, progressive and empowering outcomes. Although being imprisoned can include the loss of paternalistic enactment, the ability to desist from violent behaviours in prison could evoke a reminder of fatherhood (Ugelvik, 2014).

Horticulture and Green Space in Prison

Due to the prevalence of mental illness in prisons, a range of interventions such as mindfulness, talking therapies, sports and group activities (Meek, 2018; Yoon et al., 2017) have been implemented to try to tackle the problem, although it is accepted that further research is required to find effective treatments (Forrester et al., 2018). However, nature-based and horticulture-focused interventions have consistently produced positive outcomes (Theorell and Osika, 2018). Horticulture interventions are often described as therapeutic projects and are socially, psychologically and ecologically salient, offering immediate and potentially long-term benefits for participants (Harris, 2017). Engaging in horticulture frequently involves a strong connection to nature (Moran and Turner, 2018), which in turn offers prisons an opportunity to promote healthy environments (Baybutt and Chemlal, 2016). Farms and gardens have a long history of presence in prisons (Devine-Wright, 2018) and over recent years implementing specific horticultural programmes have resulted in increased psychological and mental wellbeing for prisoners (Jenkins, 2016). Prescribing horticulture as therapy specifically has been a process in prisons for many years (Richards and Kafami, 1999) and in all areas of the world (Moloko et al., 2018) but to tailor it to specifically investigating the impact on reducing and mediating hypermasculinities is limited.

In line with the UK's prison reform agenda, prison-based horticulture can contribute to creating safe, decent, secure and health enhancing settings addressing issues of substance misuse, suicide, self-harm and violent actions (Baybutt et al., 2018). This research study seeks to examine connections between prisoners' participation in a horticulture project, how masculine behaviours are presented in such a context and the impacts on mental wellbeing.

Originality

The aforementioned three concepts of mental wellbeing, hypermasculinity and horticulture are well researched in a prison context all with widely-accepted conclusions about their position in the field. However, after reading significantly about all three concepts, there appears to be no research that investigates them within the same study and seeks to find interconnections and mutual benefits. Ultimately, with the overwhelming problems that exist with both hypermasculine behaviours and mental wellbeing in prison settings, it seems pertinent to investigate whether prison-based horticulture can impact positively at the interface of hypermasculinity and mental health.

Furthermore, the research adopts a social constructionist, interpretivist position, in order to uncover the deep meanings that can derive from social settings. Symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry are utilised to ensure that the micro level and broader societal impacts are all assessed and truths are uncovered. This will allow for an enhanced level of connection to be made between the three research concepts of hypermasculinity, mental wellbeing and horticulture. Participant observation, guided conversations and individual in-depth interviews allowed for a variety of data to be collected, alongside an honest reflective diary kept by myself.

Funding

This doctoral research project has received funding from the North West Coast Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC). In 2008 the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) created nine regional CLAHRCs across the UK to carry out research, implement findings and build capacity across organisations for generating and utilising evidence (Martin et al., 2011). The North West Coast CLAHRC was established with the specific aim of reducing health inequalities in the region, pertinent to the area of the country and the current health issues it faces. The North West of England is home to 50% of the country's poorest neighbourhoods due to socioeconomic decline and all have considerably worse overall health and wellbeing compared to the rest of the population (Popay et al., 2017).

The North West Coast region received just over £10 million worth of funding over a five year period to conduct research, build relationships with National Health Service (NHS) organisations, increase the availability of high quality health care and contribute to the country's growth through local and national initiatives (Harvey et al., 2011). The establishment of CLAHRCs have aimed to bridge the gap between academic research and clinical practice within the health care field by creating worthwhile collaborations amongst universities and NHS trusts (Currie et al., 2013).

Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP)

Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP) is a therapeutic, social and environmental horticulture-based programme which was originally established in 2008 through funding by the Big Lottery Fund's Target Wellbeing initiative. Much like the NIHR CLAHRC's, Target Wellbeing had an overarching focus on reducing health inequalities and had three main outcomes: mental wellbeing, physical activity and healthier eating. GOOP adopted these outcomes alongside contributing to creating a rehabilitative prison culture.

GOOP provides skills development, functional skills qualifications, social inclusion, access to nature and an opportunity to enhance one's mental health and wellbeing whilst in custody. It is open to all ages and abilities of prisoners and can be particularly beneficial to more challenging individuals with complex needs, such as illiteracy, mental health problems, those at risk of suicide and self-harm and chronic drug and alcohol users. GOOP encourages the creation and maintenance of prison gardens while green spaces improve the built environment, with a focus on how these environments can be used to grow plants, flowers, fruit and vegetables. Establishing community links with organisations such as Groundwork, Change Grow Live and Recycling Lives is also encouraged, particularly where prisoners are able to be released on temporary licence (ROTL). By completing functional key skills in Numeracy and Literacy and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in horticulture through the social enterprise, Novus, prisoners are better equipped to find employment on release from prison.

All public sector prison establishments in the North West participate in GOOP and five prisons in neighbouring regions (as part of a pilot programme to roll GOOP out nationally); all of which are delivered in very different ways given the variance of prison sites. Each project is unique as it is responding to and tailoring itself to the needs of people in prison, the number of participants, category of prison and the availability of space. In addition, the GOOP Network offers an opportunity for prisons to support each other by sharing information and resources subsequently informing best practice.

The GOOP site at the research site is represented diagrammatically in Appendix 1. It is a relatively small site featuring a polytunnel, classroom, office, five storage containers, raised beds and a shed. However, further to the main horticulture department site, GOOP staff and prisoners are responsible for maintaining other areas of the prison, including a large grass area behind one of the wings, the health care gardens, the garden walk way between the wings and horticulture (cottage garden), as well as potted plants and hanging baskets around the inside of the prison grounds/walls.

Choosing the Research Site

Due to the criteria pertaining to CLAHRC funding for this research study, just five public sector prison sites in the North West region were available for data collection. Given how vastly each prison differs, it was essential to visit each site to make an informed decision on where the research plans and ideas could successfully be carried out. Five prisons site in the North West were included in the research funding and were visited in the early stages of the research period.

After visits to each prison sites and much deliberation, four of the sites were all deemed unsuitable for research due to a range of factors (pertaining to travel distance, budgetary considerations, closure of one prison and site size). Thus, for a number of reasons a particular prison was chosen as the ideal site to conduct the research. Firstly, in terms of access and location, the selected prison was easy to visit and travel to due to its centrality in the city. Secondly, the small geography of the site itself meant that I would be in close proximity to those working on site and have the potential in integrate myself into the group

effectively – important for an ethnographic study. Thirdly, although some may consider this prison be a strange choice within the realms of horticultural research bearing in mind the comparative lack of green space, the running of GOOP within such an 'urban' setting was impressive and, if anything, had potential to add greater value to the research findings providing evidence from an urban environment. Finally, the inclusion of gender/masculinities within the research aims and objectives meant it was imperative to reflexively consider gender in this research context; a female researching in a predominantly male environment. There was already a female horticultural instructor working on GOOP which helped to eliminate gender bias to some extent (Upchurch, 2016) as prisoners were accustomed to having a female on site.

Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study was to identify and explore the influences and impacts of a GOOP horticulture project upon hypermasculine norms and the mental wellbeing of male prisoners within a North West prison.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To examine prisoner and staff views and perspectives on the role and impacts of GOOP.

2. To increase understanding of how a GOOP project within a selected male prison impacts on the development of a therapeutic and rehabilitative culture.

3. To illuminate the relationships and interconnections between horticulture, hypermasculinity, and male prisoners' mental wellbeing.

Research Design and Methodology

The research adopted a qualitative design in order to retrieve rich data from participants through observational work and in-depth interviews. The study was underpinned by a social constructionist epistemology and informed by symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry. The research sought to gain personal

narratives from participants through a critical ethnographic methodology and used a range of qualitative data collection methods, including active participant observation, guided conservations and individual in-depth interviews.

Further, the research used Bourdieu's (1980) work of habitus, field and capital as a lens to attach meanings to the findings. Habitus represents the personal views and values of the prisoners' and staff on GOOP and the concept of field applies to the wider prison or research site itself and how that environment encourages meanings and truths to be created. Both habitus and field align themselves with the symbolic interactionist perspective as this is about personal feelings created through a period of time at specific place. Bourdieu's (1980) concept of capital then pertinently supports critical inquiry lens as it seeks to apply findings to the realms of the whole prison system rather than simply one site.

Research Findings

Data was examined using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic analysis process. Consequently, three main themes emerged.

The Small GOOP Community

The first theme explored how creating a small group dynamic within a large prison environment can result in a positive, pro-social environment encouraging meaningful connections and trust to be established with both staff and fellow prisoners. Further, by establishing a strong group identity as GOOP, protective and territorial traits appeared, with GOOP members indicating signs of masculinity but also of valuing their job. Sub-themes included: being away from the overcrowded wing; building relationships; trust; finding a place talk; promoting staff and prisoner relationships and becoming protective and territorial. Findings suggested that horticulture enabled staff and prisoners to work in harmony; and provided a context in which prisoners could form friendships where they could trust and confide in one another and where a strong sense of community and group identity was moulded, away from the wider prison population.

Sub-cultural Masculinities

The second theme explored to what extent masculinities and hypermasculinities were prevalent on GOOP and how being engaged in horticulture affected behaviours and attitudes. Within this context, group roles and dynamics between prisoners and staff were investigated, including a focus on how interactions between females and males can influence masculine behaviours. Sub-themes included: gardening as a 'man's job'; hypermasculinity on the wings and on GOOP; showing emotion; being top of the hierarchy; and gendered interactions. Findings indicated that prisoners seek to assure themselves that engaging with horticulture is a masculine job, in order to maintain masculine performances in prison. However, behaviours not ordinarily associated with masculinity - such as showing emotions, opening up and a reducing violence - were also prevalent on GOOP.

Changing Lives

The third theme explored the impact that GOOP has upon changing the lives of prisoners whilst they're in prison and the potential positive gains that could remain with them post-release. Essentially, this addressed whether GOOP is contributing to a therapeutic and rehabilitative culture at the prison. Sub-themes included: rehabilitation on GOOP; personal, social and skill development; mental health and wellbeing; learning; and freedom. Findings demonstrated that it is difficult to judge how rehabilitative GOOP is long-term due to cynical views about what works in reducing recidivism. It was clear, however, that GOOP offered prisoners hope and engendered a willingness to change their lives through experiencing feelings of freedom, learning new skills and providing a sense of the outside world but within the prison walls. Additionally, GOOP has displayed its credibility in contributing to improved mental wellbeing with helping to alleviate specific mental health conditions.

Autobiographical Note: What Led Me to Prison Research?

Throughout my school life, sport was the only area I had any real interest in pursuing at university and as a future career. To become a Physical Education (PE) teacher in a secondary school was all I ever saw myself doing and playing sport as a hobby was about the only thing that mattered. After sustaining a serious knee injury through playing football and subsequently undergoing several operations, the dream of a sporting future suddenly seemed less attractive. I no longer enjoyed playing sport to the same extent, firstly because I was in pain and secondly because I wasn't able to reach the high levels of performance I once could. As a result, the life plan had to change.

Throughout my undergraduate degree in PE, I deliberated, worried and panicked for endless months over what I could do next; teaching and playing sport regularly was now an unrealistic option for me and I needed to find a new interest/passion. The impact of the knee injury, not just physically, but mentally, fuelled my interest in psychology and, initially the psychology of sport and exercise. Whilst I felt so low about my injury and despondent with the rehabilitation the one positive that came out of the scenario was to learn about my own psychological response and make sense of the human brain. It didn't take too long for me to become fascinated by human behaviour within sport and fortunately my course enabled me to take all the psychology-oriented modules possible.

Throughout university, I was also diagnosed with depression and anxiety as a consequence of my injury and other factors. Once again though, this encouraged me to read further into the subject and eventually my undergraduate dissertation focussed on the impacts of engaging in outdoor adventurous activities on males suffering with depression.

Following success in my degree, I was eager to pursue psychology further so I enrolled on a masters course in Exercise and Sport Psychology. Many of the modules heavily focussed on sports performance and the techniques sports psychologists can use to aid development. There was also, however, a significant focus on health and wellbeing and using alternative treatments such

as exercise and engaging with nature to treat psychological distress. I realised I'd found a new passion and something in which to seek a future career.

Whilst it was never part of a long-term plan to undertake the challenge of a PhD, I was encouraged by lecturers in my masters course to be aware of which research studies were out there. During a period of inevitable concern as to what I'd be doing post-masters, along came an advert for a PhD investigating the role of horticulture upon mental wellbeing in prisons. Although the population group and setting were very new to me, the idea of using an alternative therapy or intervention to enhance mental wellbeing ticked the box for my newly found subject interest.

Like many other people, prison and criminology has always been of interest; I suppose because prisons are somewhat of an enigma for those fortunate enough never to be exposed to such environment. It is an interest in a world of unknowns. There is so much negativity in the media surrounding prison life, so this was an opportunity to see for myself what prisons have to offer. Surely they're not just holiday camps where people have it easy? They can't just be sat there on PlayStations all day, can they? When the chance came up to utilise some of my psychology background, and to investigate the use of therapeutic horticulture in an area where I would undoubtedly learn so much, I had to take it.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature using an exploratory style to uncover the current research and debates surrounding each strand of this research study. The chapter is divided into three sections: health, masculinities and horticulture. Each section offers a contextual picture of the gaps in the research and how this study aims to bridge such gaps.

Chapter 3 focusses on the journey to completing the research in relation to ethical and security issues, theoretical considerations and conducting the data collection. The range of security-related training that was undertaken prior to collection data is described and attention is given to the ethical considerations,

issues, potential implications of the study and how these were addressed; further, the research context with regards to underpinning theory and methodology. Crotty's (2009) theoretical framework is used to provide structure with regards to epistemology, theoretical perspectives, methodology and data collection and analysis methods. Ontology is also considered. This chapter introduces the work of Bourdieu (1980), which provides an overarching theoretical lens for the research. Personal reflections and feelings are provided, offering transparency to the research.

Chapter 4 introduces and presents the findings from both the exploratory and main research study. A description of the research site is provided along with profiles of both prisoner and staff participants. The chapter is divided into three key sections reflecting the main findings: The Small GOOP Community, Subcultural Masculinities and Changing Lives. In-depth descriptions of observations are offered to build a picture of what life on GOOP is like, direct quotes from in-depth interviews and story vignettes are utilised to support the findings.

Chapter 5 offers a discussion of the findings highlighted in Chapter 4, with reference to the work of Bourdieu and other overarching, theoretical lenses. The discussion focusses on the three key themes (Small GOOP Community, Subcultural Masculinities and Changing Lives) and explores sub-themes such as the small nature of GOOP, group dynamics, trust, gender interactions and beliefs within horticulture, rehabilitative culture, biophilic environments and specific mental health conditions.

Chapter 6 provides concluding thoughts about the overall research findings. Strengths and limitations of the study are outlined with an explanation of how the research offers an original contribution to knowledge. Implications for any future research studies in this area and offers recommendations for changes in policy and practice. Key findings are summarised followed by brief overall personal reflections.

Summary

This chapter has provided an introductory outline of the thesis, explaining why research in this field is so important, the context of where the research took place and what the GOOP programme offers. The wider context of the research was discussed with regards to funding. Furthermore, it included an autobiographical note reflecting on how my academic qualifications have led me to a PhD research study involving prisons and how other factors in my life prompted interest in this area. Additionally, overviews of each chapter were described.

The next chapter will provide a contextual literature review exploring previous research and literature and how this has influenced the need for this research study.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the structure of the thesis, provided an overview of what the research found and discussed how I found myself in the position to conduct prison research. This chapter investigates the background of the research subject and contextualises the current situation surrounding health inequalities, mental wellbeing, masculinities and horticulture in relation to prison. The chapter is structured in the form of a contextual literature review with the aim of presenting compelling and contemporary evidence, arguing the case for the importance of this research study. Firstly, the concept of health inequalities is addressed with particular reference to the Determinants of Health Model (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991) and the prison population. Further, the current situation regarding male prisoners' health and wellbeing, how masculine performances can negatively impact health and the significant issues surrounding male suicides in prison, are discussed. Finally, the use of green spaces, natural environments and the role of horticulture in promoting mental health and wellbeing is explored, with a note regarding GOOP and how this project fulfils the requirements of horticultural therapy.

Conducting a Literature Review

The purpose of conducting a literature review is to analyse secondary data in order to draw conclusions and identify gaps within the research field, thereby informing the subsequent research study. Without examining previous studies and findings, researchers often repeat previous mistakes and cannot make informed decisions about how to construct a successful, new research project (Cooper, 1998). There are many types of literature review, including systematic, meta-analysis and critical, all of which follow a rigorous process of search strategies and seek to examine and draw conclusions from the research field (Grant and Booth, 2009). In slight contrast, this study is informed by a contextual literature review as the research questions proposed seek to deepen

the understanding of a newly researched combination of concepts, and the study is open to adaptability and flexibility (Saunders et al., 2009).

Where some other types of literature review are stringent and rigorous in their use of key words whilst carrying out a search strategy, the contextual literature review allows some room for manoeuvre as other key concepts arise from the reading and reviewing. In other words, whilst the main subject areas were inevitably used as search terms, not all search terms were predetermined, highlighting the flexibility of an exploratory literature review.

Key words and phrases were searched on Google Scholar, UCLan Discovery, PubMed and Science Direct and the article was considered for review if the key words were in the title or abstract of said publications. The following key words and phrases were searched: health inequalities; determinants of health; health inequity; healthy settings; health in prison; prison health; prisoners' health; mental health; mental health and wellbeing; mental wellbeing; mental health in prison; male mental health; male mental wellbeing; masculinities; hypermasculinities; bravado; toxic masculinity; masculinities in prison; hypermasculinities in prison; bravado in prison; toxic masculinity in prison; Connell's theory of masculinities; horticulture; horticulture therapy; green environments; green therapy; horticulture in prisons; nature; nature in prisons and Greener on the Outside for prisons.

Health

Health Inequalities

Health inequality is regularly used as 'a term used to designate differences, variations and disparities in the health achievements of individuals and groups' (Kawachi et al., 2002). Graham (2009) and Whitehead (2007), however, adopt a more moral and ethical view of how to define health inequalities, by conceptualising them as systematic differences in health of people occupying different positions in society, with a recognition that such discrepancies are avoidable, unjust and unfair.

The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age form the social determinants of health influencing health inequalities across the world (Wilkinson and Marmot, 2003). The circumstances that individuals, families and communities face are influenced by the distribution of money, power, and resources as global, national and local levels (ibid.). Informed by European research, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has suggested that the ten most influential factors affecting health status are social gradient, stress, early life, social exclusion, work, unemployment, social support, addiction, food and transport (Marmot, 2005). These social factors then shape whether individuals remain healthy or become unwell (Raphael, 2009).

Figure 1. The Determinants of Health Model.

Model extracted from Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991; p.11).

In relation to the acceptance of factors affecting health, Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991; Figure 1) created a model of the determinants of health, illustrating five levels of influencing factors upon health: age, sex and hereditary factors; individual lifestyle factors; social and community networks; living and working conditions; and general socio-economic, cultural and environmental conditions. Age, sex and hereditary factors refers to personal characteristics such as ethnicity and biological factors. Individual lifestyle acknowledges personal choices such a smoking, alcohol consumption, diet and physical activity. Social and community networks considers the influences of family, friends, and wider social circles and the quality of these relationships

(Beijersbergen et al., 2015; McMillan, 1996). Living and working conditions refers to the opportunities for employment, training and education, prevalence of transport, health facilities and welfare services and sanitation, fresh water and pollution. Finally, general socio-economic, cultural and environmental conditions represent the importance of wages, disposable income, cost of living and the overall distribution of wealth and facilities (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991). Unsurprisingly, those living in an area with poor quality wider environments with a lack of healthcare facilities are more likely to be subject to the negative influence of social determinants of health. The outer layers of the Determinants of Health Model impact upon individuals' health both directly (for example, through poverty, poor housing and pollution) and indirectly (for example, through constraining healthier lifestyles). This is echoed by Barton and Grant's (2006) creation of The Health Map which further explains the impact of the wider environment by incorporating wealth creation, activities and social capital. This also leads to the consideration of commercial determinants of health, which is commonly defined as 'strategies used by the private sector to promote products and choices that are detrimental to health' (Kickbusch et al. 2016). The advertising, and subsequent sales, of processed food, sugary drinks, alcohol and tobacco are thriving particularly in low-income regions (ibid.).

More recently, three main pathways have been proposed in a systems-based approach, as a way of explaining the existence of health inequalities from social determinants (WHO, 2010). Firstly, social selection implies that health determines an individual's economic position, rather than the opposite (WHO, 2010). Secondly, social causation suggests that unequally spread resources, psychosocial factors and behavioural factors allow health inequalities to exist in communities (Brunner and Marmot, 2005; Brunner, 2007). Finally, a life course perspective implies that occurrences across a lifespan (maternal malnutrition, poor education, unsafe working and living conditions) significantly manifest into trends in poor health. This is considered to be an ecosocial proposal which derives from the Ecosocial Theory of Health (Krieger, 1994). The ecosocial theory applies a multicausal approach to health by incorporating interacting biological, psychosocial and environmental factors (ibid.). In other words, a person or social group is affected by the wider, social and environmental world

in which they live (Beckfield and Krieger, 2009). In summary, the conditions, life experiences, facilities available and common behavioural trends within a community appear to contribute significantly to poor health, and produce health inequalities between societies.

There is a longstanding acceptance that those with greater wealth are more likely to have better health than those living with lower incomes (Semyonov et al., 2013). Whilst there tends to be a focus on less economically developed regions, health inequalities are ubiquitous even in wealthier countries across Europe (Marmot and Bell, 2012). The link between wealth and health amongst communities of varying socioeconomic status is referred to as the health gradient (Gonzalez et al., 2014). Clear empirical findings indicate that the health of a population tends to increase in line with a country's wealth, however, this may not always be the case for inhabitants of 'wealthy' countries due to the distribution of resources and government money (Semyonov et al., 2013); for example, despite the USA being considered a wealthy country, the distribution of healthcare, education and opportunities are significantly unequal, meaning that people living in certain local areas suffer worse health than other Americans (McLeod et al., 2012). Furthermore, the type of healthcare system available to inhabitants has been found to influence the health gradient across a nation after a comparative study was carried out between the UK, Sweden, Germany, USA, Israel and Czech Republic (Maskileyson, 2014). Additionally, health gradients have varied with regard to economically developing nations, advanced nations and industry-oriented nations as, again, the wealth is unevenly distributed (Beckfield et al., 2013). In Northern Europe, the Nordic countries are considered to be high performers in terms of population health with high life expectancy, few inequalities between males and females and strong, democratic welfare states (Beckfield and Krieger, 2009; Marmot et al., 2012). Even the highly-regarded Nordic states, however, still have some health problems with premature mortality amongst older adults greater than expected (Popham et al., 2013). Despite efforts to reduce inequalities across Europe, further focus is still required to improve the environments in which people are born, live, work and grow, in order to achieve greater health equity for all (Marmot et al., 2012).

Research into the social influences of population health dates back to at least the early 19th century (Jayasinghe, 2015) with pioneering researchers including Rudolf Virchow who explored the living conditions of the working class in England and Salvador Allende who aimed to display the role of social and political factors in health inequalities in Chile (Krieger et al., 2010). Rose (1985) conducted research which aimed to distinguish between the cause of disease in individuals and the incidences within a specific population group, concluding that the balances, or imbalances, of social norms and behaviours result in determining a 'sick' population group, and therefore, an unequal social group.

It is widely accepted that economic status significantly affects health. From sweatshops in Far East Asia and slums in South America, to workhouses in Britain, history has shown that those living in poor conditions with a low economic status tend to experience worse health and shorter lives than the wealthier members of society (Berkman et al., 2014). More specific research studies have supported the correlation between socioeconomic status and poor health. As an example, Daly et al. (2015) found that those with lower economic status and less wealth experienced overall worse health with regards to chronic pain, risk and existence of obesity, low physical activity levels and poor overall health. Low socioeconomic positions are thought to heavily contribute to persistent cardiovascular problems, such as high blood pressure and increased heart rate (Steptoe and Kivimaki, 2013). Berkman et al. (2014) suggest that socioeconomic status is materialised by three factors: education, employment and money.

A recent literature review (Pickett and Wilkinson, 2015) evidenced that there is a strong causal relationship between income inequalities and health within communities, which exacerbates differences between social classes. Significant income differences are extremely damaging for those lower down the socioeconomic hierarchy, with causal processes possibly extending to violence and anti-social behaviours within communities (ibid.). Furthermore, inequalities have also seen high rates of teenage pregnancy, obesity and mental illnesses, implying that overall, unequal societies seem to have a negative impact on most areas of life (ibid.). Recognisably, those deriving from a lower economic group are less likely to have the necessary access to adequate materials to improve

their health, such as clean water, medical care and sufficient sanitation (Marmot, 2005).

Evidently, the distribution of resources, whether this is material (health centres, areas for physical activity etc.), social or economic, is central to how communities shape health (Scambler, 2012). A resource or factor that is often neglected from literature surrounding the social determinants of health is time, therefore, McQuoid et al. (2015) propose that the availability and use of time is a significant factor in securing good health. It was concluded that time should, in future, be included as a determinant of health but should be viewed as a multidimensional concept due to people's varied time commitments and perceptions (ibid.). Interestingly, many would argue that those with lower socioeconomic status are likely to have more free time to maintain their health in comparison to those with greater income; however, access to time may be meaningless if materials and income remain sparse and conditions are poor.

Since the Labour Government's 1997 commitment to reduce health inequalities, the UK has been considered as a global leader in research and policy towards improving health for all (Garthwaite et al., 2016). Despite, however, the breadth of policies aimed at reducing health inequalities across the UK, gaps and social gradients appear to have increased (Bambra, 2012; Barr et al., 2012). Within the UK, health inequalities are widespread across different population groups, due to social class, socioeconomic status, ethnicity and local environmental factors (Smith and Hill, 2015). In 2010, a coalition government was formed between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats, coinciding with the introduction of an economic period of austerity. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this has prompted extensive debate between economists and public health experts with regard to how spending cuts have contributed to the neglect of health (Reeves et al., 2013). The WHO are in little doubt that spending cuts to public services within the UK contribute directly to health inequalities (Marmot and Bell, 2012) and, as a consequence, unemployment, poverty and homelessness have increased – all of which are significant determinants of individuals' and community health (Reeves et al., 2013).

The North West of England has suffered greatly during the austerity period (Office for National Statistics, 2012), and although it is difficult to accurately

predict the future, unemployment, suicide rates and homelessness have all increased and treatment programmes/interventions for health have been cut (Cheetham et al., 2017). Although it has been argued that overall health has improved through new findings and medical treatments in the UK, premature mortality is persistently and significantly above European averages, especially in a deprived area such as the North West of England (Murray et al., 2013). The North-South divide has been subject to socio-economic investigation in the UK for centuries (Bambra et al., 2014) and the north of England currently experiences greater occurrences of premature mortality and decreased life expectancy in comparison to the south of England (Hacking et al., 2011).

Between 2009 and 2011, people residing in Manchester were twice as likely to die early in comparison to people based in Wokingham (Public Health England, 2013) and this estimated comparison has continued to widen since (Bambra et al., 2014). There are many aspects of health that are affected and considered worse in the North West of England. Firstly, use of and risk-taking with alcohol, tobacco and drugs was found to be significantly higher in the North West (Farmer and Hanratty, 2012). Violence-related behaviours and offences have also been found higher in the North West as a result of acute mental health problems and alcohol abuse (Doyle et al., 2012). Physical activity levels in childhood and early life also remain lower than the recommended level through to adult life in the North West (Haycock and Smith, 2014) which considerably affects overall physical and mental health, with physical activity gaps increasing up to age 85 (Farrell et al., 2014). Young people are also less likely to have regular attendance at a dentist in the most deprived wards of the North West, resulting in inevitable dental problems, mostly due to sugar intake (Eckersley and Blinkhorn, 2001). In order to address the North-South divide, in 2014, Public Health England launched a Health Equity North programme. This involved research, debate and collaboration between key interest groups and stakeholders to discover how to improve the health of Northern regions (Johnstone, 2013).

Despite the efforts and intentions of health organisations and successive governments to eliminate health inequalities, the gaps within the UK have continued to widen (Smith and Eltanani, 2015). Vulnerable groups such as the elderly (Norman and Boyle, 2014), those with disabilities (Hatzenbuehler et al.,

2013), residents of areas of low economic status (Scambler, 2015) and ethnic minority groups (Uphoff et al., 2015) are all at risk of and likely to suffer the consequences of healthy inequalities. One population group, however, within society that is often overlooked, is the prison population (Kupers, 2005).

Health in Prison

The UK has the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe; 179 per 100,000 which has risen from 90 per 100,000 in 1992 (MoJ, 2018). Currently, the prison population in England and Wales is approximately 85,000 (MoJ, 2018) with the record highest level being 88,000 in 2011 (Berman, 2012). Prisoners are more likely than the wider community to have grown up in local authority care, poverty or disadvantaged families, possess few qualifications and have poor physical and mental health (Hellenbach et al., 2017; Prison Reform Trust, 2018). Many prisoners, perhaps unsurprisingly, derive from some of the most socially excluded groups of society, for example, ethnic minority groups, homeless people, those with chronic mental and physical health conditions and drug users (HMP S, 2016). A prolonged and prevalent history of social exclusion including poor education, low incomes, minimal employment opportunities, low self-esteem, inconsistent family relationships and impermanent residencies is extremely common amongst prisoners (Woodall and South, 2012). Mental illness, drug dependence and transmissible diseases, such HIV or Hepatitis B, are the three dominant health problems attributed to prisoners (Hayton et al., 2010; Public Health England, 2018) and many of these individuals have had minimal access/contact with a health service provider prior to imprisonment (Woodall and South, 2012) meaning prison could be the first time they receive the necessary treatment (Woodall, 2010).

Based on the principle of human rights and equal access to services, prisoners should have the same health care provisions as those in the wider community (Kanato, 2008). As reducing health inequalities is a fundamental principle of public health, people in prison should therefore receive the same treatment access as the wider population (Stürup-Toft et al., 2018). The standard of healthcare with regard to quantity, quality and effectiveness has been frequently

challenged by those within and outside the prison walls (Smith, 2000). As a result, recent public health campaigns have aimed to address the inequalities of prison health, for example the Worldwide Prison Health Research and Engagement Network (WEPHREN) through evidencing the need for improvements and change (Plugge et al., 2017). Within prisons in England and Wales, NHS/healthcare provisions are ever-changing and prisons are often expected to take individual responsibility for health in their respective prisons (Forrester et al., 2013). Despite the strong arguments advocating improvements and attention to prison health care, there are barriers to overcome to ensure that proposed enhancements come to fruition.

When considering a settings-based approach to health, it is pertinent to consider Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), which was originally created to explain child development but has since been applied to human development more generally. The theory is displayed diagrammatically below.

Figure 2. Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).
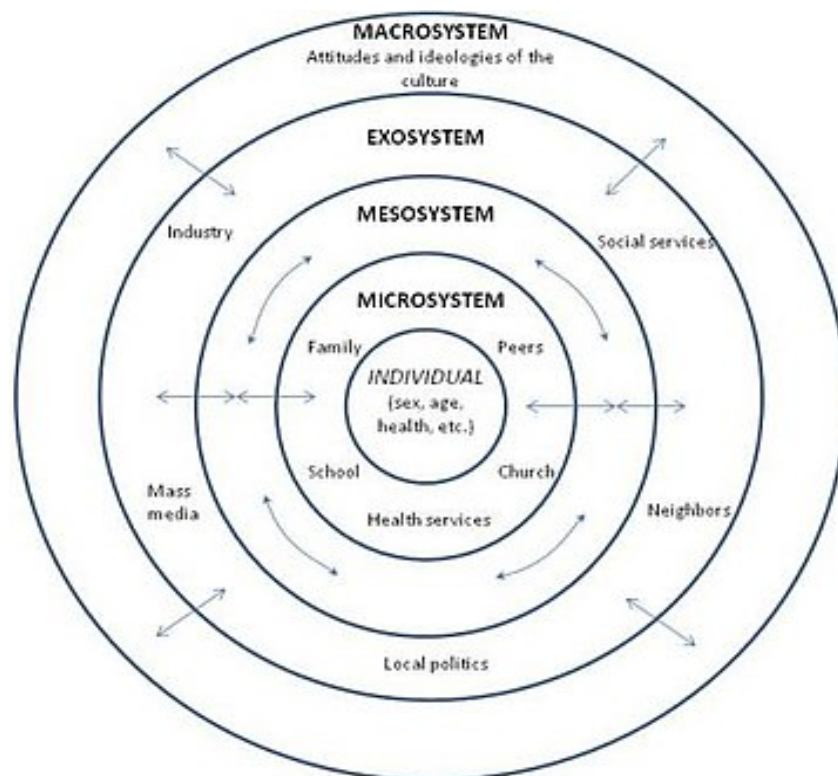
Model extracted from Bronfenbrenner (2005, p.6).

Similarly to the Determinants of Health Model (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991), the Ecological Systems Theory represents different layers of a person's life and how each these can influence their health. Kokko et al. (2013) used the setting of sports clubs to utilise Bronfenbrenner's (2005) theory to highlight a setting-based approach to health promotion. Firstly, the individual's sex, age and health status is fundamental in determining health but it is the micro, meso, exo and macro systems that represent how the prison setting/service can be influential in promoting health. By establishing links and collaborations with key health services, promoting health within the prison and providing a secure setting for both prisoners and staff, this strengthens each ecological systemic layer for a prisoner, ultimately resulting in a whole prison approach to health promotion.

Given the increase in the prison population in England and Wales since the 1970s (Cullen et al., 2000), the hostility towards prisoners from the general public has increased, leading to a disregard of prison reform and an advocacy for punishment, delivered as severely and cheaply as possible (Matthews, 2005; Blagden et al., 2017). More recently, fiscal constraints have significantly impacted upon prisons and the service it provides. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has seen its budget cut by more than a quarter over the past six years and has subsequently been asked to reduce its bill by £600 million over the next four years (Clifton, 2016). On one hand this could result in mental health services being neglected and underfunded. Counteracting this concern, however, Public Health England's (2017) latest commissioning plan insists that prisoners' mental health will be a priority on the agenda with integrated NHS mental health services becoming available for all government controlled prisons in England and Wales.

There is little dispute regarding prison's negative influence on short-term and long-term health for prisoners (Schnittker and John, 2007); penal institutions are, overall, sick and unhealthy environments (de Viggiani, 2007). With regard to health inequalities, a prison setting may be one of the most unhelpful places to send them as this, potentially, prevents the likelihood of successful rehabilitation and health promotion (ibid.). Imprisonment is known to contribute to unemployment, low wages and poor social integration, all of which are determinants of poor health (Laub and Sampson, 1993; Schnittker and John, 2007), meaning that prisoners enter a vicious cycle of poor health and crime.

Prisoners' health is known to worsen due to prison conditions such as overcrowding, exposure to violent situations, drug use, a lack of meaningful and purposeful activities, emotional deprivation and a lack of support networks (Wilson, 2005). Previous life experiences, socio-economic background and victimisation both in and out of prison (Edgar et al., 2014) are also considered influential in suicidal behaviours, neuroticism, self-harm, asthma and infectious diseases (Marshall et al., 2000). This evidence regarding prisoners' health suggests that health promotion within prisons is even more urgent than health promotion in the wider community (Ross, 2013), echoing the call for, and positive characteristics of, a whole prison approach (Woodall and South, 2012).

A whole prison approach advocates a setting in which the health of both prisoners and staff and a secure working environment are crucial to implement health promoting and reform-based interventions (Santora et al., 2014). If prisons are to be successful in executing a whole prison approach, all stakeholders need to be 'on board' and look further than simply preventing disease but addressing all aspects of health within prison (Woodall, 2012). Prisons adhering to the whole prison approach should use policies that promote health, such as smoke free prisons, have an environment that supports health and offer prevention, education and health-promoting initiatives tailored for each individual prison (Baybutt et al., 2014).

There have been attempts to address poor physical and mental health in prison, most notably through the means of sport and exercise. Sport has been found to address substance misuse issues, enhancing mental wellbeing and promoting physical health in prisons whilst offering a valuable way of motivating prisoners to engage in healthy behaviours (Meek and Lewis, 2012). It has also enabled prisoners to work together to achieve a goal/victory, learn from each other's health behaviours and understand the health benefits of physical activity beyond the premise of simply 'winning' (Meek, 2013). Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), also reiterates the possibilities of learning from others' behaviours in such context. Despite the inevitable success of sport interventions for prisoners, due to differing designs, not all custodial establishments are able to provide sufficient space or time for such activities (Pantelis, 2014). Most recently, an independent review entitled 'Sporting Chance' was conducted to investigate the impact of engaging young and adult prisoners in sport, exercise

and physical activity (Meek, 2018). The report highlighted that Physical Education Instructor staff roles have decreased, prisoners are less likely to meet the government's recommended daily physical activity levels and those who experience victimisation in prison are more likely to reject opportunities to exercise (ibid.). Regardless of the recent changes to sporting provisions, the social interaction, psychosocial and rehabilitative benefits of prisoners with any access to sport should not be underestimated (Parker et al., 2014). The Sporting Chance report reaffirms the benefits, recommending that each prison devises their own sport and wellbeing strategy, nutritional advice should be offered alongside sport sessions, senior managers should develop partnerships between notable sport club/organisations and engagement in sport can resolve conflict (Meek, 2018). Green health initiatives are also included in this with GOOP providing an example of good practice.

Attempts to tackle health concerns in prisons are regularly criticised as they appear largely to fail to address the root causes of poor health, such as the social determinants of health prior to incarceration (Adler et al., 2016). Recently however, there have been attempts to address this with collaboration between the MoJ and the Revolving Doors charity. This collaboration saw the launch of the 'Rebalancing Act' approach which acknowledges the links between crime and ill-health (Public Health England, 2017). The approach aims to change systems and improve services for those caught in a cycle of crisis and crime and acts as a 'trusted friend' in directing individuals to the relevant governmental departments, local authorities and service providers (ibid.).

It is often perceived by governments that public opinion on incarceration is based on punishment as opposed to rehabilitation, reducing reoffending or a place to change lives (McNeill, 2014). As a result, the notion of 'transforming' individuals' lives and ensuring they are released as reformed, healthier people has been somewhat neglected. The Transforming Rehabilitation Agenda outlined by the Coalition Government in 2014 proposed a more fiscally motivated approach to rehabilitation resulting in a target driven culture neglecting the overall health and wellbeing of prisoners (Calder and Goodman, 2013).

By 2014, probation services faced a complete reformation by the Ministry of Justice and were divided into a public sector National Probation Service (NPS) and 21 new Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), owned by eight private providers (Robinson et al., 2015). Probation is traditionally aimed at encouraging rehabilitation and creating positive links between offenders, families and the community. Recent changes, however, have seen an increasingly punitive approach to people in prison (Annison, 2013). Whilst the monitoring of mental health is also supposed to come under probation's remit, the cost-cutting, fiscal approach has reduced appropriate training for both probation and health staff, and left a lack of formal pathways between probation and health agencies (Sirdifield et al., 2016). Overall, the privatisation approach to probation has resulted in unstable links between relevant parties, a lack of trust from offenders and an increase in anxiety and stress from probation workers (Robinson et al., 2015). Time will tell whether the latest Public Health England and HMPPS commissioning plan aiming to connect services and pathways will change the situation for prisoners and staff alike (Public Health England, 2018).

Evidently, deprivation is a key concept associated with both prison health and prisoners' backgrounds prior to incarceration. The deprivation perspective most notably derives from Clemmer (1958) and Sykes (1958), work founded upon two arguments: firstly, that imprisonment is synonymous with deprivation and, secondly, that deprivation in prison has overwhelmingly negative implications upon physical, psychological, emotional and social health. Secondly, the deprivation of freedom, lack of control and unpredictable environments within prison establishments accounts for erratic and changeable behaviours among prisoners, (Baron and Moos, 1976) including health behaviours, such as suicide and self-harm (Huey and McNulty, 2005).

Contrasting with the deprivation theory is the importation theory (Irwin and Cressey, 1962). Where the deprivation model implies that prisoners' behaviours occur as a response to the prison conditions, the importation model proposes that behaviours derive from previously held values and beliefs which are extended through the prison culture (Harer and Steffensmeir, 1996; Innes, 1997). For example, prisoners who have previously been exposed to violence, drug use or struggle with mental ill-health (Inwood and Maxwell-Stewart, 2015)

are more likely to continue such behaviours and find adaptation to prison life difficult (Gover et al., 2000); they 'import' these characteristics into the prison setting.

Irwin and Cressey (1962) argued that prisoners can be placed within one of three subcultures prior to their imprisonment: thief, convict or legitimate. These three subcultural descriptions represent the pre-prison life experiences of prisoners, which have ultimately contributed to their prison sentences. The main argument of the importation theory implies that the behaviours, attitudes and values learned from these subcultures are imported into a prison setting, consequently influencing misconduct and other behaviours. It could be argued the underlying masculine behaviours exist pre-prison but are heightened after incarceration, resulting in dominant hypermasculine culture within this setting. If a prisoner has sought power in their pre-prison life then they are likely to repeat this need whilst imprisoned which also enhances the power struggle between prisoners and staff (Woodall and Dixey, 2015).

Similarly, Goffman (1968) has also supported this argument by inferring that prisoners enter a custodial setting with a 'presenting culture' derived from their 'home world', i.e. bringing their learnt health behaviours from home into the prison culture. Importation theory is supported by the aforementioned statistics regarding the origin of prisoners and their challenging backgrounds. Equally, the deprivation theory can also provide a suitable rationale for explaining misconduct and poor health behaviours in prison, due to the poor conditions available to prisoners. Deprivation can also include the absence of companionship, meaning male prisoners adopt an 'every man for themselves' mentality in the prison environment, causing battles between inmates and staff as to who is top of the hierarchy (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

The arguments for both deprivation and importation theory are both understandable and feasible, with regard to adult male prisoners (Thomas, 1977), and pertinent to this research study. Theories, therefore, have been combined to account for prisoners' health behaviours arising from internal and external factors, which appropriately predict adjustment to incarceration (Goodstein and Wright, 1989; Gover et al., 2000). Unsurprisingly, some prisoners are more affected by the adjustment to prison life than others,

regardless of their background, whilst others bring with them potentially traumatic life histories, influencing their adaptation to prison (Irwin and Cressey, 1962). Further, a situational theoretical model of prisoner behaviours was also proposed by Steinke (1991) and enhanced by Jiang and Fisher-Giorlando (2002). Whilst the deprivation and importation theories are appropriately prominent in exploring and understanding prisoners' behaviours, the situational model argues that the environment in which prisoners are present influences their behaviour (Ibid.). Many studies applying the situational model have highlighted the negative aspects of prison life perpetuating misconduct (Wortley, 2013).

Offenders that enter custodial settings find themselves confined to a complex life of strict regimes, rituals and rules designed to disempower and control, with emotional and psychological resilience playing a significant role with living in a deprived environment (de Viggiani, 2007), enhancing the problematic hegemonic masculine norms (Connell, 1993). Given that many prisoners enter custody with poor health (ibid.), the behavioural justifications underpinned by the deprivation theory and the importation theory imply that prison may be the worst possible place for prisoners to improve their health. Further, applying Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) is also pertinent here: those entering a prison setting and all the challenges that come with it, find decreased opportunity for self-actualisation and self-transcendence. The basic needs of physiology, love, safety, belonging and opportunities to enhance self-esteem are seldom being met.

Improving Health in Prison

Evidently, previous experiences and long-held values imported into prison, alongside the prison environment and its regime, have significant influence on the health behaviours of prisoners (Ginn, 2012). The WHO Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986) with its focus on introducing a settings approach, provided a catalyst for efforts to improve healthcare in prisons (Whitehead, 2006). As a result of the concerning health findings, the WHO (Europe) launched the Health in Prisons Project (HIPP; WHO, 1996; WHO,

2000) which the UK government, along with 45 other European countries, committed to in order to improve health in prisons across England and Wales. An initial focus on addressing communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) was soon followed by a concern to address mental illness, drug, alcohol and substance misuse and the needs of special minority prisoner groups (Gatherer et al., 2005).

As part of the whole prison approach to health, staff health is also considered (ibid.). A health promoting prison should, where possible, incorporate all aspects of prison life: individual health needs, prison staff, organisational factors and the physical environment (de Viggiani, 2009). The WHO Ottawa Charter (1986) provides a framework for this approach whereby the health promoting plans should include strengthening community action, building a healthy public policy, developing personal skills for prisoners, creating supportive environments and redesigning health services to encompass a more holistic, rather than reactive, approach (WHO, 1986; Woodall and South, 2012).

Following the UK's commitment to the HiPP, the strategy Health Promoting Prisons: A Shared Approach acknowledged that prisons should be safe, secure and places of reform with an emphasis on health promotion and grounded in the concept of decency (Department of Health; DoH, 2002). Although prisoners are sometimes considered to be a 'hard to reach' group, they are also a captive population; thus, the HiPP aimed to focus on policies which promote health, an environment which actively supports healthy behaviours and provision of health education (DoH, 2002).

Many prisoners serve relatively short sentences, meaning they regularly shift between imprisonment and the wider community (Woodall et al., 2014). In theory, depending on sentence length, this can allow prisons to potentially instil health promoting behaviours into prisoners which can transcend back into the community upon their release (ibid.); however, if they are then returning to an 'unhealthy' community, these health behaviours may not be sustainable. Worral coined the phrase 'punishment in the community' implying that custodial sentences are not always necessary, but the dysfunctional communities from which many prisoners come from, could result in social punishment (Beichner and Rabe-Hemp, 2014).

In contrast to the aforementioned 'lock them up and throw away the key' attitude, there is considerable support for a health promoting prison model to be adopted through the application of a healthy settings approach, suggesting that this would be beneficial for prisoners, staff and wider communities (Ross, 2013; Woodall et al., 2014; Woodall and Dixey, 2015). A health promoting prison prioritises a whole prison perspective and is a secure setting that aims to provide a healthy environment, tackle health inequalities experienced by prisoners and promote healthy behaviours which can be taken back into the community (DoH, 2002; Woodall and South, 2012).

Evidently, a settings-based approach has emerged as an applicable, practical and feasible way of tackling health inequalities and problems (Dooris, 2009). This approach is underpinned by the ideology that health is created and lived by people in the place that they reside, in this case, prison (Woodall et al., 2014). The settings-based approach is embodied by an ecological model of public health, a systems perspective and a whole-organisation focus (Dooris, 2009), and within a prison context it is imperative that a health-promoting prison needs to be safe and secure with an emphasis upon participation, equity, human rights, decency and respect for all involved (Baybutt et al., 2014), including prison staff (Ross, 2010). Firstly, an ecological model of public health means applying a holistic approach determined by environmental, organisational and personal factors of all involved (Baybutt and Chemlal, 2016). Secondly, a systems perspective acknowledges that several parts of the prison must work in harmony to address health concerns across the whole of the prison service, before, during and after sentencing (ibid.). Thirdly, a whole-organisation focus uses organisational development to establish change within a prison, relating to rehabilitation of prisoners, promotion of health and wellbeing and forming connections with the wider community (Baybutt et al., 2009; Baybutt and Chemlal, 2016). Traditionally, prisoners struggle to accept the controlling nature of prisons and are reluctant to allow the system to help their rehabilitation in a bid to maintain their own identity (Fielding and Fielding, 2000).

Further to the importance of funding and availability of resources (Clifton, 2016), establishing partnerships with an organisation, creating a supportive environment for health promotion and recognising the need for a relationship between prisoners and the wider world are all of fundamental importance

(Woodall, 2016). Prison settings should make links and connect 'beyond health' in order to maximise the potential success of a health promoting setting (Dooris, 2013); however, prisons often struggle to collaborate with other organisations in and out of the gates, due to the closed nature of the setting (Palumbo, 2015). In addition, wider public perceptions regarding whether prisoners deserve to receive health support also create challenges (Baybutt et al., 2009). Unsurprisingly, the idea that prisoners should have empowerment, freedom and choice over their health behaviours, does not sit comfortably with everyone (Woodall, 2016); therefore, it becomes difficult to implement health promoting ideas with which all parties are in agreement, and of which all parties are in support (Tabreham, 2014).

Given the restrictive and controlled environments of prisons, they have been considered the most problematic of settings-based environments (Whitehead, 2006) and their disempowering and punishing conditions somewhat contradict the fundamentals of settings-based health promotion (Woodall et al., 2014). The settings-based approach provides a salutogenic model of health, but the loss of freedom within prison is inherently pathogenic (ibid.), hence the difficulty is in sustaining successful health promotion across all custodial establishments. It has been implied, however, that prisoners adapt to prison life more effectively and smoothly when they are allowed some form or measure of control over their immediate environment (Huey and McNulty, 2005; Toch, 1998; Woodall et al., 2014), supporting the arguments for a sense of liberation and alternative health-related programmes. As a result, several research studies (Bagnall et al., 2015; Meek and Lewis, 2012; Woodall et al., 2015) have assessed alternative health interventions to tackle health inequalities within prison.

An alternative approach has been the use of art-based programmes in prisons. For example, encouraging involvement in music interventions can enable prisoners to develop a sense of ownership over their musical creations, identify with and appreciate others' creations, promote empowerment amongst offenders as they are free to express themselves and provide a chance of coping with difficult feelings and emotional release (Daykin et al., 2013). Group music therapy interventions have also been found to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression (Chen et al., 2014), improve self-esteem (Chen, 2014) and feelings of anger can decrease and an air of calmness can be created

(Bensimon et al., 2015). Furthermore, De Viggiani et al. (2010) also found increases in confidence and wellbeing amongst older prisoners following an evaluation of a music-based project in prisons in South West England.

Despite the presence of alternative health-related interventions and the UK's leading policy development between prisons and health services (Gatherer and Fraser, 2009), there are still problems surrounding health in prison. It is now 20 years since the WHO European Office set out their intentions for tackling health inequalities in prison and push for health promoting custodial settings (WHO, 1996) – but issues surrounding overcrowding, rising prison populations and resource and budget restrictions have been significant barriers to fulfilling health promoting prison intentions (Gatherer et al., 2005; Walmsley, 2014; Woodall, 2016). There have been previous suggestions that prison staff neglect the health needs of prisoners (Caraher et al., 2002). It is likely though, that recent cuts to staff numbers and a rise in those held in custody has played a significant role in the lack of a health 'vision' from staff to prisoners (Woodall, 2016). There are also power dynamics between prisoners and staff which create barriers for prisoners, making it difficult to express views and gain elements of freedom – crucial to health promotion (Woodall and Dixey, 2015).

It seems that what is required is a sustainable, health-related intervention in which prisoners are empowered and trusted; a working, natural environment where outputs and success stories are evident to wider parties and relationships with staff are less about power and more about collaboration; and a setting where mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of intentions.

Mental Health and Wellbeing in Prison

Amongst the wider health-related issues existing in prisons in England and Wales, mental ill-health and psychiatric morbidity is of significant concern, reflecting wider society (Forrester et al., 2013). In 2016, there were 112 self-inflicted deaths recorded in prison, the highest annual rate since recordings began in 1990 (Inquest, 2016). The rates of suicide and self-harm have been at alarming levels in English and Welsh prisons (Borschmann et al., 2018). Given the current high and growing level of imprisonment in England and Wales, it is

estimated that up to 68,000 prisoners have some form of mental or psychiatric disorder (Prison Reform Trust, 2016). Male prisoners make up an estimated 94% of the prison population and have a much higher incidence of mental health issues than the wider population (ibid.). Whilst mental illnesses come under the umbrella of wellbeing, it is said that everyone is on a scale of 'wellbeing', meaning this can be positive too. Wellbeing, however, is a complex constructed for which the definition has been greatly contested, with Thomas (2009) arguing that wellbeing is intangible and extremely hard to measure accurately. Ryff (1989) identified key components that determine one's wellbeing, including autonomy, mastery, positive relationships and a purpose in life but still struggled to provide an accurate definition. Shah and Marks (2004) suggested that wellbeing is more than just being happy; it involved developing as a person, being fulfilled and making contributions to society, but Dodge et al. (2012) argue that this is too descriptive, rather than defining. Most commonly and simply, Deiner (2009) defines wellbeing as a general evaluation of one's quality of life, and this accounts for both contentment and challenges present for an individual (Dodge et al., 2012).

Recent studies have shown that prisoners, both male and female, have notable problems with hazardous drinking, high levels of Class A drug use, significant prevalence of anxiety and depression and symptoms of psychosis whilst in prison and, more so, if they reoffend and return to custody (Light et al., 2013). Although mental illness diagnosis (Singleton et al., 2003), prevalence of suicide and incidences of self-harm (McManus et al., 2009) are greater amongst female prisoners per head of population in England and Wales, it has been suggested that male prisoners are less likely to report depressive feelings or symptoms (Williams et al., 2012). Further, compared to females, males are four times as likely to be hospitalised as a result of self-harm attempts (MoJ, 2011).

Based on statistics, females are more likely to continuously self-harm or threaten suicide attempts, however male self-harm behaviours tend to be more serious and less self-reported, such as drug and alcohol use and dangerous risk-taking (Hawton et al., 2014). Male self-harm is more likely to be fatal, rather than the non-fatal attempts mostly carried out by females in prison (Owens et al., 2002); and prisoners who are deemed to require solitary cells are more likely to exhibit self-harm behaviours, such as cutting, drug abuse or deliberate

violent injury (Kaba et al., 2014). Entrapment, perceived stress and absence of support are acknowledged as the main reasons for deliberate self-harm in prison (Slade et al., 2014), but moreover it is a coping mechanism for those in custody (Dear et al., 2002). Furthermore, bullying is an overwhelming problem in prisons often arising due to the type of sentence, debt or use of substances, and can subsequently result in victims resorting to self-harm or suicidal behaviours (Ieland, 2014; Marzano, 2015). Many prisoners struggle to adapt to prison life, feel they deserve to be punished and have excessive free time to dwell on previous experiences, rendering self-harm or suicidal behaviours as a means of avoiding the emotional baggage (Chapman et al., 2005). Links between previous life trauma, imprisonment and current mental states have also been correlated as reasons for self-harm in custody (Fliege et al., 2009).

With regards to psychosis and psychotic episodes, both males and females are consistent in reporting paranoia and mania; however, females are more willing to accept help for such symptoms (Light et al., 2013). Foreign national prisoners are also considered a high-risk group with regards to mental illness: approximately 13% of the prison population are foreign nationals and they account for a quarter of self-harm statistics (HMPS, 2016). Predictably, this is reportedly due to language problems, cultural isolation, immigration uncertainties and, again, lack of family support (Barnoux and Wood, 2013). Some prisoners choose to detach themselves from family support networks as a coping mechanism for both parties (Jewkes et al., 2016) and to protect younger family members from experiencing a bleak prison setting (Blumberg and Griffin, 2013). In addition, many prisoners serving longer sentences suffer with a lack of established relationships, reduced familial support and unpredictable future relationships on release from prison, resulting in them feeling alone and suffering in silence (Volker et al., 2016).

Research has suggested that prisoners perceive prison to be an unhealthy environment with extended periods of isolation, prevalence of bullying and the overall current prison climate contributing to the challenges of enhancing mental wellbeing (Goomany and Dickinson, 2015). Conversely, the access to health services, prominence of structure and routine, and using prison as a place of respite have all been accepted as positive influences for mental wellbeing (ibid.).

Peer support mechanisms and peer advocacy programmes have been used frequently in prison settings to address health issues (Woodall et al., 2015) and despite the limited published evidence, they are accepted as a recognised way of confronting health and social issues amongst prisoners (Fletcher and Batty, 2012). On the other hand, engaging with support programmes or groups can be perceived as weak by some prisoners, therefore they refuse to join through fear of highlighting a potential vulnerability (Jaffe, 2012). Bagnall et al. (2015) found that peer health education programmes help to reduce risk-taking behaviours in prison, they promote positive health behaviours and encourage practical and emotional support. Peer support programmes have also been found to reduce stigma surrounding mental health, reduce drug use (Wright et al., 2011) and improve the atmosphere around the prison, and relationships between staff and prisoners (Davies, 1994) – fundamental in providing a health promoting prison (Woodall et al., 2015). Overall, this suggests that interaction, peer mentoring and trust building between prisoners and staff are all important components of successful health interventions (Coates, 2016; Petersilia, 2011).

Although there are some negative connotations with joining a group in prison, the importance of communication and mutual dependence are frequently stressed as significant factors in creating a successful group (Forsyth, 2018). A group is made up of individuals, who each bring to it their own characteristics and skills for the benefit of all (Agazarian, 2018). Equally, within bigger groups, small groups or 'cliques' can occur (Clavreul, 2006); through expressions of unity and belonging to a group dynamic, social ranking and differentiation can quickly become prevalent (Homans, 2017). Unsurprisingly, this can then return to being a problematic group within a prison setting.

A specific intervention that has been utilised to encourage support networks is the Samaritans' Listener Scheme (1990). Despite the scheme's long-standing existence, there has been a lack of research into the effects that it can have in prisons. What has been found, however, is that listening schemes increase empathy, confidence and resilience and thereby provide tools to cope with the challenges of prison life (Jaffe, 2012). Prisoners have also reported feeling less vulnerable and having reduced stress levels after engaging in the listener scheme, whilst mentors themselves experienced significant personal growth whilst in prison (Dhaliwal and Harrower, 2009).

Despite the prevalence of mental illnesses within prison settings, the treatment for such conditions remains somewhat neglected. While physical health problems, such as TB, can be easily diagnosed, mental illnesses are more difficult for prison staff to identify without the necessary training (Reingle-Gonzalez and Connell, 2014). The recent HMPPS proposals regarding mental health indicate that prison officers will be encouraged to attend further training related to suicide and self-harm and is now included in Prison Officer Entry Level Training (Seed, 2018). Additionally, forensic psychologists and psychiatrists are in relatively short supply (Hills et al., 2004), and a lack of integration between health providers (Johnson et al., 2015) and continuous justice settings budget cuts (Painter, 2013; Scott-Haywood, 2009) have contributed to the unreliable and inconsistent mental health care in prisons.

A prison officer's role is to facilitate rehabilitation whilst maintaining order in the prison establishment (Liebling et al., 2010), however, given the complex needs of many prisoners, this can be an extremely challenging position. The combined effect of reduced prison staff, budgetary constraints across the public sector and an increasing prisoner population (Clifton, 2016), have resulted in a shortage of prison staff and a workforce unable to receive the necessary training required to cope with the varying demands (Bennett et al., 2013). It has been suggested that prison staff that enjoy their job approach prisoners with greater enthusiasm and hope (Gredecki and Ireland, 2012) but with reduced numbers, this is now a rarity. Prison officers now have pastoral care roles as 'personal officers' and are responsible for the welfare and care of a specific number of prisoners (Crawley, 2013). Understandably, the ever-increasing prison population (Clifton, 2016) has strained the role of personal officers and some prisoners may not even meet their personal officers during their sentence (Liebling et al., 2010).

The decrease in prison staff also means the process of 'pro-social modelling' is less likely. Previous research has suggested that a clear 'us and them' culture exists between uniformed staff and prisoners, with an obvious line between who is in charge (de Viggiani, 2007). The NOMS Model (Raynor and Maguire, 2006) highlights the benefits of staff presenting positive behaviours to prisoners to allow them to learn about and reflect upon their own actions, with the ultimate goal to reduce anti-social behaviours and reoffending (Carr, 2017). Due to the

current climate of prisons, pro-social behaviours are far from common practice amongst prison staff (Cherry, 2017), despite reiteration in HMPPS agenda for providing a rehabilitative culture through safety, enhancing mental wellbeing and reducing reoffending (Tangen and Briah, 2018).

Although screening for mental health problems has become a norm for prison settings as prisoners enter an establishment (Raffle and Gray, 2007), some difficulties remain with regards to who is conducting the initial screenings (Senior et al., 2013). A recent study (Brown et al., 2015) has indicated that the presence of a community psychiatric nurse to carry out prisoners' screenings could be beneficial in terms of improving referrals, accurate diagnoses and strengthening transitions to prison life. Research by Slade et al., (2016), explored prisoners' pathways through the prison system. They found that a third of prisoners displayed an acute mental illness on arrival at reception screening, and just over a third presented acute symptoms such as suicidal behaviours at a later stage. Over half (55%) of self-inflicted deaths have occurred within prisoners' first month of their sentence (Prison Reform Trust, 2016). Furthermore, mental health problems, particularly symptoms of depression and psychosis, are likely to be more prevalent during the early weeks and months of a sentence due to adaptation to prison life, changes in medication, withdrawal from drugs and disrupted health care (Hassan et al., 2011). This indicates the importance of thorough and accurate mental health screenings upon arrival in prison. Evidently, the process involving mental health assessments appears unpredictable.

Stigma towards mental illness is also a common barrier to gaining the correct help and support. Stigma is defined as the occurrence of labelling, stereotyping, status loss and discrimination in which power is exercised (Hatzenbuehler et al., 2013), implying a lack of knowledge or understanding, resulting in ignorance towards an issue (Thornicroft et al., 2007). In the context of this research, males find the idea of opening up challenging, in relation to masculine expectations (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Therapists and clinicians acknowledge the sociocultural barriers that men face in adhering to masculine norms and denying their mental health (Allen et al., 1991). As a result, multiple media campaigns called Andy's Man Club, #itsokaytotalk and Break The Stigma and

many sports initiatives have all aimed to tackle the stigma associated with mental health amongst the male population (Clement et al., 2013).

Remand prisoners are reportedly less likely to suffer with mental health conditions whilst in prison, whereas sentenced prisoners experience longer-term mental health problems, in particular depressive episodes (Hassan et al., 2011). Additionally, Black et al. (2007) found a strong association between histories of mental illness and attempted suicide amongst male prisoners with participants stating homelessness, illegal drug use and living alone as contributing factors. The distrust, isolation, lack of control and shame is often overwhelming and intolerable for prisoners with suicide often being perceived as the only way out (Pratt et al., 2016). Similarly, suicidal prisoners often feel a sense of hopelessness as they battle between defeat, entrapment and low self-esteem, therefore it is suggested that therapeutic interventions focussing on enhancing self-perceptions and worthlessness would be beneficial (Gooding et al., 2015).

Although research suggests that mental health service provision has improved within prisons over the past 12 years (Fazel and Seewald, 2012; Martin et al., 2018), it is evident that the increase in prisoners, substantial funding barriers and reorganisation of NHS commissioning groups has prompted challenges (Brooker and Gojkovic, 2009). This perhaps endorses the need for more alternative, cost-effective and sustainable ways of delivering therapeutic care.

Masculinities

Men and Masculinities

The sociocultural phenomenon of hypermasculinity within prison is arguably linked to the prevalence of mental health problems amongst male prisoners (Kupers, 2005). Significant research into gender was conducted in the 1970s by psychologists who made the important discovery that humans' lives and experiences are constructed and influenced by their gender (Morawski, 1985; Smiler, 2004). It has been argued that gender is among the most confusing concepts that occurs within science (Freud, 1953) and even contemporary

researchers claim it is a permanently contested phenomenon (Butler and Scott., 1992). This marked the start of studying males as males, rather than non-gendered individuals (Thompson and Pleck, 1995), introducing masculinity as a relatively modern concept (Connell, 1993). Initially, masculinity was predominantly viewed as the 'male sex role theory' which implied that males actively attempt to acquire attributes that affirm their biological identity in an effort to become and appear more mature (Pleck, 1987). Masculinity is, however, much more complex and it was quickly acknowledged that personalities, cultural factors and social expectations influence male masculinities (Spence and Helmreich, 1979).

Masculinity could simply be defined as 'the possession of qualities traditionally associated with men' with these characteristics listed as aggressive, unemotional, independent, dominant, competitive, self-confident and excitable (Franklin, 2012). In contrast, Middleton (1992) contests that masculinity should be defined as a discourse, a power structure, a psychic economy, an identity or an aesthetic, implying that a person's sex does not necessarily impact upon masculine traits.

Bem (1977) argues that the traditional masculine characteristics (Franklin, 2012) are derived from childhood experiences and cognitive development, commonly referred to as the androgyny theory; however there is also an acceptance that individual personalities can influence masculine behaviours. Further to these characteristics, David and Brannon (1976) proposed four underlying principles that define the boundaries of a masculine role; acting tough or 'no sissy stuff', acting superior or 'the big wheel', displaying independence and self-reliance or 'sturdy oak' and using aggression and violence or 'give 'em hell'. Their descriptions of masculine roles prompted the first acknowledgement that displaying masculine traits could be negative and potentially damaging with regards to emotional suppression, being anti-feminine and dismissive of health and wellbeing. Similarly, Garde (2003) suggests that there are four domains that epitomise masculinity: power, ambivalence towards femininity, domination and avoiding emotions.

In more recent studies, O'Neil (2002) identified consistent links between masculine behaviours, emotional control and depressive symptoms whilst

Malamuth et al. (2000) accepted that masculinity can lead to hostility, aggression and increased sexual promiscuities. Endorsement and internalisation of perceived traditional male gender roles can prompt dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours, such as misogyny and violence (Pleck, 1981). Within masculinity research, this perspective is considered to be a Masculinity Ideology Theory (Smiler, 2004). Another notable pioneer in the study of male behaviour is William Pollack, who has continually investigated the psychology of men and the characteristics they possess in order to become 'a man' (Levant and Pollack, 1995). Given the historic feminist theorisation of masculinity, Pollack (1995) recognises the struggles faced by young men to appear dominant due to the sociocultural expectations and the distinguished lack of empathy, commitment and intimacy within their personalities.

Within the world of gendered research, Connell (1985) proposed that there are four types of masculinity: hegemonic, subordinate, complicit and marginalised. The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been frequently used to describe males' position in society. The phrase hegemonic masculinity was first coined by Kessler et al. (1982) and has continued to influence gender studies across many different fields (Hanke, 1992; Jansen and Sabo, 1994; Martino, 1995). Hegemonic masculinity implies that males hold a dominant position within the social hierarchy (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005), is defined as the current configuration of practice that legitimizes men's overriding position in society and justifies the subordination of women (Connell, 1985) and where men should not be controlled or led by women (Carli and Eagly, 2001). The protection of women, however, is relevant to male hegemony and for prisoners who have committed offences against women, or indeed children, it would not be uncommon for them. It would not be uncommon for vulnerable prisoners (Blaauw, 2013) to be subject to bullying in prisons (Blaauw, 2013). There has been a rise in the sex offender population, negative community perceptions and media frenzy have only heightened the stigma (Mann, 2016).

Understandings of hegemonic masculinity converged from three main factors: the enhancement of women's political experience, gay men's social and political progression and empirical research on boys and men in schools and workplaces (Connell, 2017). Over recent years the traditional male and female working roles have diminished and many males feel additional pressures to

maintain the historical 'providing male' role in society (Whitehead, 2002). The demise of manufacturing and heavy industries has rendered males confused and pressured about their role within modern working life and creates another link between unemployment, poverty and criminal activity (Scourfield and Drakeford, 2002).

In contrast to hegemonic masculinity, subordinate masculinity is not considered a dominant male position due to the projection of supposed weak, feminine, homosexual and emotional behaviours (McFarlane, 2013). These actions are frequently seen as abnormal within the masculine male world and often result in oppression and vulnerability (Collier, 1998; Segal, 1997). Those considered to be subordinate masculine males are not the only male group to be oppressed within society. Males who fail to hold down a job, cannot provide for their family, commit crimes worthy of custodial sentencing or turn to alcohol as a means of coping can be left vulnerable (Morgan, 2005). This suggests that those incarcerated are even more likely to display masculine behaviours in order to mask their 'failures' as a man.

Furthering the dominance of the male's position within society is the idea of complicit masculinity (Connell, 1985). Men within male dominated groups experiencing successful hegemonic rewards often become complicit in their masculine persona and are dismissive of accepting others who do not fit their agenda (Wetherell and Edley, 1999). Hegemonic groups of men will agree ways in which subordination of other groups will be carried out meaning that discrimination is entirely intentional (Gomez and Fernando, 2007).

Finally, marginalised masculinity is considered to be the weakest position for males, but it is more than just gender that can result in becoming marginalised (Connell, 2005). Poor, working class, minority ethnic and homosexual men are often categorised as marginalised through the attitudes of hegemonic or complicit masculine groups (Creighton and Oliffe, 2010). Perhaps ironically, the low socio-economic backgrounds of many male prisoners means they could be considered a marginalised group but with great intentions of achieving hegemony within a prison setting, implying that Connell's proposals can alter depending on the subcultural environment.

Overall, subordinate and marginalised are both considered unfulfilling with regards to achieving a masculine position due to their effeminate and outsider traits; in contrast, hegemonic masculinity is considered the ultimate male status to reach and complicit masculinity accentuates the concept as deliberate discrimination is present to ostracise other groups. Although still a frequently used phrase, it has been argued that hegemonic masculinity is too simplistic, does not account for societal changes and invites pressure for males to behave in such a way (Moller, 2007) or be seen as non-conformers (Kupers, 2017). The hierarchical nature of the hegemonic masculinity theory (Connell, 1985) also suggests that men can not only dominate women but also other males, meaning the notion is more complex than a male-female dualism (Cameron and Bernardes, 1998).

Men's Health

Evidently the peer-pressure to exert overtly masculine characteristics, such as aggression and suppression of emotions, has the potential to prevent males from seeking help, treatment and support, particularly with regards to health (Sabo, 2001). Gender-specific health care has now become a biomedical speciality (Legato, 2000) and health professionals have begun to investigate how males' needs can be met in healthcare settings (Courtenay, 2002). Perhaps ironically, the resurgence of females' health choices, such as the introduction of the contraceptive pill, appears to have left behind males' health needs, despite the perceived male-dominated society in which many reside (Sabo, 2001).

Excessive drinking, physical injuries from fighting and accidents from risk taking are results of expected masculine behaviours and heart related problems have been accounted for by the demands of being 'the male of the household' (Creighton and Oliffe, 2010; Harrison et al., 1992). Similarly, adherence to the 'husband/provider' role shapes male's experiences of coping with female loved ones' health problems, enhancing males stress levels (Sabo et al., 1986). Males have also been found to be passive regarding their own health problems, naïve when exploring the seriousness of conditions and ignorant towards their need

for help (Gough, 2006). It is argued that the requirement to appear as self-reliant, physically capable and possessing control in life is preventing males from seeking the necessary help and guidance with health problems (Farrimond, 2012). Although it could be argued that men's resilience in coping with illnesses could be a valuable buffer to health, the hegemonic masculine attitude is widely understood to be an important risk factor (Levant and Wimer, 2014).

Epidemiologically, men's health is underpinned by male and female sex differences and biological models of health (Watson, 2000). Although this is often dismissed by researchers as, depending on their environment, females could just as likely take part in risk taking health behaviours (de Viggiani, 2003). It is also important to appreciate that health inequalities among men are not simply biological, but also influenced by economic, social and emotional status (Whitehead, 1992; Lee and Owens, 2002). This has led to an acceptance that health is a gendered concept and nuances such as masculinity should be explored as a social health phenomenon (Harrison and Dignan, 1999; Watson, 2000).

Following extensive research displaying the health inequalities experienced by males, the connection between health and masculinity has been theorised. For example, Evans et al. (2011) explored the intersections between health, illness, men and masculinities, and invented the Health, Illness, Men and Masculinities (HIMM) Framework. Specifically, the HIMM Framework depicts masculinities as a significant determinant of men's health that intersects other, more established, determinants of health, such as socio-economic status, race, geography and education (ibid.).

The delivery of men's health interventions has also been found to be significant in enhancing male engagement with health, and understanding their needs. Using words and phrases such as 'activities' and 'regaining control' rather than 'health' and 'help-seeking' appeal to males more effectively as well as offering support in a relaxed, 'arm's length' manner creates a more comfortable environment (Robertson et al., 2015). Evidently, this suggests that the tone and type of language used to reach out to certain prison population is crucial in

engaging individuals in rehabilitative and therapeutic interventions (Brosens et al., 2014).

It has also been suggested that working to improve health within a community rather than clinical setting is likely to be more successful when reaching out to males, as it masks any potential unease and is more informal (Ba and Zwolinsky, 2013). Within a prison setting, this is difficult to organise and discomfort in seeking health is hard to eradicate. In general, approaches to improve and understand men's health have successfully progressed with practical, meaningful and gender sensitive interventions being implemented (Patrick and Robertson, 2016), for example, a human-animal relationship intervention demonstrated declines in aggressive behaviour and lower hypermasculine traits (Fournier, 2016). However, the challenges of reaching out to males in a hypermasculine environment still remain (Baker, 2016) particularly, in this case, in prison.

Masculinities in Prison

When males are placed within a prison setting cohabiting alongside hundreds of other males, this triggers a masculine awareness – where although prisoners may not 'stick their chest out' and 'flex their biceps', there is an intense suppression of emotion and an edginess to the environment (Sabo, 2001). The aforementioned four epitomising domains of masculinity – power, ambivalence towards femininity, domination and avoiding emotions (Garde, 2003) – are strictly followed by male prisoners and are used as techniques to survive the prison environment as it becomes hypermasculinised (Toch, 1998).

Many public institutions are historically underpinned by patriarchal and hegemonic masculine values (Connell, 2014) and prison is no exception. Prison is considered to be an ultra-masculine environment where nobody talks about masculinity and a location that subconsciously encourages hegemonic masculinity (Sabo et al., 2001). In contrast, within the patriarchal culture of prisons, the term fratriarchal is sometimes used to describe the circus of masculinities on prison wings, by gender theorists (Brod, 1990; Remy, 1990). Where patriarchal suggests a male dominance, deriving from father-to-son

values (Reid, 2017), fratriarchal implies a brother-to-brother code of conduct which results in a battle to become the 'big man' on the wings, in a bid to achieve patriarchal status in the prison hierarchy (Coyne, 2003; Jewkes, 2005).

Research by Evans and Wallace (2007) implied that men together in prison results in a 'prison within a prison' scenario as the oppression of emotions and feelings metaphorically symbolises being locked away, and this has a significant influence on the low mental wellbeing experienced by male prisoners. Research surrounding prison life implies that each prisoner is expected to 'do their own time' and keep any problems to themselves (Scarce, 2002) as it is not considered the norm to 'drop the mask of masculinity' and release oneself from male bravado (Pollack, 1995). Male prisoners are likely to project a tough persona and present behaviours that suggest they are dealing with prison life. This is often, however, due to the pressures of not appearing weak, effeminate or gay, all of which are deemed to be against the rules of male prisons (Sabo et al., 2001).

Ethnographic research of prison masculinities undertaken by de Viggiani (2012) produced findings suggesting that male prisoners felt a pressure to 'fit in' and become accepted into the prison regime. This meant they displayed behaviours that earned them respect from others, and aggression to establish their dominance in a bid to seek social survival in prison. Furthermore, it was also found that the divisive, institutional prison culture was disempowering to males with regards to their health and there was reluctance to improve themselves physically, mentally and emotionally. Some prisoners reported that they decided to become reclusive and refuse to move from their cell each day, as this was easier than 'putting on the front' expected of prison life and meant they could just 'forget all their problems' by sleeping. Reporting issues about bullying is also rare, although physical bullying often does involve some form of intervention from older, respected prisoners. Psychological bullying, however, is nearly always dismissed as 'banter' or 'camaraderie', despite many prisoners feeling victimised (ibid.). There is no doubt that bullying is extremely prevalent in prisons (Ireland, 2010) and although fairly under-researched (Sekol et al., 2016), it seems that bullying involving banter and teasing are widely accepted forms of behaviour in hypermasculine environments (Sloan, 2016).

Another ethnographic study conducted with younger males in prison found a significant 'gang culture' on prison wings, which naturally enhanced the likelihood of violence-related activities and competitiveness between prisoners (Earle, 2011; Pyrooz et al., 2011). Younger males are more likely to be experiencing prison for the first time; they may therefore feel the need to fit in, find common ground with other inmates and exert a 'tough' persona in order to deter threats from others (ibid.). On residential wings an unwritten code is adhered to, where prisoners 'don't grass', keep themselves to themselves and maintain a stiff upper lip to avoid bullying/trouble (Lander and Ravn, 2016),

Despite the prevalence of masculinity, many male prisoners have accepted that the pressures of appearing masculine and tough can be damaging to their health (Evans and Wallace, 2007; de Viggiani, 2012). Research has shown that prisoners acknowledge that forming positive relationship with others in prison can increase trust, decrease feelings of vulnerability and create a positive prison life (Karp, 2010). Furthermore, some males who may have not possessed overtly masculine traits prior to their custodial sentence become victims to the masculine norms of prison life (de Viggiani, 2012) indicating that these expectations are affecting men from numerous backgrounds, personalities and cultures.

Type of crime can also account for the presence of masculine behaviours in prison, and particularly violent crime is clearly gendered (Karp, 2010). Although there are instances of violent crimes amongst females, these are more associated with self-defence rather than intentional harmful actions displayed by male prisoners (Newburn and Stanko, 2013). Additionally, sexual offences and domestic abuse crimes towards women also enhance the 'anti-female' and dominance segments of hegemonic masculinity, meaning masculinities are potentially already prolific amongst those offenders prior to prison (Cossins, 2000). Committing a crime against women, however, is also seen as the 'lowest' or 'least accepted' type of crime by other criminals (Karp, 2010) meaning that those who are convicted of rape, sexual assault or domestic violence towards women are more likely to display masculine behaviours in order to cope with the scrutiny from other inmates (Bandyopadhyay, 2006). Sex offenders are often segregated in prison on wings and for work to ensure their own safety (Mann, 2016), and have their own treatment programmes away from

other offenders (Brown, 2013) due to the extreme negative perception of their crime by both prisoners and staff (Spencer and Ricciardelli, 2016). Given the harm done to women as part of their crime, these offenders are not seen as 'real men' as this breaks the traditional protection role that men possess over women (Michalski, 2015). This implies a Kleinian 'splitting' mindset (Klein, 1975), creating an 'us versus them' scenario (Hernandez-Tubert, 2015). Kleinian 'splitting' behaviours can also occur between prisoners, as they look to separate each other from different types of crimes, presenting deeply ingrained self-fulfilling prophecies to differentiate from others (Holt et al., 2015; Merton, 1948). Groups with common ideologies or identities can also 'split' off to form their own culture in prison (Strauss, 2007). This can come as a result of shared achievements or projects (Haslam and Reicher, 2012) or simply a mutual motivation to escape the stereotypical aggressive, chaotic prison culture (Schanz, 2017). It has been argued that establishing out groups by splitting, can result in deindividuation and subsequently a loss of behavioural control (Reicher et al., 1995) but equally healthy shared goals and beliefs prompt a sense of belonging (Maslow, 1954; Sedikides and Brewer, 2015).

Furthering the idea of an 'us versus them' culture, Goffman's (1961) 'total institution' referred to inmates and staff relationships being a major implication in the central features of a punitive institution. As a result, there are often masculinity related issues deriving from the prison officers and prisoners as hierarchies begin to develop. Whilst female prison officers are common in English and Welsh prisons (Summers, 2017), it is traditionally seen as a female doing a male's job (Farnworth, 1992) due to the overwhelming dominance of male staff (Marzano et al., 2015; Seymour, 2003). The presence of male staff only adds a further dimension to the gendered, masculine culture of prisons as male prisoners are not only reminded of the loss of their masculinity through being a bread winner and protector of his family (Bandyopadhyay, 2006) but also have a someone above them in the hierarchy. The compulsory regime of prison life prompts males to rebel against the system to some extent as they seek to maintain some form of masculinity by 'not being messed with' in a time of loss of liberation and emasculation (de Viggiani, 2018).

Given the punitive nature of prisons, the threat of force from officers, and possibly from prisoners to other prisoners, is omnipresent (Gariglio, 2016).

Consequently, violent and aggressive actions are synonymous with imprisonment and with hypermasculinity, so the prison environment becomes a breeding ground for such problems (Meade, 2017). Returning to Connell's (1985) hegemonic masculinity theory, one of the key features of men seeking to maintain or create the hegemonic image is to portray strength, aggression and/or violence. Within a wider societal context, perfecting the toned, muscular, athletic 'billboard' look has become the idealistic way for men to present themselves (Gill, 2008). Prisons are a problematic sub-culture for hypermasculine goals as so many actors present, including prisoners and staff, are fighting, literally and metaphorically to be a 'real man' and display power within the hierarchy (Coyne, 2003; Michalski, 2015). There has, however, been some research implying that humour has been known to unite groups within prison, even if this is traditional 'black humour' (Crawley, 2004). By having a sense of humour in face of the punitive and power driven prison setting, it can create a prosperous working environment, particularly between prisoners and staff (Williams and Winship, 2018) and that humorous exchanges could be used to regulate potential masculine clashes within groups (Kehily and Nayak, 1997).

Evidently, expressions of masculinity come from the prison environment that is designed to encourage stoicism, bravery, physical prowess and power; prisoners try to respond to these characteristics in an equally damaging manner (Ricciardelli et al., 2015). As a result, masculinity has become a type of gender power both socially and structurally in prisons as simply 'being male' isn't enough; specific efforts have to be made to further their gender and seek power (Hearn, 2004). Of course, the characteristics of masculinity do not solely have to be isolated to male prisoners, as the agency and power that exists in women's prisons can produce similar behaviours and outcomes (Bosworth, 2017).

It is not just gender or positional characteristics that prompt behaviour change, as racial minority groups are also likely to enhance their masculinity due to threats from convicted racists and to counter feelings of marginality (Gibbs and Merighi, 1994). According to Goffman (1961) a male prison represents a total institution as all aspects of life are conducted in the same place, under the same authority with a strict, punitive schedule. The construction of masculinities as an identity position is a universal response to conform to lower working-class

dominated prison culture (Jewkes, 2005), often referred to as the 'prison code' (Sabo et al., 2001). In a similar respect to the deprivation and importation theories of health (Clemmer, 1958; Sykes, 1958), it appears that masculine traits can also be imported into the prison setting or created by the prison setting itself.

From a social psychological perspective, the 'pains of imprisonment' (Sykes, 1958) were understood to prompt the establishment of inmate subcultures and subsequent behaviours, such as how prisoners felt and how to address their individual needs, in this context projecting masculine behaviours. The losses of certain liberties and freedoms when incarcerated, prevents prisoners from fulfilling certain needs and renders them likely to become disobedient to prison rules in order to reach a state of satisfaction. By ignoring the societal, contextual causes of criminal activity, the impact of the pains of imprisonment worsens and exacerbates the problem (Haney, 2006). Unsurprisingly, the pains of imprisonment have altered over time since Sykes' (1958) initial proposal. The more contemporary problems of overcrowding, insisting on filling prison spaces (Guetzkow and Schoon, 2015, drug pressures, systemic policies, indeterminate sentences and self-governance have added to the pains of imprisonment (Crewe, 2011). Structurally and materially prisons are more comfortable than in previous decades, however they are now seen as tougher in different ways, as refuge and simple public protection has somewhat subsided for a place of power and psychological challenge (ibid.).

Despite the isolating experience of prison and the idea of 'keeping yourself to yourself', there has been some recognition of befriending amongst male prisoners, in the form of banter, friendship, support and extended family type feelings (Wulf-Ludden, 2013). Having a prison setting conducive to social connections is greatly beneficial (Cochran and Mears, 2013), to eradicate the common occurrence of social isolation, despite the high number of prisoners (Liebling and Maruna, 2013). Further, creating a friendship network between different age groups, which GOOP clearly helps to facilitate, can act as a moderator for misbehaviour, particularly in younger prisoners as they learn from older, more mature prisoners (Reid, 2017). Unsurprisingly, there is a reluctance to discuss this in an emotional or meaningful context (Crewe, 2014).

More often than not, prisons are seen as aggressive and untrustworthy settings rife with men putting on their male bravado masks. Trust is a significant part of prison culture and it naturally prevents people to trust each other (Corley, 2001). Trust can be defined as the extent to which an individual or a group is willing to depend on someone or something, with a feeling of relative security despite potential risks (Josang and Presti, 2004). Neupert (1992) and Kramer and Crook (2004) proposed that different types of trust exist in relationships and we subsequently work our way through the stages as we trust others. For example, humans can be forced to trust others through the form of contract and eventually, as the reliability grows we reach a stage of goodwill trust, where it is a personalised form of the characteristic. Although some friendships can be established in prison, trust remains a key element of successful friendship (Silver, 1989). According to Dietz (2011) trust can be based upon three concepts: ability, benevolence and integrity all of which are seldom displayed in prison cultures.

It is also important to consider the whole emotional geography of a prison with emotional acceptance varying throughout prisoners' custodial journey (Crewe et al., 2014). The induction period to a custodial sentence is considered the most emotionally challenging time for prisoners, particularly first timers and the 'divide and rule' culture from prisoners and staff also provokes emotional challenges (de Viggiani, 2003). Consequently, many local prisons created 'First Night Centres' where prisoners could be supported often in bright, comfortable surroundings with the availability of mental health and detoxification assessments (Liebling, 2007). Prisoners are also more likely to express emotional concerns within religious group settings or to cell-mates (Liebling and Arnold, 2012), and less inclined to do so on prison wings, in larger groups or in front of prison officers (Hua-Fa, 2005). Prison wings are often metaphorically referred to as 'jungles' (Marks, 2001) which can be useful in describing the chaotic and dangerous lives in residential settings in prison (Dolovich, 2018).

Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that some male prisoners have experienced positive masculinities whilst imprisoned. An ethnographic study in a Scottish prison demonstrated that attending specific parenting courses, even for prisoners without children at home, can encourage a softer side to male behaviour as prisoners learn to confide, express feelings and share stories,

which ultimately resulted in less aggressive behaviours in the wider prison (Buston, 2018). Although the pains of imprisonments can include the loss of paternalistic enactment, the strength to reject involvement in violence and aggressive behaviour can enhance feelings of being a good father and resisting conformation to masculine norms (Ugelvik, 2014). This can be challenging, as prisoners often conform to that culture in order to feel a sense of belonging (Skarbek, 2011), to avoid social isolation. Zimbardo's infamous Stanford Prison Experiment (1973) suggests that conformity is frequently portrayed in psychology research as a negative consequence of group structure. Displaying paternalistic traits, such as advising younger prisoners on prison life (Dyer, 2005) negates feelings of the helplessness of not being there for their own children or dependants (Arditti et al., 2005), and presents a way of positive conformation (Harvey and Consalvi, 1960).

Masculinities and Mental Health in Prison

Research into the survival process in prison was conducted by de Viggiani (2006). He found that prisoners regularly struggled with their emotional wellbeing but the fear of bullying and intimidation from other prisoners prevented the externalisation of any feelings, despite the acknowledgement of mental health treatment (ibid.). Conveying symptoms of depression, such as visible sadness, often renders male prisoners feeling vulnerable, isolated and inferior (Hammond, 2012). Individual and collective beliefs about masculinity profoundly impact upon men's mental health, especially organised settings that are highly gendered (Mankowski and Smith, 2016).

In order to counter the negative implications of masculinity, a few specific interventions have been implemented. For example, the ManKind Project (now Freedom within Prison Project) founded in 2009 is a voluntary, men's organisation which offered prisoner a therapeutic, group environment to explore their conceptions of masculinity and redefine them in more helpful ways through prison life (Karp, 2010). The Jericho Circle and Inside Circle Foundation were offshoot projects from ManKind and participants reported that they offered a unique opportunity to experience personal growth, explore emotional

intelligence and transform their prison life (Karp, 2010). Although these projects were once embedded into the prison structure, changes in funding mean that many prisons buy into the services, but they are still able to function in all prison categories (ibid.).

Within custodial settings, males lose autonomy, support networks and material goods, which are important factors in the hegemonic male's life (Hua-Fa, 2005). This prompts male prisoners to exert their masculine position even further, despite the loss (Liu et al., 2005). The loss faced by prisoners negates their sense of manliness which can directly result in deterioration of mental and physical health, particularly for prisoners who are particularly stressed by the prison surroundings (Jewkes, 2002). The pressure to conform to masculine norms has been described as the Masculine Strain Theory (Pleck, 1995). This describes how rigid adherence to traditional masculinity creates dysfunctional behaviours, potentially resulting in depression and/or anxiety (Iwamoto et al., 2012) and, notably, in men being less likely to seek support for such illnesses (Addis and Mahalik, 2003). Similarly, research involving non-incarcerated sample groups has highlighted the negative connections between masculine behaviours and mental ill-health (Iwamoto et al., 2010; Richmond, 2007).

Within prison, males have shown a willingness to seek out informal support networks through friends, family visits and community prison opportunities but are reluctant to accept formal, professional services, such as counselling (Woodward, 2003). Although this approach may work for some prisoners, many continue to 'save face' and 'wear the mask of masculinity' as their mental health worsens (Hatzenbuehler et al., 2010). Men are also more likely to experience feelings of self-blame and will rely on substance misuse as a coping mechanism, which goes hand in hand with the risk-taking behaviours engendered by masculine norms (Rosenfield and Mouzon, 2013).

Kupers (2005) chooses to use the phrase 'toxic masculinity' when referring to the barriers of seeking mental health in prisons, which he defines as "the constellation of socially regressive male traits that serve to foster domination, devaluation of women, homophobia and wanton violence" (p. 714). The need for respect is a significant issue for male prisoners (Crewe, 2011) as they often feel as if they are not respected for their role within the prison regime, rendering

a toxic dynamic between male prisoners and male staff alike (Trammell, 2012). It therefore seems the perceived embarrassment and stigma of seeking mental health treatment extends to staff as well. Negative and uncertain relationships in prison, undoubtedly heightened by hypermasculinity, also prevent male prisoners from seeking the necessary professional treatment due to a perceived lack of self-reliance (Morgan et al., 2007).

The physical conditions of the prison environment can also heighten masculine, violent behaviours amongst those incarcerated. For example, research conducted by Bierie (2012) found that, according to prison officers, noise, clutter, overcrowding and a lack of privacy contributed to prisoners' violent actions and boisterous behaviour, echoing the argument for a healthy prison environment. Overcrowding is a contemporary issue within prisons worldwide (Guerrero-Garcia and Marco, 2012) and particularly so in England and Wales (Berman and Dar, 2013; MacDonald, 2018). Research suggests that the congested, intense conditions on prison wings exacerbate health problems amongst males; as stress levels rise, surveillance increases and pressures are at an all-time high, meaning health is neglected, treatments are sparse and vulnerabilities are seized upon (de Viggiani, 2006; Dumont et al., 2012).

Sport, exercise and physical activity play a significant role in prisoners' free time and education opportunities within prison undoubtedly offer many benefits, such as socialisation, health improvement and skill development (Meek, 2018). With the violent and aggressive behaviours that manifest from masculine prison subcultures, organised sport can be an effective way of channelling aggression into a purposeful activity (Digennaro, 2010). However, there are many researchers who imply that gym-related activities are damaging for male prisoners and simply enhance the problem of hypermasculinity (Meek, 2013). Weightlifting in the gym is a considerably popular pastime for some male prisoners and although it can increase health status by a reduction in fat, it is extremely problematic in a social context, due to perceptions from other prisoners (Tepperman, 2014).

Perceptions from other prisoners involve judgements and jibes about how each other look with regards to their muscles and how 'big' they are, which creates a serious body image problem amongst male prisoners (de Viggiani, 2012). The

gym has been described as testosterone filled, a place for men to 'prove themselves' and a setting where offensive personal and physical comments are rife, which only enhances the pre-existing masculine dominance in prisons (ibid.). Given the existing problems with masculinity and previous inability of interventions to eradicate the issue, perhaps an alternative approach, setting and/or programme is required to challenge the problem of masculinities (Evans and Wallace, 2007).

Horticulture and Nature

Rehabilitative Culture

Given the aforementioned record high prison population in England and Wales, some have argued we are in a period of hyper-incarceration and prisons need to be reviewed to counteract the problem (Cuneen et al., 2016). By establishing meaningful environments, this can create more favourable expectations of life post-release (Visher and O'Connell, 2012) and discover a 'new' and 'better' personal identity influencing their future plans (Stevens, 2012). Consequently, in 2016 the UK government announced that there would be a reform of the prison and probation services with a notable focus on establishing a rehabilitative culture within custodial sites (MoJ, 2016). The environment in which prisoners are required to reside during their sentences was deemed to be unsafe and inhumane and to lack the rehabilitative resources needed to ensure reoffending is reduced (ibid.). The initial plan proposed to open a new super prison, HMP Berwyn, invest £1.3 billion to create 10000 more prison spaces, build five new community prisons for women and simplify the organisation ensuring prisoners are placed in the correct category prison with appropriate regimes (ibid.). Berwyn, however, has been scturinised in relation to being fit for creating a rehabilitative culture, given the size of the site (Jones, 2018). Notably, the issue of overcrowding and how the increased flow of people into prison could be reduced seemed to be omitted from the government's proposals (Carr, 2017). Significant focus, however, has been given to healthcare, drug and alcohol treatments, family reconnections, restorative justice and gaining qualifications to increase the chances of successful resettlement invoking feelings of hope

amongst prisoners. Inevitably, creating a rehabilitative prison is a challenging prospect, particularly if the system is to be consistent across all prison sites (Maguire and Raynor, 2017). Ideally, prisons should be decent, safe and secure (Hales et al., 2016) but recent shrinking resources, staff, accommodation and necessary pathways to recovery means that problems remain. In particular, the environment of prisons in the current climate has led to concerns about violence, substance misuse, and suicide and self-harm.

By infusing prisons with a rehabilitative culture, it is proposed that prisoners will be more likely to desist from future crimes (Losel, 2010). It is suggested that there are seven pathways to reduce reoffending: accommodation; education, training and employment; health; drugs and alcohol; finance, benefit and debt; children and families; attitudes, thinking and behaviour (Gojkovic et al., 2011). Though not all of these factors can be entirely addressed whilst in custodial settings, by implementing a joined up and collaborative approach to prisons, probation and rehabilitation, the opportunities and synergy between organisations should ensure the desistence from crime is possible (McNeill and Whyte, 2013). Further, Walters' (2016) version of the importation theory suggests that prisoners export prison behaviours into the community. This also affirms previous research indicating that prisons can have a criminogenic effect and therefore increase crime and unsafe communities (Cullen et al., 2011).

Prisoners' life stories are often rife with hopelessness (Leder et al., 1999), but the HMPPS prison reforms emphasise hope as a key to rehabilitative cultures. One of these concepts is that of hope, which is crucial in ensuring that prison is a turning point, offering a hopeful future and finding meaning in prisoners' lives (Vignansky et al., 2018). It has been acknowledged that at times of adversity throughout life, particularly in prison, hope can be the last thing that prisoners hold on to in order to survive their sentence, and act as a placebo for positivity (Pierce, 2014). Through research, hope has been found in practices in green settings helping to reduce recidivism and enhancing mental health (Van Der Linden, 2015). Introducing nature into the design of settings involves the presence of 'living things', to which humans are innately connected (Wilson, 2017); the spiritual, emotional and metaphorical benefits that arise in nature, act as a representation of sustainability and conservation (Booth, 2015).

Horticulture and Green Environments

Research suggests that participating in horticulture can make a notable contribution to the safe, secure, decent and health-supporting setting that is desired for the rehabilitative prison (Baybutt et al., 2018). Horticulture is the science and art of growing plants for both consumption and happiness, for the health of communities and to integrate nature into civilization (Relf, 1992). Although the urbanisation and development of towns and cities has led to less reliance on the horticultural industry, there has been a long history of farms and gardens amongst humans (Jacobs, 1969). The industrial revolution impacted the regular use of horticulture but Warner (1987) argues that banishing nature completely was not the inevitable way to build cities, but was seen as a 'bad mutation' brought on by nineteenth and twentieth century land greed; however, even during dramatic industrial change, wealthy philanthropists developed parks and gardens in hospitals and public places in order to improve health (Hartig and Marcus, 2006; Horowitz, 2012).

Despite some level of uncertainty within the horticultural industry, it is widely accepted that the presence of community gardens and green spaces provides numerous benefits, including nutritious food, sustainable produce, social cohesion, physical health improvements and an enhancement in psychological wellbeing (Hynes and Howe, 2009). Horticulture is also an outlet for self-expression and promoting self-esteem through recognition of responsibility, creativity and accomplishment (Griffiths and Griffiths, 1976). Local environments also become more aesthetically pleasing and are perceived as safer through the presence of gardens and offer a place of spirituality, reflection and inspiration (Zhou, 1994).

Nature refers to physical features and process of non-human origin, such as weather, flora and fauna and landscapes, and is often grouped alongside the phrase 'natural environment' which is an area of little human influence (Hartig et al., 2014). Over the centuries, humans have become increasingly and worryingly disengaged with nature (Axelrod and Suedfeld, 1995) due to economic shifts away from rural residencies and into towns and cities (Katcher

and Beck, 1987). We live in a progressively urbanised society (Pelling, 2014) meaning contact with nature is reduced despite evidence indicating that exposure to nature is vital for human health and wellbeing (Maller et al., 2006; Berman et al, 2012). Over recent years, however, there has been somewhat of a resurgence in connecting to nature due to the highlighting of overtly urban settings (Shanahan et al., 2015). Subsequently research in the field has grown rapidly partly because of the decrease in green spaces (Groenewegen et al., 2012) but also due to the obesity epidemic, increased sedentary lifestyles and low adherence to exercise (de Vries et al., 2013). Although Westernisation has doubled our life expectancy, non-communicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular problems have become dominant (McMichael, 2001) and the surge of mental ill-health is a significant public health concern (Merali and Anisman, 2016).

Socioeconomic factors are also relevant, as deprived areas often have less green spaces and those with low income perceive that they cannot afford the cost of food advertised as healthy, as well as gyms (White et al., 2013). It is likely that inequalities will always exist, but natural environments can be created anywhere, and are, more often than not, free to access and beneficial for all (Takano et al., 2002).

The human connection to nature is deeply rooted within people's conscious and subconscious minds and it is, therefore, difficult to conclude exactly why nature appears to positively impact health (Maller et al., 2006). Psychological, sociological and cultural studies, however, have consistently found positive correlations between engagement with nature and positive physical and mental health (Hartig et al., 2011). Natural environments are often visited as they are seen as places where humans feel relaxed and less tense, due to the presence of fresh air and open spaces as well as respecting living organisms (ibid.). Much of the research completed in this field of work has been 'dose-response' type, correlative studies, meaning that causations of the positive connections have yet to be established (Shanahan et al., 2015). However, ecopsychologists maintain that using measurements such as the Connectedness to Nature Scale (Schultz, 2012) provide acceptable evidence that nature and human health are positively connected and that human reporting is sufficient (Mayer and McPherson-Frantz, 2004).

The stress reduction theory (SRT) provides an outline for the impact of nature upon effect as Ulrich (1984) claims that natural environments have a restorative advantage over artificial environments due to their role in human evolution. Echoing the SRT evidence, simply showing photographic evidence of natural spaces has been found to reduce stress and lower heart rate (Gladwell et al., 2012). Furthermore, connecting with natural landscapes can reduce cortisol (Tyrvainen et al., 2014), positively influence blood pressure and self-esteem (Pretty et al., 2005), improve chronic illnesses (Pryor et al., 2006) and aid recovery from surgery (Ulrich, 1984). More specifically, neurological research measuring prefrontal cortex activity found that walking in natural environments decreases depressive symptoms and rumination in comparison to urban settings where no changes were reported (Bratman et al., 2015).

Varying times of the day, with regards to available natural light, have been researched showing that daylight, rather than night time, has a greater impact upon health and wellbeing due to increased vitamin D (Beute and Kort, 2014). Exposure to greater natural light can speed up cardiovascular recovery (Laumann et al., 2003), increase self-regulation, enhance positive mood and control the nervous system functioning (Williams and Thayer, 2009). Unsurprisingly, these phenomena can vary across countries, due to the natural climate, as well as across communities with regards to air pollution and provisions (Beute and Kort, 2014).

Green Exercise

There is little dispute that sport, exercise and physical activity increase physical and mental health across one's life span (Bize et al., 2007) and recent evidence suggests that the benefits of physical activity are most impactful when those who are least active participate (Powell et al., 2011). Although there are large numbers of people who are usually unwilling to engage in physical activity, interestingly, being in contact with nature is thought to increase motivation and empower them to become physically active (Wong, 1997). People are motivated to exercise for many different reasons; some are driven by external factors such as what others think of them and some are keen to improve their own health, for their own benefit (Divine et al., 2016; Vartanian et al., 2012). Research, however, suggests that the relaxed, fresh outdoor environment where partakers

can choose their speed, duration, activity, time and company is more likely to be motivational and this increases empowerment and a sense of freedom (Gladwell et al., 2013).

The concept of green exercise has derived from the Attention Restorative Theory (ART) which asserts that people can concentrate and feel better following a period of time in nature and, ultimately, seeks to find connections between two attention systems: direct and indirect (Kaplan, 1995). Indirect attention occurs when something happens suddenly or when an individual does not exert any effort or thought. In contrast, direct attention is activated when a person is required to concentrate and mentally disregards other distracting factors. Overall, green environments are supposed to offer a setting where concentration is greater than in other, urban, more chaotic settings.

Pretty et al. (2005) conducted a study involving groups of participants exercising on a treadmill whilst having different scenic photos placed in front of them, categorised as: rural pleasant, rural unpleasant, urban pleasant and urban unpleasant. Blood pressure, self-esteem and mood were all measured during the study and findings clearly showed that unpleasant sceneries have a negative impact upon mood and self-esteem. These findings were then furthered and the researchers investigated the impact upon psychological wellbeing in 10 different green exercise situations (Pretty et al., 2007). The exercises varied and included horse-riding, cycling, fishing and canal boating and all activities were found to stabilise mood, promote self-esteem and improve psychological wellbeing, but more vigorous activities offered slightly higher results on psychological wellbeing questionnaires. It is important to acknowledge that participants of this study were, however, already physically active.

Comparative research about different green environments has also been carried out where psychological responses were measured before and after 5km runs in a beach area, grasslands, riverside and heritage sites (Rogerson et al., 2016). All settings offered acute psychological enhancements and it seems that location is not critical to improvements in effect; however, some have argued that the literal presence of the colour green is more reliable in terms of health benefits (Elliot and Maier, 2014). In a cycling-oriented study, where

participants viewed different coloured videos of forest areas whilst on an exercise bike, findings showed that feelings of tension, depression, fatigue and confusion reduced (Akers et al., 2012). This was the first study to show the importance of the colour green in exercise.

Diagnosed mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression have been found to improve following periods of green exercise. A group exercise study found that green exercise reduced symptoms of state anxiety, acknowledged the need to address individual and group requirements of exercise, and that the amount of 'greenness' was pertinent to the successful anxiety treatment (Mackay and Neill, 2010). A meta-analysis also supported these findings, showing that those who had pre-existing mental illnesses experienced the greatest improvement in depression and anxiety symptoms following outdoor exercise and, interestingly, that the presence of water also provoked positive self-reporting regarding mood (Barton and Pretty, 2010). Similarly, there has also been a recent exploration into the benefits of green exercise and outdoor experiences for delaying the effects of dementia, improving memory loss and preventing hippocampal dysfunction in later life (Blake and Mitchell, 2016; Mapes, 2016).

Horticulture as Therapy

Due to the evident benefits of engaging with green spaces and the outdoors, horticultural therapy has developed into a profession/activity in its own right. Horticultural therapy is the process in which plants, gardening activities and innate closeness to nature are all used as vehicles in tailored programmes of therapy and rehabilitation (Davis, 1998). An alternative definition is the method of utilising fruit, vegetables, flowers and plants to achieve specific treatment goals and improve a person's wellbeing (Liu et al., 2014). Although horticulture does not necessarily tick all the boxes for a therapeutic tool, the wide range of users and varying activities makes it an attractive rehabilitative programme for many population groups (Elings, 2006; Sempik et al., 2005; Simson and Straus, 1997). The mental health charity, Mind, have also acknowledged that horticulture is a clinically valid treatment for those experiencing mental illness

(Peacock et al., 2007). The creative elements needed for horticulture also allow a display of personal thought and expression, supported by studies in dance (Frigon, 2014), drama (Taylor et al., 2010), music (Daykin et al., 2017) and artwork (Johnson, 2008). Some have argued that creative prisoners did not exist (Eisenman, 1992) but the aforementioned studies have shown that creativity can prompt accurate articulations of feelings and worries. Increasing levels of creativity in prisoners can assist them in dealing with everyday problems and unpredictable scenarios both inside the prison walls and back in the community, thus enhancing rehabilitative opportunities (Harvey, 2010).

Much like the concept of green exercise, the evidence underpinning horticultural therapy is founded upon two theories. Once again, Kaplan's (1995) ART plays an important role in accepting the connection between the outdoors and human attention, and secondly Ulrich's (1984) SRT supports the restorative benefits of engaging with gardening. There have, however, been other theories more specific to horticultural therapy, which also reinforce its significance. Ulrich and Parsons (1992) proposed the Overload and Arousal perspective which suggests that engagement with plants offers an alternative, calm, stress reducing setting in contrast to the complex, overwhelming, visual lifestyle many of us now lead. Kaplan (1992) also reiterates the restorative value of horticultural therapy with the suggestion that it provides an escape, a space to create, a fascination in what will grow and a compatibility to achieve personal and group goals. Although all these factors could be achieved away from a garden, they are always present in harmony in horticultural therapy (Simson and Straus, 1997).

There is no doubt that humans possess a certain connectedness to nature which is beneficial to human wellness (Brymer et al., 2010). The premise for continuing the nature and people relationship is underlined by Wilson's (1984) biophilia hypotheses, which states that humans are innately, emotionally connected to other living organisms. Human dependence is much greater than the simple issues of material and physical existence as we crave the aesthetic, spiritual and intellectual meanings of nature (Kellert and Wilson, 1995). This implies that our relationships with nature are important components for building and sustaining good health (Frumkin, 2001) and disrupting this relationship could be psychologically damaging (Annerstedt and Wahrborg, 2011).

Biophilia is defined as humankind's innate connection to nature and living things (Wilson, 1984) and using this proposal, researchers and architects have begun applying the benefits of biophilia to the design of building and environments. This process has been termed 'biophilic design' (Kellert et al., 2011), which is a deliberate attempt to integrate nature and living things into the geography of a location – enriching a built environment with the health and wellbeing benefits of biophilia. More recently, biophilic design has been applied to prison settings in order to improve the mental health and wellbeing of prisoners and staff (Soderlund and Newman, 2017), particularly in urbanised prisons such as the one used in this research. As prisons become modified and transformed, biophilia is becoming more prevalent in the consideration for penal aesthetics due to its impact on healing, hope and instilling a rehabilitative culture (Jewkes, 2018).

Studies using the biophilic theory through horticulture have presented positive findings for those experiencing mental ill-health. In a study with hospital patients with acute psychosis, positive findings were found in regard to social interaction, trust building and an ability to show resilience from stressful situations, which also resulted in a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere in the hiatal unit (Smith, 1998). Furthermore, a reduction in fatigue, stabilisation of mood, openness to reflect and acquiring a sense of tranquillity has also been prominent in horticultural gardens for psychiatric patients (Wichrowski et al., 2005). In a further study with psychosis sufferers, results showed an increase in motivation to leave the hospital unit, a sense of spiritual connection, a confidence to discuss personal issues and that growing plants provided a meaningful pastime, meanwhile findings were also consistent between genders (Kam and Siu, 2010). Horticultural therapy also offers an opportunity to become engrossed in an activity, with visible, progressive outcomes, making the tasks goal-oriented (Wiesinger et al., 2006).

Sufferers of clinical depression often experience feelings of rumination and a distortion of attention and horticultural interventions can help disrupt the maladaptive ruminations, due to the fascination with change and the sense of 'being away' from the struggles of everyday life (Gonzalez et al., 2010). The literal, visible growth and change that appears with growing plants perhaps offers a metaphorical example of demonstrating that change and progression is

possible for those suffering with mental health problems, and that things can 'improve' (Linden and Grut, 2002). Isolation is also a common ruminative feeling for those suffering with clinical depression (Teo, 2013) and horticultural therapy has been found to deter these feelings due to the sense of belonging that exists within gardening groups (Diamant and Waterhouse, 2010). The garden environment can generate an atmosphere where each participant is delegated tasks and feels valued in their involvement in constructing an aesthetic, sustainable setting (Bryant, 2008). The element of choice of activity in community gardens also provokes a sense of self-determination, as does the adaptability of activities to meet different needs (Rebeiro, 2001).

Schizophrenia is another mental illness that has been researched in the context of horticultural therapy. Schizophrenia is a heterogeneous syndrome recognised by peculiar beliefs, social withdrawal, disorganised behaviours and unusual sensory experiences (Harvey, 2013). The reduction in stress levels, the calm environment and a place of serenity have all been noted as benefits of engaging in horticultural therapy in a recent randomised control trial (Liu et al., 2014). Schizophrenia causes delusions, hallucinations, social withdrawals and abnormalities in cognitive processes (Tandon, 2009) which can be eliminated by the social nature of horticultural therapy (Soderback et al., 2004). People with schizophrenia are also more likely to be physically inactive (Gorczynski and Faulkner, 2010) and, although not intense, gardening is accepted as a physical activity which counteracts sedentary lifestyles (Flournoy, 1975; Thompson Coon et al., 2011). Gardening can reduce muscle tension, lower blood pressure and reduce the risks of other chronic conditions, due to the physical demands (Elings, 2006).

Although interventions such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), counselling, psychotherapy and anti-depressants have long been successful in treating depression (Price et al., 2007), the illness is often a complex, multi-dimensional issue, meaning that single treatments cannot always be successful in solitude (Gonzalez et al., 2011). Horticulture has been referred to as a co-therapist as it can help people work through psychological distress, either with or without other treatments (Stigsdotter et al., 2011). Ultimately, horticultural therapy creates a setting whereby all the elements and complexities of

depression, and other mental illness, have the potential to be addressed and explored (Clatworthy et al., 2013).

Prisons and Horticulture

Evidently, horticulture can be of great benefit in promoting mental wellbeing and addressing mental illnesses, creating a rehabilitative culture; and the connection to nature can be of significant benefit for those residing in 'stress-filled institutions' such as prison (Lewis, 1996). The restorative, rehabilitative, therapeutic and aesthetic benefits, however, of prison gardens are often overlooked (Lindemuth, 2007). Although not all health-related issues that go hand-in-hand with custodial settings can be resolved through gardening, it does offer much needed release for both prisoners and staff alike (Carter, 2007).

Gardens and horticulture projects were traditionally part of the farms and gardens industry and have subsequently been incorporated into therapeutically-oriented programs (Jiler, 2006). Historically, horticulture, farms and gardens were an integral part of the young offenders' system since the inception of the original establishment at Borstal in 1908 (Baybutt, 2013). Since then, horticultural therapy has been used in custodial settings and is a much valued opportunity providing structure, routine and rehabilitation in the world of environmental psychology (Sempik and Aldridge, 2006). The range of activities encourages skill development in problem solving and decision making (Flagler, 1995) and participants are likely to become less hostile and more respectful of their surroundings and workmates (Rice and Remy, 1998).

Studies with young offenders have also demonstrated positive findings. Horticultural projects have contributed to changing the attitudes of young offenders as they look to transform their futures away from prison (McGuinn and Relf, 2001), and the visual achievement of successfully creating an aesthetic garden can increase self-esteem and develop a sense of pride in their work (Sempik et al., 2003).

Horticultural settings also offer the opportunity for therapeutic communities to be established and have long been used as a treatment for substance abusers in prisons (Wexler and Williams, 1986). It has been implied that a therapeutic

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community can act as a 'doctor' for those battling drug addiction, with findings also consistently showing improvement in wellbeing for those with personal disorders (Capone et al., 2016). Specific research on therapeutic communities was completed at HMP Wymott in the North West of England, which provided further evidence of working in a harmonious setting (Greenall, 2004). Semi-structured interviews with prisoners highlighted the importance of therapeutic projects in terms of providing structure to the prison day, developing interpersonal skills and relationships, and offering opportunities to challenge oneself in a safe environment and create a respectful hierarchy between prisoners and staff (ibid.).

In addition, HMP Grendon, a category B men's prison in Buckinghamshire, has been subject to extensive research regarding therapeutic communities. A recent study found that engaging in small group therapy encouraged open conversations about the impacts of offences, resolved problems with others and invoked feelings of responsibility (Dolan, 2017). Further, prisoners reported feelings of safety and trust and described supportive relationships amongst staff and fellow prisoners (ibid.). HMP Grendon is now considered one of four 'whole' therapeutic community prisons, and studies have highlighted the importance of the regime, practices and the design of the prison, which partially accounts for the positive reputation (Moran and Jewkes, 2014).

Prisons are often dominated by male inmates and there has been much research surrounding traditional male job roles in prisons. With regards to horticulture, a feminist perspective and the wider ecological world suggests that women have always had a mythical association with this field, hence the term 'Mother Nature' (Twine, 1997). Despite this, jobs related to agriculture, farms and gardens were historically considered to be male-dominated (Gowdy-Wygant, 2013), as the tasks involved hard labour and use of tools which have long been associated with men's work (Gelber, 1997). Although male prisoners may experience some ridicule from the female association with gardening, horticulture in the broadest sense encompasses traditions from both genders. Hegemonic masculinity recurrently involves presentations of physical strength (De Visser et al., 2009); therefore, laying down rocks, mowing the lawn, using joinery tools, breaking up wood pallets and removing filled waste bins are likely to be popular horticultural tasks. Equally, the development of soft skills in males,

such as nurturing and caring, often associated with women (Glenn et al., 2016) allows the labour market to be expanded for genders (Morey and Crewe, 2018). In relation to masculinity, nurturing and caring for plants and living organisms through horticulture (Matsuo, 1996) has been termed 'caring masculinities' (Elliott, 2016). Similarly, 'ecological masculinity' or 'ecomasculinity' (Hultman, 2014) has been coined, implying that if men could discover a spiritual connection with nature they could experience feelings of being an 'eco-man' – one who regains a sense of dominance and mastery, but in a healthier manner than traditional masculinity. Ecomasculinity provides an opportunity to be caring and build connections with others (Pule, 2013).

Scandinavian countries have long been accepted as superior and 'ahead of their time' in terms of creating humane and rehabilitative custodial settings (Larson, 2013; Madoc-Jones et al., 2016) with relatively open conditions, high number of staff and opportunities to work (Bondeson, 2013). Pertinently, horticulture has been a predominant factor in rehabilitative and vocational training in Scandinavian prisons, but empirical evidence has been somewhat limited. A recent study, however, further documented the strong, positive relationships developed between staff and prisoners and reported on the increased ability of prisoners to emotionally cope with their time in prison (Rappe et al., 2014). An American study conducted in Nevada also indicated that horticultural interventions increased job prospects, with several participants successfully gaining employment or enrolled on college courses post sentence completion (O'Callaghan et al., 2009). Metaphorically, gardens can also "invoke a repertoire of skills, arts and virtues" and offer spiritual spaces in contrast to the brutality of typical prison wings, emphasising that the aesthetics of horticulture creations should not be underestimated (Brown, 2014). More widely, horticulture is recognised as an important means of increasing biodiversity within prisons. Whilst prisons are stereotypically bleak and dismal places, Sarat (2014) uses the rather oxymoronic phrase 'The Beautiful Prison' to reinforce the importance of horticultural settings.

Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP)

As discussed in Chapter 1, Greener on the Outside: For Prisons is a therapeutic, horticultural programme which was initially funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Target Wellbeing in 2008. This initiative implicitly adopts a salutogenic approach to health improvement (Baybutt and Chemlal, 2016).

The main aims of GOOP are to develop knowledge and skills in order to increase employability, to enhance links with local communities through conservation, and to improve health and wellbeing (Baybutt and Farrier, 2015). There are now 11 public sector prison sites, including adult prisons, youth offenders' institutes and approved premises, which have a GOOP project offering diverse opportunities, including growing plants and producing crops; cooking produce; developing functional skills in numeracy and literacy (Hughes, 2016), alongside wider skills in gardening and joinery; gaining accredited horticulture qualifications; and helping create the opportunity to spend time in alternative therapeutic places away from normal prison life (Farrier and Kedwards, 2015).

A number of evaluative research projects of GOOP have been undertaken (Farrier and Kedwards, 2015; Baybutt et al., 2018; Farrier et al., 2018), alongside a doctoral research study in one women's prison (Baybutt, 2013). There is evidently, however, still an important 'research space', hence the decision to focus on GOOP in this study. Research incorporating participant observation and photographic diaries, found that GOOP had a positive impact upon mental health and wellbeing, encouraged resilience, self-esteem and confidence and, perhaps of increasing importance, promoted a reduction in self-harm (Baybutt, 2013; Farrier et al., 2018). Prisons have also reported that GOOP positively impacted prisoners' behaviour and the prison environment as a whole, and that sharing of best practice and materials between prison establishments has been successful (Farrier and Kedwards, 2015). Furthermore, physical activity levels have increased, knowledge of healthy eating has been encouraged and an understanding of how to use fresh produce was ever present (ibid.).

Summary

This chapter has provided an in-depth exploration of current literature and set the scene for the research study, by focussing on health, masculinities and horticulture and nature. The health inequalities faced by various population groups were discussed, followed by a specific focus on prisons and male prisoners. Specifically, the current health inequalities faced by males in the general population and, pertinently, those in prison, were acknowledged with regards to the challenges they face in terms of living a healthy lifestyle. The sociocultural challenges of performing masculinities in prison were discussed with significant reference to Connell's (1993) theory of masculinity. Links were then drawn between males, masculinities and mental health and how 'being a man' results in a reluctance to talk about mental ill-health. The literature review then acknowledged the recent governmental changes to rehabilitation in prisons with reference to how horticulture and green environments link to the aims by providing effective interventions. Finally, a brief explanation of GOOP was provided presenting its aims and previous research success stories.

The next chapter will discuss the research context introducing both the epistemological and ontological positions, theoretical perspectives and Bourdieu's (1980) notions of habitus, field and capital. Further, the data collection methods will be discussed followed by the process of data analysis.

CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed a wide range of literature related to health, masculinities and horticulture and nature to contextualise this research study and highlight the case for further exploration – specifically for building connections between these fields of enquiry.

This chapter starts by re-stating the research aims and objectives and introducing the chosen research site and its daily regime, before detailing my journey in conducting the research. In relation to starting out, it contextualises the experience of conducting research with prisoners, considers access and vetting issues, and outlines the process of securing ethical approval. With regards to getting set up to conduct the research, it describes security awareness training, personal protection techniques and issues relating to key handling. Focusing on the actual study, it examines rapport-building and familiarisation and explores the ethical issues raised by the research process.

Informed by Crotty (2009), it then sets out the underpinning epistemological and ontological perspectives of social constructionism and subtle realism respectively, and discusses the theoretical perspective of interpretivism with a dual focus on symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry. Bourdieu's (1980) theory of habitus, field and capital is then introduced as an overarching theoretical lens, highlighting its applicability to this research study. The chapter then introduces and provides a rationale for my methodology of critical ethnography, before outlining the qualitative study design. The chosen data collection methods – active participant observation, guided conversations and individual in-depth interviews – are then detailed, before considering the approach taken to data analysis, with reference to Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic process and the procedure of coding and discovering themes.

Throughout the chapter, personal reflections of completing the process are included, detailing challenges, feelings and obstacles faced throughout the research process.

Research Aim

The aim of the study was to identify and explore the influences and impacts of a GOOP horticulture project upon hypermasculine norms and the mental wellbeing of male prisoners within a North West prison.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine prisoner and staff views and perspectives on the role and impacts of GOOP.

2. Increase understanding of how a GOOP project within a selected male prison impacts on the development of a therapeutic and rehabilitative culture.

3. Illuminate the relationships and interconnections between horticulture, hypermasculinity, and male prisoners' mental wellbeing.

The Research Site

Overview

The research site is part of an old, Victorian radial prison constructed between the years 1840-1895. It is now considered a category B local, remand, resettlement and holding prison, accepting all adult male prisoners including 18-21 year olds, from Crown and Magistrates Courts in Cumbria and Lancashire. It holds around 750 prisoners, with the majority residing in double cellular-style accommodation, despite its original single cellular design.

As a context for undertaking research, the GOOP site is attractive: firstly, its urban and overcrowded environment epitomises public perceptions of prison life; secondly it has demonstrated the creativity to establish a horticultural project within a predominantly concrete landscape. Furthermore, the diversity of prisoners – with regards to age, sentence length and crime – potentially

enhances the research by offering multiple perspectives on experiences of GOOP.

Basic maths and English qualifications and time occupancy opportunities, including artwork, painting and decorating, textiles, the gymnasium and horticulture are provided to prisoners. Many of these disciplines are available as paid employment for prisoners along with wing-cleaning or reception duties. Prisoners are encouraged to apply for jobs and are paid per session which links to the rehabilitative pathways of gaining employment. Most commonly, prisons have a 'Farms and Gardens' department amongst their job opportunities. Due to not having farmland and livestock, the prison simply has a horticulture department, which came about through the introduction of GOOP itself. The custodial site, as a whole, is an old, concrete, urban setting – living up to a stereotypical prison environment that many will identify with through the media. However, following GOOP's introduction, the limited green spaces and previously concrete open spaces have been developed into gardens or enhanced with planters and decorative woodwork products.

The horticulture department is run by two qualified instructors, previously Operational Support workers in prison. They took the initiative to creatively establish a horticultural site, which has continued to thrive over the past 5-10 years. The site includes one large polytunnel, four old shipping containers used for woodwork and storage, a classroom for functional skills lessons, a shed, several bordering flower beds and an office. Further to the site itself, the innovative horticultural team have expanded their work to ensure the prison is more aesthetically pleasing. For example, Windlesham awards have been received for a 'cottage garden' creation, in an open area of the prison; and flower beds and planters have been placed around the prison walls. More recently, creations of a Japanese garden and a 'woodland walk' have displayed links with healthcare as an illustration of improving the built environment outside of the GOOP area for the whole prison.

Away from the academic and prison related experiences, by default, my knowledge of horticulture has also expanded. Gardening has never been something that I had been involved in beforehand but I always had a strong appreciation of being outside, in aesthetically pleasing settings. Through

engagement in GOOP, much like the prisoners themselves, I have picked up tips and ideas on how to go about designing a garden. The Japanese style garden created at the prison was started from scratch and a derelict concrete yard has been transformed into a colourful, creative haven of nature and colour. To see how plans are implemented so accurately with relatively limited resources has inspired me to reuse materials and create my own garden at some point.

Figure 3. Photo of the Japanese Garden.

Arriving at Prison

According to the latest Prison Service Instructions (PSI), arrival to custody should be compliant with the safety, decency and respect legislations outlined by the MoJ. Following conversation with the Head of Industries (Seed, 2017), where the research study took place, those required to be held in custody are met by receptionists and wait, alone, in a holding room. Soon after, they are provided with a Basic Custody Screening questionnaire and a Risk Assessment for Cell Sharing to determine whether they are in a frame of mind to share a cell with another offender. Prisoners are also made aware of their entitlements and responsibilities and how to access support that is available to them, such as the Listeners Scheme. Due to a high turnover of prisoners, this can be a lengthy, time-consuming process, but PSIs state that the Basic Custody Screening must be completed within 72 hours of arrival. Once this process in completed, they are then moved to another holding room whilst their belongings are recorded

and decisions are made as to what can be taken into custody with them. A full body search is then completed behind curtains to ensure dignity is adhered to. A profile photograph is then taken and a temporary identification card produced, which could be replaced at a later date depending on the sentence length. Prisoners are then provided with reasonably fitted, prison establishment clothing and toiletries; they are then ready to be escorted to their cell.

Prisoners are then escorted to the introductory prison wing, where, normally, people do not spend more than one week, before they are moved to another, permanent wing, a segregation unit or, in some cases, another prison. On arrival to the introductory wing, prison officers will conduct an initial screening process to get to know the prisoner, determine their mental state and resolve any immediate concerns, for example, arranging child care or contacting other family members, if custody was not expected. At this stage, an Assessment Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) document is completed, which focusses on suicidal and self-harm behaviours, and if necessary an ACCT document will be opened for a prisoner. Interestingly, so far, all assessments are carried out by prison officers who are not qualified health professionals. In previous years, a nurse would have been in direct contact with the individual during the reception procedure, however, health assessments with a qualified person are now carried out at some point during the introductory week. In other words, some people may spend up to a week in custody without seeing a health professional.

Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP)

Within the prison service, a framework known as Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) is utilised to encourage prisoners to behave responsibly, maintain hard work and progress through the IEP scheme during their custodial sentence. There are three levels: basic, standard and enhanced, with the majority of prisoners remaining at standard level. The IEP status of prisoners working on GOOP varied but those who had gained an enhanced status were permitted to have greater freedom within the work remit on GOOP. The horticulture department is responsible for maintaining areas of the prison in

addition to the main GOOP site, which has come about through the implementation of GOOP. Prisoners who are at a basic level are not permitted to leave this site under any circumstances and those at standard level are required to wait for clearance from the security department to work in other areas.

During the research period, other horticultural activities involved maintaining plants, creating and constructing a Japanese garden in the healthcare department, tidying and maintaining the healthcare garden, mowing, and weeding and enhancing internal corridors and spaces with sleepers and planters. The cottage garden area, which is situated adjacent to the main horticultural site, was available to all GOOP workers regardless of IEP status and a key component of the daily GOOP tasks. Furthermore, an internal corridor leading to the visits room, affectionately known as 'visits road', is also an area of responsibility for the horticulture department.

Figure 4. Photo of the Cottage Garden.

The Working Day

The working day at the selected prison is split into morning and afternoon working sessions, as in most prisons across England and Wales. Prisoners employed to work on GOOP are drawn from all areas of the prison and begin to

arrive for work between 8:15am and 8:30am. They return to their cells for lunch between 11:30am and 11:45am and arrive back at the GOOP site between 1:30pm and 1:45pm for the afternoon session. The working day concludes between 4:30pm and 4:45pm. During the morning sessions from Monday-Thursday, the group is split into two, and prisoners alternately attend English or Maths lessons in the on-site classroom. On Fridays, much like other prison industries, staff and prisoners have a half day and the GOOP work finishes by 11:30am for the weekend. From 11:00am - 11:30am, GOOP prisoners attend the library in the education building and are free to use all available resources. Whilst there are other opportunities to visit the library throughout the week, this time slot is specifically allocated for GOOP prisoners.

My Research Journey: Starting Out

Initial Reflections

As discussed in Chapter 1, prison research was entirely new for me so naturally I was filled with excitement, uncertainty, inquisitiveness and willingness to prove prisons weren't as they were often portrayed in the media. I vividly remember receiving the call that I had been successful in my interview for the PhD and subsequently telling family and friends the news. Questions and reactions swiftly moved from *"congratulations!"*, *"that's amazing!"* to *"wait… you're going to be going in a prison?!"*, *"will you have to talk to murderers and stuff?!"* Well, yes, I did speak to several murderers and they were actually all really nice to me!

I have always had a desire to question many areas of life and therefore I never fully bought into the media and cultural stereotypes surrounding prisoners and life in prison. As far as I was concerned I would never have known what prison was like until this PhD opportunity arose. It was a completely alien environment where any perceptions formed were based on what we see on the TV, in films, and hear on the news; most recently dominated by violence and riots. Naturally, at times, I did wonder what I was letting myself in for! Nevertheless, my underlying morals of always providing people with second chances and treating

every member of society with respect motivated me to become immersed within the prison culture.

Working with Prisoners

In contrast to the concerns of engaging with potentially dangerous criminals, in fact, almost all prisoners were respectful towards me during my visits to prison, furthering my views that prisoners are just 'normal people'. I chatted to them about their lives, upbringings, hobbies and interests, and about what we like to watch on TV and football, all of which were valuable tools in building a rapport with research participants. A notable challenge was handling questions that prisoners directed towards me and responding in ways that protected me. The security awareness and personal protection training furthered my understanding of the importance of not disclosing personal information as well as techniques to deflect these questions.

I would try to answer questions as honestly as I possibly could in order to ensure the rapport was not hindered but I was careful about how honest I could be. When I was asked more personal things, however, such as 'where are you from?' I would try to divert the conversation elsewhere or answer generically (e.g. 'I'm from the North West'). It was challenging trying to build a rapport with prisoners whilst not giving too much away about myself; it felt quite unnatural when trying to get to know people particularly as I would describe myself as such an open and honest person.

During data collection, I aimed to treat all participants in the same way. Of course, this is something I aim to do in everyday life, but I acknowledged that I might find it difficult when working with potentially dangerous people; some of whom have committed such horrible crimes. Whilst I did not specifically ask or necessarily want to know what crime each prisoner had committed, it was difficult to avoid finding out due to the openness with which prisoners discussed their crimes. Although all crimes have victims and negative consequences, hence the loss of liberty, I found myself beginning to understand why people commit certain crimes so the judgement of their actions was diminished somewhat. Whilst there were a couple of memorable stories about prisoners'

crimes, I found that the environment on GOOP was conducive for getting to know prisoners as people, meaning I was able to detach the crime from the person.

Gaining Access for Research

Throughout the whole PhD journey, I slowly began to learn how fortunate I had been in having a relatively stress-free process in terms of conducting the research. Many prison researchers experience significant challenges in gaining access to a custodial site due to stringent ethical procedures, establishing contacts with relevant prison staff, persistence in maintaining communication and background checks (Schlosser, 2008). Further, members of the public, prison staff and anthropologists have negated the worth of prison research by arguing that prisoners won't tell the truth, are unreliable participants and they're sub-human so do not deserve the voice provided, particularly through ethnographic research (Waldram, 2009).

Firstly, due the NIHR CLAHRC funding supporting this research project, the possible prison research sites were already aware that a potential study could be carried out. Secondly, one of my PhD supervisors has a long career history working in and alongside the prison service, therefore I was able to be formally introduced to Governors and other key staff members ahead of any prison visits and data collection. Thirdly, my supervisors' significant involvement in establishing the GOOP project allowed me access to the GOOP network meetings from a very early stage of the research, meaning my name and my face were around and I could interact with relevant prison staff.

I acknowledge that some prison researchers face significant battles in gaining access to a prison research site. They may not have the connections I was fortunate enough to have or receive similar levels of support from prison staff. In contrast to the negative responses, I was fortunate not to face such difficulties. Although some people were shocked at the idea of engaging with prisoners their arguments were not based upon sub-human ideologies and I did not encounter any negative responses from other prison staff that I engaged with at the prison site. I opted to wear a UCLan t-shirt embroidered with 'PhD

Researcher' and along with carrying keys, and wearing the appropriate metal capped boots for the horticulture site, perhaps it was assumed I was supposed to be there with a recognisable university logo. Impression management and ones' performance and portrayal is crucial in prison research, in particular, due to the stresses and emotional dimension of the sub-culture (Drake and Harvey, 2014). I was lucky enough to be accepted by staff as 'the girl from UCLan researching about gardening' rather than a '*suspicious stranger', 'unwanted intruder', 'responsible professional'* or *trusted confidant'* (Ugelvik, 2014).

Given my position as a researcher at the prison site, it is imperative to consider Bourdieu's (1980) concept of 'field' and how my presence can influence actors behaviours and meanings of the location. Ultimately my presence can completely change another person's perspective of the 'field' and therefore the truths they associate with it. The use of a reflective diary and allowing myself to question whether my presence influenced prisoner and staff behaviours was crucial to ensuring transparency within the research.

HMPPS Vetting

In order to gain access to prison sites for the purposes of selecting the research site and undertaking data collection, I was required to complete a HMPS vetting process. This involved completing personal documentation about security, disclosing any previous criminal convictions and undergoing pre-employment checks prior to entering HMP establishments. The vetting process was completed and approved by NOMS (now HMPPS) in March 2016, allowing me to visit prisons with a gate pass.

Ethical Approval

Reference number: STEMH 507

Prior to the commencement of any data collection, a rigorous ethical procedure was carried out, submitted and successfully reviewed by NOMS NRC with ethical approval granted in June 2016. Following NOMS NRC approval, a

further application submitted to UCLan (STEMH Ethics Committee) ensured full ethical consent to complete the research study, allowing data collection to commence.

The detailed NOMS ethical application form proved a time-consuming process though enabled appreciation of the importance of considering data protection and consent. Working with potentially vulnerable and unpredictable individuals, such as prisoners, it is important to consider confidentiality, safety and how to eradicate risks where possible, e.g. positioning myself near an alarm bell during interviews. NOMS allow only two ethics submissions, increasing the pressure to provide a high quality and acceptable proposal. Due to the conscientious and diligent approach taken in completing the document, ethical approval was granted on the first attempt without amendments necessary. Letters of research approval were obtained from both the then North West Deputy Director of Custody for Public Sector Prisons and the Governing Governor at the research prison (Appendices 2 and 3).

The recording of data formed a strong focus in the NOMS ethics document. It was decided that the individual in-depth interviews would be recorded using a digital voice recorder, although this is ordinarily a contraband item according to HMPS regulations. As a result, special approval to use a digital voice recorder was gained through the NOMS ethics application, the Governing Governor and the Head of Security and Intelligence at the selected prison. A letter confirming the approved use of this piece of research equipment was provided and carried with me throughout the research data collection period, so that whenever an interview was conducted I had written permission available. Once the individual in-depth interviews were transcribed, they were stored on UCLan's computer system with password protection on all files and all participants' names changed to pseudonyms.

During the research period, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) changed with a specific focus on ensuring those who participate or consent to personal details have such destroyed and removed from databases upon completion of involvement (Goddard, 2017) and that individuals have the opportunity to 'opt-out' of involvement (Rumbold and Pierscionek, 2017). Fortunately, due to the pre-agreed destruction of personal

data and identifications through both NOMS and UCLan ethics procedures, this did not influence the research in any way, as similar protocols were already in place. I was more aware, however, of the right to 'opt-out' of or withdraw from involvement, as outlined on consent forms (appendices 6 and 7).

Reflections

The process of gaining ethical approval through NOMS was challenging, rigorous and, rightly, time consuming. Further, the pressure of only having two attempts to gain ethical approval added to the conscientiousness with which I approached the document. Whilst I was aware, to some extent, how detailed a prison research approval document was likely to be, even as a novice, I was still shocked at the level of information required. The majority of the challenge came from having to pre-plan the main research methodologies and ideas of how the data would be collected, as much of this was new to me too. However, by having to make these key decisions at such an early stage of the PhD journey it helped to frame the three year study and painted a clearer picture of how the journey could unfold.

My Research Journey: Getting Set Up - Security and Safety

Introduction

As working within a prison setting was entirely new for me, the security side of how a prison functions was one of the first areas I had to understand. Given the closeness with which I would be working with prisoner participants and the length of time I would be spending in the prison, having the appropriate security training was essential for my own safety and security, and for ensuring that the research could be undertaken effectively. Prior to any data collection, personal protection techniques (PPT) and security awareness training were completed, with permission from the prison to attend staff induction or refresher courses. Control and Restraint is another important component of prison security training but this was deemed inappropriate for my research needs as it is primarily

designed for uniformed staff. Further, if any serious incidents were to occur on the research site, prison alarm bells are available to alert the relevant personnel.

Security Awareness Training

A one-day security awareness course, instructed by a member of the Security and Intelligence team, was completed at the research prison site in September 2016. This provided an insight into the role of the security and intelligence department, breaches of security regulations, how to report incidents and, most importantly, how to protect oneself within the prison environment. I learnt what to be aware of when conducting prison research, how to report incidences of drug use, suspected suicidal risks, threatening behaviours, abusive language, misuse of keys by staff and inappropriate behaviours between staff and prisoners. Additionally, the training provided an awareness of what personal information should be kept private, and how to deal with personal questions from prisoners and when this should be reported, in order to avoid being manipulated. Similarly to the PPT training, group discussions were encouraged as the instructor provided examples of scenarios that could occur during prison work. With each scenario we were asked to highlight the risks, what the correct code of conduct should be and how severe the risk is. The security awareness training was concluded with a multiple choice test on which all answers had to be answered correctly in order to pass the course.

Personal Protection Techniques

All staff and regular visitors to prison are required to undertake the PPT training due to the potentially unpredictable nature of the environment. This training was completed alongside prison officers, some of whom were new to the service and some who were completing their annual refresher course. The purpose of the PPT training was to highlight the importance of personal safety, rather than restraint, by demonstrating holds and breakaway techniques should an incident

occur. These techniques were initially discussed as a group, whilst a PowerPoint provided examples and descriptions of how techniques could be used. As a group we also discussed the appropriateness of using force and more experienced prison staff shared their experiences. Although my own personal risk of harm within the research field was deemed to be relatively low, given the pre-existing security protocols, the PPT training increased my understanding of what to be aware of and how to ensure I was protected as far as possible.

Key Handling

Not all people who work within prison require access to keys, but it was decided, following discussion with my PhD supervisory team and horticultural prison staff, that my research would be facilitated with myself being a key-holder, given the nature of my research being in one prison. This would enable me to move around the prison site without being escorted, preventing any disruption to prison staff's daily regime and routine. As an adjunct to the security awareness training, a key handling session was therefore completed with a member of the Security and Intelligence team. The key handling session simply involved learning how to draw keys from the cabinet, learning which keys are used for which gates and doors and how to check that gates and doors are locked. Suggestions were also made about how to report any misuse of keys by prison staff. I believe my decision to carry keys helped with the positive response I received from other prison staff at the research site as it represents a position of trust and that perhaps I was on a similar level to them, from their perspective; it generated an interest of how long I'd been working there and why I was researching on horticulture.

Carrying keys as a prison researcher can naturally create a barrier between a researcher and the prisoners participating in a study as the question is asked 'whose side are we on?' (Liebling, 2001). Being a key-carrying researcher resulted in an unplanned 'dual position', with me as semi-staff and semi-gardener, as I jostled between roles at different times of the day (Davies, 2015). If I hadn't carried keys, would the prisoners have viewed me more of an equal to

them? Contrastingly, would staff, both horticultural and wider prison staff have seen me as less trustworthy? Whichever way I considered the scenario, there wasn't a clear correct answer.

Carrying keys has been described as becoming a full member of the social setting, allowing full immersion with a sub-culture and presenting transparency to all participants (Marquart, 1986). I was conscious however, of trying to balance being a GOOP member who engaged in tasks to someone who was allowed to open and close gates, in a professional manner. By moving between different social positions, this can create symbolic challenges for the participants involved as the subtlety of research interactions becomes more apparent (Nielsen, 2010); one moment I'm involved the next I'm viewed as a key-carrying member of staff. Overall, I did not experience any negativity from prisoners with regards to carrying keys; I ensured that my chain and keys were always tucked away under my t-shirt but was comfortable in using them to assist in horticultural group movement when necessary.

Reflections

Discomfort

The only time that I felt any prolonged discomfort was when a convicted sex offender was on the GOOP site, alongside a prisoner who was convicted for a serious assault on a sex offender. Other prisoners were also very vocal in their dislike of paedophiles. Staff and I were more on guard during this period of time and personally, I felt slightly more on edge when they were all present on site. I observed prisoners building up suspicions and asking more questions, to which they received mumbled quiet responses, doing his best to mask his criminal activities. It must have been incredibly difficult to maintain a lie for so long in prison, particularly in such a small group where lives are discussed so openly. In the end, the sex offender was removed from the course for his own safety and rumours spread around the wing about what he was in prison for and prisoners were furious that they had had to work alongside someone like that for several weeks. Whilst I understood to a certain extent the anger that comes with the knowledge of sexual offences towards children in this environment, the

forcefulness with which other prisoners spoke about those who had committed such offences was brutal.

My Research Journey: Undertaking the Study

Rapport-Building and Familiarity

Rapport-building visits to prisons took place to enable me to choose an appropriate site for the research. Further, these visits allowed me to become accustomed with the daily regime of prison life while building positive relationships with staff and prisoners alike. Once a research site had been selected, approximately 20 familiarity visits were completed since the start of the PhD journey (January 2016). Following the key handling course, over half of these visits were with access to keys meaning I had freedom of movement around the prison and was able to practise using them prior to the main research period. Like many prisons, there was a variety of doors and gates, in various sizes and volume across the whole prison site, therefore it was imperative to become comfortable in navigating my way round with my own set of keys. Further, initial visits with access to keys were also a little intimidating with an overwhelming sense of responsibility experienced, therefore the more I was able to practise prior to data collection was beneficial. Moreover, prison staff, including the Governing Governor, continued to remain supportive and understanding of the research and related support needs.

Ethical Issues and Considerations

Whilst the prison population is increasing, accentuating the compelling argument to conduct research in such settings (Brewer-Smyth, 2008), there are always ethical considerations and dilemmas to address. Firstly, as a female, researching masculinities in a predominantly male environment, gender influences and biases need to be acknowledged. Having a female horticultural instructor already working on GOOP helped to eliminate gender bias to some extent (Upchurch, 2016) as prisoners were already accustomed to having a

female on site. However, further consideration to gender in relation to security issues is paramount: some prisoners may be serving sentences associated with offences towards women, meaning I may not have been allowed to be alone with certain prisoners or they shouldn't be working around females in general. The security awareness training focussed heavily on gender with focus towards manipulation by prisoners, hostage situations and how to avoid feeling vulnerable whilst in prison.

Secondly, some academics, critics and researchers have argued ethically against conducting prison research due to the easy-access and captive nature of a group of participants (Gostin, 2007). It is argued that one way or another, their anonymity cannot be completely assured and they have little or no choice in participating (Rawbone, 2013). Conversely, involving the prison population with research can help to bridge the gap between prison and the wider community as prisoners are offered a voice to express themselves (Aresti et al., 2016). Further, by holding a position as an ethnographic researcher it has been suggested that this advances the encouragement of prisoners being able to truly be themselves (Piche et al., 2014).

Thirdly, other critics have argued that conducting research with prisoners is invalid as they are prone to lying, exaggerating realities and creating a persona to appease the researcher (Waldram, 2009); however, a significant part of research in any environment, but particularly with prisoners, is to build up rapport and trust with participants that can hopefully eliminate such problems. Building up strong bonds with research participants is arguably imperative in producing valuable research findings. It was important, though, to consider the ethical implication of becoming 'too close' to prisoner participants. I was conscious of being questioned by prisoners and of not giving too much personal information out about myself. Correspondingly, I was also aware of not discussing prisoners' disclosures with other people due to the consent and confidentiality agreement they had signed. It is suggested that subjective connections with participants and their stories in any human research setting are impossible to avoid (Liebling, 1999) and it is fair to say I have a personal, compassionate trait towards adverse circumstances. Applying emotion and personal honesty to ethnographic research studies, however, can produce more validity as the frank acknowledgement by a researcher provides a

corresponding gain rather than weakening the study (Jewkes, 2012). Processing and reflecting on emotional aspects of prison research are essential when analysing data and accurately portraying a research setting (Drake and Harvey, 2014).

Finally, an area that could spark debate, when considering prison research, is the discussion of crime with prisoners. I made the decision prior to commencing the research that I would not directly ask prisoners what crime they had committed and why they were being held in custody, so to avoid personal judgment of each participant and the preconceptions of criminal activities one may have. Perhaps naively, I did not initially think that prisoners would want to discuss what crimes they had committed through fear of embarrassment or shame. Although I stuck to this initial plan of not directly asking prisoners about their crimes, it was difficult to avoid gaining some knowledge and insight into what they had done and most of them freely discussed it with me and the GOOP group. I learnt as the research period went on that I had become more desensitised to what crime/s each prisoner had committed, no matter how serious or otherwise. Whilst acknowledging that I probably still held some unconscious preconceptions and biases, I felt increasingly that each prisoner participant was their own person and their crime did not obviously influence my perceptions of them.

The changes to GDPR policy (Goddard, 2017) throughout the research period highlighted the need to consider confidentiality, consent, anonymity and participant wellbeing became paramount. Whilst recruiting participants for the study, I provided all of them with Participant Information Sheets (PIS) and consent forms (Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7) both of which referred to anonymity, confidentiality, right to withdraw and who to contact in the case of discontent. Whilst issues relating to confidentiality and anonymity were adhered to, in terms of disclosure, as per to the changes to HMPPS policy (2018), if a research participant disclosed any suggestion of risk to either themselves or others then this was reported to the appropriate prison staff. When referring back to my observation notes this only occurred in two situations across the data collection period, both of which were references or threats to harming others. It was challenging to have to report these disclosures, as I did feel as though I was breaking trust but of course, understood that safety of others was paramount.

Equally, reference to harming themselves or others was highlighted as a scenario in which confidentiality would be broken in the consent forms (Appendices 6 and 7).

Obviously, all participants' names were changed to ensure anonymity and I decided to use human pseudonyms for the purpose of notes, interviews and writing up the thesis to reflect my humane approach to prison research; prisoners are not numbers in my eyes. During individual in-depth interviews, I ensured that these were conducted in a closed environment away from other participants to allow the best possible opportunity for openness and honesty but also for others not to hear personal stories and views. The participants also signed consent forms to accept that everything they said would be confidential, except in the case of threats or self-harm; both of these conditions were reiterated at the start of the interviews.

An ethically and emotionally challenging scenario that stands out from the research was the induction of Joe, one of the prisoners, to GOOP. To expand my own knowledge and understanding of a prisoner induction, Vicky (one of the staff working on GOOP) and Joe allowed me to observe, and it turned out to be memorable and somewhat emotional experience. Joe had only recently arrived at the prison and was struggling to come to terms with the assault that he had committed. Inductions usually take about 10-15 minutes but on this occasion we spent approximately 45 minutes listening to Joe's struggles with depression and suicidal thoughts. From a research perspective, I realised that all of this had to be noted for the purpose of my observational notes – but I was conflicted in my position as a researcher versus a human being who wanted to help, as I would have done to anyone else expressing such thoughts. Along with Vicky, I tried to console Joe and reassure him that things would improve, perhaps drawing on my experience of my own mental health problems. It was a memorable morning of research and I found myself thinking about Joe's welfare over the next few days before I returned to prison again. Personally, it was challenging to witness and I did dwell on the severity of what I'd heard for several days, which is common on prison research as we often experience the pain of others (Scraton, 2016).

Similarly, many of the prisoners used my 'neutral' status as an outsider and non-staff member as a tool for them to discuss their concerns and I felt privileged that I was part of continuing the 'it's okay to talk' attitude on GOOP for my short time there. Whilst I did not offer advice, given it was not my position to do so, I did feel like my presence as a sounding board for prisoners' concerns was useful for them and they benefitted from having that space to talk without judgement or formality. Whilst prison research can be an emotional experience, scenarios like the one described can demonstrate the level of trust established through research (Bosworth et al., 2005).

Reflections

Mental Health

Alongside the potentially emotional experiences of prison research I had to consider my own emotions with regards to suffering with depression and anxiety. This was something that occurred frequently in my reflective notes during the research period, and it was important to consider myself in terms of this being part of my identity and how this could influence the findings (Rowe, 2015). The prevalence of mental illnesses amongst the group of prisoners in my research meant that it was a subject often discussed during observational sessions. Naturally, my empathy towards prisoners suffering from mental illnesses was high and I approached the research in a compassionate manner. Whilst I did not discuss my mental health problems with prisoners, through dialogue, I made my positivity towards talking openly about concerns and worries known, which I believe did help those who needed to talk. Reducing the stigma of discussing mental health problems is an attitude I have in everyday life so it was appropriate to bring that to the research setting too.

A significant frustration throughout the research was the number of stories I heard from prisoners about the lack of mental health support they had received both before and during their time in custody. Once again, having battled through the complex system of trying to find a mental health treatment that worked for me and impatiently sitting on a waiting list, I empathised with their circumstances.

A key research focus was investigating the benefits of horticulture upon mental wellbeing for prisoners, but even as a researcher, I experienced personal benefits from being in the GOOP environment. I was able to learn from the wide range of tasks on GOOP, enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and my wellbeing certainly increased from being outside in the fresh air each day, maybe as much as the prisoners did!

Researching in a Prison

From a researcher's perspective, the development of friendships and positive working relationships between staff and prisoners contributed to how comfortable I felt whilst visiting the horticultural site. Whilst I fully understood that there needed to be clear boundaries, I also felt that many of the prisoners who were long-standing members of GOOP and played a significant role in my research became more than just research participants. In particular, the ethnographic research led to me beginning to understand their life histories in great depth and a sense of trust certainly developed, with an appropriate awareness of the boundaries of course. Equally, staff were welcoming and friendly towards me right from the commencement of the PhD and may well remain friends in the future. This highlights the welcoming and open culture developed by the horticulture staff.

Overall, it's fair to say that I found the research experience incredibly humbling. I appreciated my upbringing, my family and friends and the 'normal' life that I lead in comparison to the complex lives I heard prisoners discussing. I felt lucky that I'd never been exposed to knife crime, drugs and a violent childhood. I sympathised with many of the stories prisoners told me as I can't imagine what it must have been like for them.

Interestingly, once the prisoners had learnt that my name was Florence, rather than just Flo, I also was called 'posh girl' by a few of the lads and several jokes continued over the course of the research period about my supposed wealthy upbringing, also encouraged by horticulture instructors! Whilst I knew the prisoners and staff were joking and it was all done in jest, I found the reference to being posh quite bizarre as I would definitely not see myself like this! Perceptions about social class and socioeconomic status seemed to be

important in determining prisoners' opinions towards, and assumptions about me. I had numerous questions about the size of my home that I must be wealthy if I go to university and I sound posh because I talk properly. All of these assumptions rendered me slightly uncomfortable as I'd considered myself to be very down to earth and hoped I wouldn't come across this way, despite my upbringing being quite fortunate. This left me feeling that class was maybe more of a barrier and challenge than gender in the GOOP setting.

Female in a Male Setting

With regards to the research being focussed around male behaviours, there is of course a need to acknowledge potential biases arising from me being a female researcher. For example, what I considered to be masculine may not be something that a male researcher would have noted as being masculine. The attitude, however, that the male prisoners had towards me as a female shows some level of traditional masculine values in itself, which could have, and most likely would have, been different had a male researcher undertaken this particular study. Furthermore, in an attempt to eliminate bias, the prisoner participants were not aware that hypermasculinity was something that I was specifically researching, they were simply informed that I was looking at male behaviour in an all-male environment.

Within the research findings, an incident regarding abuse from a non-GOOP prisoner was discussed. A prisoner who was residing on the ground floor of the healthcare wing was stood at his window, looking through the bars across the healthcare garden as the GOOP prisoners were tidying and weeding; this particular prisoner began shouting quite vulgar things in my direction. The verbal abuse continued for several minutes before the GOOP prisoners started to realise he was aiming the insults at me and responded angrily. They were keen to protect me, adamant that it was not acceptable to treat a female in this way. Up to this point, I'd not experienced any negative responses from male prisoners; however, whilst I was initially shocked at the level of mistreatment towards me, I was mostly discomforted by the fact I'd become the centre of attention in a relatively small group. Despite the inevitable attention that someone new receives in prison, particularly as a young female, I was always very conscious of ensuring I wasn't there as a distraction from the prisoners'

usual routine. On this occasion, I loathed the fact that my presence and the reaction of a non-GOOP prisoner impacted the atmosphere on GOOP. From a research perceptive, though, the traditional masculine reaction of the GOOP prisoners in protecting me as a female provided great interest.

Similarly, a prisoner who enrolled on GOOP in the final few weeks of the research was incredibly negative towards horticultural activities. Due to staff holidays, there was only one horticulture instructor available and during afternoon sessions some prisoners were, therefore, not required for work. 'Not required' was a phrase used when prisoners would not come to work for a session because either they had not been cleared by security or there were staff shortages resulting in the need for reduced numbers from a supervisory point of view. This prisoner had become increasingly annoyed that he wasn't working in the afternoons and one morning expressed his dislike of an instructor and me in an aggressive manner, which we overheard. This was, of course, reported to the security department via an incident report, but I did have a couple of moments where I felt slightly uneasy around that prisoner during the course of the morning. Much like the incident at the healthcare garden, some long-standing GOOP members took offence at the prisoner's threats and became protective.

My liberal and equality driven values meant that I have never agreed with severe punishment or discipline; applying fair and decent characteristics always seemed a more effective way of approaching prisons. Needless to say my opinion on adhering to this approach has not changed at all, if anything my values are even more ingrained, due to the depth in which I began to understand the prisoners' life stories.

Even several months on from completing the data collection, I find myself missing visiting prison! I feel so grateful for experiencing something unique and exploring a world that so many do not understand. I learnt so much about crime, prison life, horticulture, the difficulties people face in everyday life and how quickly people can change, when given the opportunity to do so. The development of the Japanese garden over the summer of 2017 is something that has inspired me to create a quirky garden in the future and I was proud to be part of the finished project. There are certain prisoners who were there for

large parts of the research who I'll never forget. Their stories, their kindness towards me and their respect towards one another are unforgettable and I learnt something from each and every one of them. From the loud characters who consistently entertained me to the quiet, thoughtful lads who preferred a quiet chat about Coronation Street, they'll all stick in my mind and I can only thank them for their positivity towards me and for making GOOP a special experience. Similarly, the staff on GOOP and other neighbouring departments made the experience enjoyable and, on uncountable occasions, hilarious; they, too, were just as significant in contributing to a successful data collection period.

I was unsure how much impact my presence, if any, had had on the GOOP group, however on my final day on research I was given a small, two drawer wooden cabinet made by a prisoner as a 'thank you and good luck' present on behalf of all the GOOP lads. I was so touched and admittedly slightly choked up by the generosity of this gift. Many of the prisoners wished me well and thanked me for my respect towards them as I was leaving. The prisoners in the woodwork room also constructed a 'Jenga' game with which we played a tournament on my last afternoon – another display of their thoughtfulness. This made the experience all the more rewarding knowing that I'd had some form of positive impact upon their time in prison, even if it was in just a small way. Seeing improvement and progress in prisoners on GOOP was also rewarding and there seemed to be some hope instilled that they could change their lives!

Theoretical and Epistemological Underpinnings

Introduction

The research encompassed much more than simply visiting prison and I became exposed to the complexities of academic work and innumerable theoretical positions. Unsurprisingly, discussing these issues with family and friends prompts a less emotive response as they usually switch off at the word 'epistemology'. Despite the initial challenge of coming to terms with the world of meanings, truths and multiple realities I have now reached a point of appreciation for such concepts. I now find myself considering individuals' views

of life and trying to understand what has led them to such beliefs. It has also, however, become apparent that perceptions are ever changing and therefore widely accepted concepts should still be questioned.

Numerous lenses and perspectives were adopted for this research to reflect to the societal and cultural layers to prison environments. Social constructionism presents the overriding epistemology where the meanings and truths are created through individuals' engagement with the social setting of GOOP. Under the umbrella of social constructionism is an interpretivist perspective where the interactions on GOOP are deeply interpreted into meanings. This interpretation uses two lenses; symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry, where the former focuses on the specific GOOP site itself and the latter adopts a more macro perspective where findings can be applied to a wider prison sub-culture. Each of these theoretical lenses is encompassed by a critical ethnographic methodology where a rigorous, transparent approach to research is adopted through the form of detailed stories and observations to accurately paint the picture of a horticultural prison sub-culture.

In order to link and bring coherence to the aforementioned perspectives and lenses, I drew on Bourdieu's (1980) framework of habitus, field and capital. Habitus represents the GOOP site and the participants, allowing personal, ethnographic stories to come to fruition. Field prompts meanings to develop from a connection to GOOP itself; allowing symbolic interactionist perspectives to arise. In a wider context, capital is reflected through critical inquiry as the broader possibilities of horticulture are considered through the findings and outputs.

Epistemology – Social Constructionism

Truth and knowledge have been of great interest to scientists, philosophers and educators for many years, with epistemology being a fundamental approach to deciding what we know (Crookes, 2013). Epistemology is defined as the theory of knowledge embedded within theoretical perspectives, therefore transcending the methodology and methods, and is seen as way of understanding and explaining what we believe to be true (Crotty, 2009). Within social research, one

of the overriding aims is to provide knowledge and understanding of a specific social context (Swain, 2016). Epistemology explores the nature of 'how we know what we know' (Crotty, 2009) through knowledge, the possibilities, the scope and general basis (Hamlyn, 1995). A philosophical background is required to decide what knowledge is possible and whether it is accurate and legitimate (Maynard et al., 1994). Inevitably, people's perceptions of the real world, meanings and truth vary immensely, resulting in a range of epistemologies, such as objectivism, subjectivism and constructionism; whatever a person's individual epistemological stance, they all have significant bearing on the way research is conducted (Crotty, 2009).

Epistemologically, this research project is founded upon social constructionism, seeking to find meanings deriving from social interactions and human relationships (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Crotty, 2009) in a horticultural setting of a male prison. Social constructionism implies that there is no objective truth awaiting discovery; truth and meaning derive from engagement with realities in our world and the meanings are not discovered but constructed within a culture (Crotty, 2009). The term social constructionism is often used interchangeably with social constructivism; however, where the latter has a focus on individuals' perceptions of a 'world', the former provides a stronger social focus (Young and Collin, 2004). Although both individual and social meanings are imperative to this research project, it was deemed more relevant to seek meanings through the social lens for the broader, prison outcomes.

The social constructionist approach encourages a critical stance towards the way we see the world and ourselves and is open to changing perceptions about a specific social context (Burr, 2015). Within the context of this research, prisons represent a social world of which many have pre-conceptions and, perhaps, skewed expectations based on how prisons are portrayed through media and hearsay (Jewkes, 2012). I continue to face a constant battle in trying to change perceptions of what prison life is like, how all prisoners (and people more generally!) should not be labelled the same and the positive creativity that exists behind the walls is, at times, astonishing.

These representations and beliefs created by the media and hearsay form our 'habitus' – our basic store of knowledge based on our surrounding environment

and culture (Bourdieu, 1977). Thus, social constructionism allows the researcher to approach the prison setting with an open-mind, acknowledging that beliefs and perceptions can change. Bourdieu (1980) proposes the concepts of habitus, field and capital which relate to individual perceptions, the environment in which they can be found and the outputs which result from this. Bourdieu's proposals will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter and in the discussion of research findings (Chapter 5).

Prisoners and prison staff form an imperative part of social constructionist epistemology, holding personal perspectives, beliefs and truths about prison. Given the potentially complex lives experienced by individual prisoners, Clemmer (1958) and Sykes (1958) propose a *deprivation theory* whereby deprivation is synonymous with imprisonment, as discussed in Chapter 2. Imprisonment is understood to result in changes to physical and psychological behaviours, all of which are likely to alter each person's perceived 'truth'. The changed behaviours from the deprived environment link to Bourdieu's (1980) concept of habitus, implying that the negative perceptions of the setting, or field, influence said behaviours. In contrast, *an importation theory* (Irwin and Cressey, 1962) has also been applied to prison life, suggesting that prisoners' behaviours, beliefs and values are imported into, and extended through their time in prison (Harer and Steffensmeir, 1996; Innes, 1997). Similarly, previously held values by prisoners could influence the truths and meanings being sought through this research project as well as views created from within the deprived setting.

Ontology – Subtle Realism

Ontology refers to what we believe constitutes social reality made up of claims and assumptions about what exists, how it is perceived, and which factors influence it (Blaikie, 2009). Within Crotty's (2009) theoretical framework, ontology does not feature as it is concerned with 'what is' and would therefore sit alongside epistemology due to their synonymous emergence. Many theorists and researchers, however, would argue that ontology is the starting point of all research, as methodologies and theoretical perspectives naturally follow the

ontological position (Grix, 2002). Although ontology and epistemology are closely linked, it is imperative to separate the two terms, as research begins from the researcher's view of the world and the theoretical truths that follow (ibid.).

Ontologically, this research is founded on subtle realism (Hammersley, 1992), lying between two perspectives widely perceived to be polarised: realism and relativism (Andrews, 2012). This implies that although something may be socially constructed, it does not necessarily make it 'real' (Berger and Luckman, 1967; Crotty, 2009). Subtle realism acknowledges that there are independent realities, worlds that are existent aside from our own perceptions, but rejects the idea that we have access to such social phenomena as they can only be represented rather than reproduced (Andrews, 2012). Social constructionism has been criticised for adopting both realist and relativist perspectives, as some argue it is anti-realist due to the denial that knowledge is a direct perception of reality (Craib, 1997). However, ontologically, subtle realism recognises the existence of independent realities, denies that there can be direct access to that reality and acknowledges reflexivity (Hammersley, 1992), imperative for social research (Archer, 2007).

Theoretical Perspective: Interpretivism – Symbolic Interactionism and Critical Inquiry

Theoretically, this research adopts an interpretivist perspective. Interpretivism explores "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of a social world" (Crotty, 2009; p. 67) and was developed as a conflicting perspective to positivism, which was detached from observations (Schwandt, 1994). In line with the aforementioned epistemological and ontological perspectives, interpretivism adopts a constructionist approach where meanings and beliefs are pivotal (Goldkuhl, 2012).

For this research study, two different and complementary interpretivist approaches have been applied: symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry. Traditionally, symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry are considered to be conflicting theoretical positions, as symbolic interactionism is accused of

rejecting the critical elements of social cultures and neglecting the broader societal meanings (Gray, 2013). A pragmatic approach to research, however, can be adopted by utilising both symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry (Martins and Burbank, 2011). The micro levels of prisoners' interactions in a horticultural environment can be considered through a symbolic interactionist perspective, whereas at a macro level, the meanings of the research in a broader health and justice context can be considered from the critical perspective (Burbank and Martins, 2010).

Symbolic interactionism was founded by George Herbert Mead and subsequently popularised by his student Herbert Blumer in 1969 (Oliver, 2012). The theory conceptualises human behaviour through people's practices and lived realities; thus, meanings are not stable but rather assessed on the basis of individual experience (Gray, 2013). Blumer (1969) indicates that humans act upon experiences through personal meanings, therefore, each GOOP participant, prisoner or staff, may experience different meanings to others. Symbolic interactionism explores pre-existing understandings of cultures that form a matrix that guides people's lives, away from the suspicion and caution with which phenomenology, for example, measures cultural meanings (Crotty, 2009). When considering prisoners' perceptions and views of a sociocultural setting, it is important to remember their pre-prison life biographies and contexts. It is important not to sanitise or glamorise prisoners' behaviours as this can lead to failure in capturing the broader inequalities and experiences that shape them (Crewe, 2013). Major transitions and events in life contribute to a person's overall identity, and position one in a sociocultural world (McAdams et al., 2001).

In contrast, critical inquiry lends itself as a pertinent perspective to critical ethnography (Thomas, 1993), which is the chosen methodology. Critical inquiry derives from a Marxist heritage, seeking to understand societies whilst also challenging their current, perceived meanings (Crotty, 2009). Questions of pre-existing assumptions of a setting or scenario are asked and it defies social structures that are mediated by power relations in society (Gray, 2013) to bring about necessary social changes. Evidently, critical inquiry in research encourages researchers to accept that power relations mediate a specific society, and this approach illuminates the relationships between such power

and wider culture (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2002). By using a critical perspective, research findings do not exist only to interpret, but also challenge societal norms (Gray, 2013), which could prompt questions and provide evidence to inform future decision-making, policy, practice and research relating to the criminal justice system and social justice.

Overarching Theoretical Lens: Bourdieu – Habitus, Field and Capital

Taking account of the two theoretical perspectives – symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry – informing the study, Bourdieu's (1980) set of thinking tools emerged from the literature as an appropriate and attractive theoretical lens and sociological framework through which to view and make sense of my research data. Pierre Bourdieu, a sociologist, proposed a set of relational concepts in order to understand, explain and highlight inequalities at different layers of societies and social groups (Costa and Murphy, 2015). In this case, by applying these various sociological concepts to a prison subculture, different meanings can be uncovered for individuals, the subcultural group itself and the wider prison or societal community as a whole.

Bourdieu's thinking tools of habitus, field and capital represent the different layers or levels of a sociocultural group. These three constructs are frequently utilised to develop a model of social practice attending to agency and structure within social worlds, particularly those considered culturally sensitive, like prisons (Houston, 2002). Habitus has a long sociological history dating back to Aristotle (Reay, 2004) and represents the individual perspectives, meanings and schemas that derive from engagement with a particular social group, and which are often long-lasting due to the connection established within the subculture (Bourdieu, 2017). Within the context of this research, meanings and values expressed by both prisoners and staff in the horticultural GOOP group would represent their habitus within the social setting. The interactions between staff and prisoners and the activities available to GOOP members, such as gardening, woodwork, maths, English and creative tasks will shape the way each individual is as a person, whilst in prison but also in their future lives.

Furthering the perspectives deriving from individuals' habitus, the wider context of the subculture itself is referred to as 'field' by Bourdieu (1980). The actions displayed and meanings created by actors within the group then transcend into overall meanings and representations of the social group within the field. Where one individual's personal interpretation of the world may be one view, someone else's could differ, but these perspectives combine to form an overall depiction of what a social subculture offers, means and represents. By considering the personal significances and interpretations of a social field, this can result in the prominence of symbolic power and a sense of place in geographical and spatial terms (Bourdieu, 1989; Hillier and Rooksby, 2005). For example, the importance of GOOP for prisoners in terms of surviving and coping in prison was hugely powerful and symbolic. This is crucial to producing effective research studies in social fields as it offers a more realistic view of subcultures and what they can mean to individuals.

Finally, the notion of capital is core to Bourdieu's work which aims to explain the facts and truths of a social world and how these can be translated and interpreted in a wider context (Lewandowski, 2008) such as other prisons or custodial settings. Specifically, social, cultural and symbolic capital, as opposed to economic capital, provides salient concepts within social studies (Lin, 2017). Originating from Marxist theories, capital was most commonly linked with economic outputs and gains deriving from labourers but we have now reached a point where human capital, incorporating social, cultural and psychological gains are equally valuable (Wolfson and Mathieu, 2018). The enhancements demonstrated on GOOP through health, wellbeing, psychological status and social interactions reiterate the importance of capital as social product rather than purely economic.

The concept was modified and re-represented in social studies to infer that symbolism and meanings are cultural outputs from subcultural worlds (Lin, 2017). By applying the concept of capital to this research project, wider sociocultural outputs can be identified and applied to the prison and wider justice system as a whole, enhancing the links to the critical theory element, as outlined previously.

Bourdieu's sociological framework also encourages reflexivity and reflective practices, with many authors acknowledging a potential obsession with such actions but equally accepting the importance of considering oneself within the social world (Deer, 2008). As previously discussed, by keeping a reflective diary throughout the research period I adhered to Bourdieu's suggestions of maintaining a reflexive position whilst interpreting a social group.

Methodology, Study Design and Methods

Methodology - Critical Ethnography

Critical ethnography provides the overarching methodology for this research project which is defined as the study of social interactions, behaviours and perceptions that occur within group settings (Reeves et al., 2008). Critical ethnography derives from an anthropological background within the social sciences (Jackson, 1987; Stanley, 1990), with ethnographers documenting perspectives and practices of people within specific settings whilst attempting to understand their views of the world through that particular sociocultural lens (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). What makes ethnographic studies unique is the emphasis on culture and subcultures that derive from social research settings (Preissle and Grant, 2004). Where conventional ethnography seeks to describe 'what is', critical ethnography attempts to ask 'what could be' in broader contexts of society and culture (Thomas, 1993). In this research study, the findings will not simply present the personal stories and narratives of those engaged in GOOP at the chosen prison site, their experiences will be considered in a wider societal context to uncover the broader possibilities and potentials of a prison horticulture site; again emphasising the important of Bourdieu's (1980) proposal of capital. It could be argued that a conventional ethnographic study only considers habitus and, possibly, field, whereas critical ethnography seeks to incorporate the wider societal picture.

The critical aspect of critical ethnography derives from the ethical requirements to address unfairness or injustices within society, for example in this study, treatment, opportunities and health inequalities for male prisoners in the North

West of England (Madison, 2011). By adopting a critical approach to an ethnographic methodology, it is possible to delve deeper into the lives of prisoners and staff associated with GOOP, and provide thorough meanings which can translate into future-focused changes and impacts. The open, narrative-pointed questions, derived from Wengraf's (2004) Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM), asked through the interview method allowed opportunities for prisoners to tell their stories.

Additionally, critical ethnography lends itself to reflexive considerations and narrative practices, which are essential to this research study as personal stories, feelings and emotions arise throughout the data collection period for both the researcher and participants (Foley, 2002). All researchers are, to some extent, connected to their research subject and therefore a self-awareness and ability to associate with the social world are essential to successful critical ethnographic research (Davies, 2012). The reflective elements of this research project were imperative to the overall research findings, as I was able to reflect and consider meanings behind each day of observation and interviews providing an alternative perspective to prisoners and staff.

During the process of conducting a critical ethnographic study, it is imperative to consider transparency to ensure the stories and personal narratives that derive from data collection are real and not subject to scrutiny (Van Maanen, 2011). Many researchers view the difficulty of being transparent in ethnographic research as a weakness (Abramson et al., 2018); however there are tools to follow which can eliminate the doubt. Firstly, the use of theoretical guides for ethnographic interview transcriptions helps create transparency, accountability and strong objectivity as the researcher is encouraged to follow a guide rather than allow their own agendas to influence results (Skukauskaite, 2012). For this research I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic analysis as a guide to transcribing, which will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

Furthermore, Reyes (2017) proposed a three-stage model of transparency in ethnographic research: naming data, naming places and sharing data. The

model alludes to the decisions that ethnographers need to make with regards to who they are researching, where they are researching and how the information they gather is distributed to others. When applying Reyes's rules in the context of this research, the confidentiality and anonymity of prisoners, staff and the prison site itself had to take precedence in what I was able to name, or not name. Obviously, this impacts the transparency of the research to some extent but the ethical rigour becomes a priority in this case. Contrastingly, although names of people and places could not be directly shared, the detail in which I wrote notes, observed interactions and transcribed interviews, through following the aforementioned processes, ensured that I was as transparent as possible throughout the process.

Many people would ask about what crimes the prisoners I engaged with had committed and, without disclosing details, I would simply explain that their criminal activities had almost become irrelevant to me; I'd been fortunate enough to get to know them as the person they are rather than by their criminal offence. It was perhaps to be expected, but the mention of prison work to non-prison people evoked emotive responses regarding, the death penalty and typical 'lock 'em up and throw away the key', attitudes. I think deep down I knew that there were plenty of people who held these views but it has just become more apparent to me whilst researching in prisons.

Study Design

This research study uses a qualitative approach as the main focus is on the study of social lives and situations (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative studies are concerned with interpreting social settings, making sense of social phenomena and finding meanings deriving from the people involved (Neuman, 2013). Given the breadth of research opportunities when conducting qualitative research, there is not one single correct way of completing such studies as a researcher's beliefs of what is known (ontology), how knowledge can be acquired (epistemology) and the overall characteristics of the research field and participants have to be considered (Ritchie et al., 2013).

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) suggest that qualitative studies are a series of representations that can be sought through field notes, conversations, interviews, recordings, observations and memos to self as meanings of a social world are uncovered. Simply, qualitative research is any type of study that produces findings that have not been discovered through statistical or quantifiable measures (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Although quantitative studies can and have been completed effectively in prisons (Hirschi, 2017) the high rates of illiteracy in prisons can make it difficult to effectively conduct questionnaires and surveys, most commonly associated with statistical research types (MoJ, 2017).

It is important to acknowledge that qualitative research is largely subjective as findings derive personal views, interpretations, worldviews, assumptions and theoretical orientations to the study (Merriam and Grenier, 2019). For example, my own personal beliefs and alignment with social constructionist perspectives will undoubtedly shape both the research findings and my analysis of the data.

The study adopted a two-stage ethnographic design (exploratory and main study). Whilst this was in part due to the need to have undertaken a 'discrete' study at MPhil stage, it also provided an invaluable opportunity to pilot and test out data collection methods, and to gain experience as a researcher in the (at that point) unfamiliar prison context. A series of rapport-building and familiarity visits to the chosen prison also comprised an integral part of the study design and played an important role in developing my capability and confidence as a prison researcher – imperative to the success of the study. Participants were recruited from both ethnographic stages and, as a result, the findings and final conclusions reflect both periods of research. A total of 51 prisoners and eight staff were recruited as participants in the study, with 16 in-depth interviews being conducted across the two stages.

In order to counteract the potential biases and increase the dependability, rigour and quality of the research I kept a reflective diary alongside the observational notes, many of which are included in this thesis, to ensure I was being reflexive about the data collection; this is where the researcher becomes a human instrument (Morrow, 2005). The reflective process was also important as due to the high turnover of prisoners, it was not possible to follow up interviews with a

process of member checking to ensure my interpretations of their views was accurate (Carlson, 2010). Whilst I felt the reflective diary was successful in ensuring validity in the research, in hindsight, it's regretful that a process of member checking couldn't have been completed too, not only for confirmability purposes but also for the possibility of therapeutic benefits for those involved (Harper and Cole, 2012).

The world of prison is layered with social interactions and the GOOP site provided a perfect opportunity to apply in-depth interviews, guided conversations and observations in a qualitative manner to uncover knowledge and produce rich experiential data. By using these research methods, a participatory approach was required. There have been some criticisms of utilising a participatory approach in relation to bias and reliability (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995), but equally it can increase the engagement of marginalised groups, improve the relevance of the research and bridge the power gap between researcher and the 'researched' (Bennett and Roberts, 2004). Additionally, it has been argued that the prison population have become 'over-researched' and using participatory research methods is considered to be less intrusive (Clark, 2008).

Data Collection Methods

Contextual Literature Review

Literature reviews are undertaken to assess the pre-existing research outputs of a subject, decide which areas can be closed and highlight aspects where further exploration is required (Webster and Watson, 2002). There are varying types of literature review, such as meta-analysis and systematic (Cronin et al., 2008) but for the purpose of this research, a contextual literature review was deemed the most appropriate. The contextual approach sought to explore the current literature around prisons, health, horticulture and masculinity and provide a relative position for where the field is up to in terms of research.

The contextual literature review (Chapter 2) was completed in the first phase of the PhD study and was updated accordingly over the following two years,

allowing for most contemporary evidence to be assessed and synthesised (Hart, 1998). A search strategy comprising appropriate key topics and words was employed utilising relevant UCLan online search amenities focusing on health inequalities, health promotion in prison, masculinities in prison and the role of natural environments, specifically horticulture. The literature review itself helped in 'setting the scene' and, by highlighting gaps in the current literature, confirmed the need for further research into the links between horticulture, hypermasculinity and mental health in the prison setting.

Familiarisation and Rapport-Building

Familiarisation visits and rapport building visits took place during the exploratory study in August 2016 and this was followed with regular site visits and further rapport-building in April 2017 for three weeks, immediately prior to the commencement of the main data collection period from May-August 2017. I felt it was important for both, prisoners, horticulture staff and other prison staff to become accustomed to having me on site and visiting the prison. Whilst no observational research notes were made or other data collected during this period, it allowed me some 'practice time', to ascertain how my days might be patterned during observation, enable me to get to know the prison staff and become familiar with various tools and activities on the GOOP project itself. Researching in prisons can range from exhilaration to tedium and fascination to emotional (Jewkes et al., 2016), therefore as a first time, novice prison researcher it was vital I allowed myself the opportunity to adapt, prepare and learn, even if dealing with the pains and turbulence of prison research are never fully established (Sloan and Wright, 2015).

Research Participants: Sampling, Recruitment and Selection

The process of recruiting and selecting participants was informed by the exploratory study (Chapter 4). As I had completed three weeks of rapport-building on the GOOP site, the explanation and subsequent recruitment of participants was relatively stress-free to complete on the first day of the main data collection period; everyone was familiar with the reason I was on site and would be for the foreseeable future.

In qualitative research there are various types of sampling for recruiting participants: purposive, pre-defined, quota, snowballing, criteria and convenience (Higginbottom, 2004). For this research study, the study participants were pre-defined as I had no control over who was enrolled on the GOOP horticulture project at the prison (Nicholls, 2009). Sampling used for interviewing participants, however, was purposive, as decisions were made based on safety, rapport and potential for interesting findings (Etikan et al., 2016). Also, the initial decision to choose the selected research site for the study means that the sampling was partially convenience based too, as access was easily manufactured (Emerson, 2015).

All GOOP prisoners present and enrolled on the project were approached on the first day of research to be part of the study. Horticulture instructors and a member of the senior management team within the Industries Department gathered prisoners together in the GOOP classroom and explained to them why I was researching on site. They then handed over to me to explain the process of recruitment and I introduced myself once again as there were a couple of new prisoners who had not been present for the rapport-building period. Both prisoners and staff were provided with Participant Information Sheets (PIS) and consent forms (Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7) and offered the opportunity to have things read for them or to ask any further questions. Prisoner and staff PIS and consent forms differed slightly as the term 'hypermasculinity' was excluded and replaced with male behaviour on prisoners' documents. It was thought that this would eliminate any risk of influencing prisoners' behaviour and inadvertently encouraging hypermasculine performances. Similarly, the PIS and consent forms provided to staff were slightly different to prisoners' and included personal contact details and full study information.

Following agreed ethics procedures, original named, signed and dated copies of consent forms, were stored in the GOOP office on site until the end of the research period so that anything that could identify participants would not leave the prison. Due to the high turnover of prisoners, it was likely that participants would have left and their prisoner number or name was blacked out to reduce the likelihood of identification. Following completion of the data collection, consent forms were physically picked up and taken to UCLan where they will be

stored for five years before being shredded and disposed of in confidential waste.

Once again, reflecting the high turnover of prisoners, the group participating on GOOP changed over the four month period of data collection. Thus, when new prisoners enrolled on GOOP I would often wait until they approached me or was asked about why I was present, before conversing with them directly and asking whether or not they would consent to participate in the research study. I would not include those present in any observational notes until consent had been provided. More often than not, however, other prisoners who had been on GOOP for a longer period of time would introduce me to new prisoners and reduced any barriers and facilitated rapport-building straight away.

Overall, 59 participants agreed to be part of the research study, from the exploratory and main studies. These comprised of 51 prisoners, who consented to participant observation, guided conversations and the potential to be recorded during an in-depth individual interview; and eight members of staff – two horticulture staff, one cover staff, three senior management staff and two Novus teachers (Displayed in *Table 1* below). Taking into account my own rapport with the different prisoners and informed by the prison database (NOMIS) and staff guidance regarding behaviour, type of sentence and appropriateness, 13 of the 51 consenting prisoners were initially selected for in-depth interviews. Three prisoners were excluded from individual in-depth interviews due to their sentence requirements prohibiting them from being left alone with females. Three of the eight staff members participated in in-depth interviews, with the other four not being available or not being required due to time constraints.

Table 1. Participant Recruitment.

Participant	Participant Observation	Guided Conversation	Individual In-depth Interview
Prisoner	51	51	13
Staff	8	8	3

If prisoners or staff had not consented to participation in the research, any observations or comments made by them on site would not have been considered in note taking or data analysis. If a prisoner did not wish to participate in the research study at all, it was agreed with staff that they would be removed from the GOOP course or not required for work on days when I was present researching. Fortunately, this situation did not arise and it was something I was thankful for, as I did not want to be the reason that a prisoner missed out on the opportunity of working on horticulture. Fortunately, however, all prisoners and staff consented to the opportunity to participate, meaning this was not a concern.

If any prisoners were considered to be high risk (for example, violent), due to the nature of the horticulture environment it was highly unlikely that they would be able to enrol or maintain a position on a project such as GOOP anyway, thus there were minimal concerns in this area. Due to the relatively small geographical space of the GOOP site, there was no need to implement spatial restrictions on where research observations took place.

Active Participant Observation

As the prison research was approached with a critical ethnographic perspective, it was deemed most appropriate to use an observational approach to gain insight into prisoner and staff experiences. Whilst studying 'non-mainstream' groups such as prisoners, it is suggested that researchers should carefully consider the methods used, due to the potential vulnerabilities of the participant group (Goffman, 1963; Hobbs, 2001), something that was closely considered throughout the research period. Whilst there are contrasting views regarding observational methods, it is argued that they can limit any disruption of participants' daily lives and offer an uninterrupted view of the subculture or society (Adler, 1998). Observational research can also be classified as fieldwork which permits full immersion of a researcher into an environment in order to observe human behaviours and interactions (Preissle and Grant, 2004). Similarly, observational studies offer the greatest opportunity to produce honest and realistic data as epistemologically it underpins the acceptance of multiple realities in a subculture (Li, 2008).

Given the breadth of researcher types, researchers themselves and research participants, Spradley (2016) identified four different types of participant observation:

- *Passive:* The researcher is a bystander – present, but interaction and participation with others is non-existent.
- *Moderate:* The researcher maintains a balance between participating and observing, with clear distinction between each activity.
- *Active:* The researcher becomes a member of the researched group completing the same activities as the participants but is there to observe alongside participation.
- *Complete:* The researcher is already an existing member of the group.

Whilst in the prison research environment, the role of an *active observer* was adopted, with the observational work considered to be overt (Li, 2008). Active observation involved engaging with horticultural activities, learning new skills, holding conversations with prisoners and staff and joining in wider discussions on GOOP, akin to being part of the everyday team. Considering all factors, not just participants' personal feelings, was essential to capturing the whole subculture of GOOP and providing an accurate portrayal of that specific GOOP project. In order to ensure that observations were carried out as thoroughly as possible, in line with the detail and depth required for critical ethnographic research studies, it was deemed appropriate to follow Spradley's (1980) participant observation framework, as symbolic power and importance of the GOOP site itself could be accentuated further and be thoroughly scrutinised. This comprises:

1. Space/place – layout, physical space of a setting e.g. rooms or outdoor areas
2. Objects – physical elements e.g. tools or plants
3. Actors – the relevant prisoners and staff involved
4. Activities – the tasks the prisoners and staff participate in
5. Acts – specific individual behaviours
6. Event – particular occasions e.g. visits to other prison areas or lessons
7. Time – the sequence of events and for how long

8. Goals – what the prisoners and staff are seeking to accomplish
9. Feelings – emotions expressed at certain moments or contexts

By following the above framework considering all nine factors, this enabled accurate and detailed notes to be made regarding all scenarios that occurred during the research. By considering the environment, objects involved, activities, feelings and end goals rather than simply the people present, this allowed more meanings to be placed on GOOP itself and how the surroundings could influence personal stories in this context.

Reflections were made following each prison visit and specific events during the research period in the form of a note-taking diary, which is an accepted form of practice in interpretivist research (Denzin, 1994). In addition to following Spradley's (1980) participant observational framework, Kolb's learning cycle (1984) was utilised to assist with compiling the reflective diary. Reflective practice contributes to transparency in the research findings, self-reflection and impacts upon the field notes and addressing any research biases (Ortlipp, 2008). In particular, given the inclusion of hypermasculinity, masculinity and male behaviours in the research being carried out by a female researcher, it was essential to reflect on any potential discrepancies this could cause due to the subjectivity of the topic. Correspondingly, researching mental wellbeing also has potential subjectivities and sensitivities open to varying observations and interpretations. Acknowledging my own struggles with mental health, it was important to maintain a reflective diary to acknowledge and understand how my own biases might affect my analysis of the data.

The process of collecting data during observational research can be challenging and the original plan, prior to the exploratory study, was to carry a small notepad and pen in my pocket, throughout research sessions on GOOP. One notable challenge, however, of using observational methods was ensuring my note-taking was completed accurately. I carried a small, pocket-sized notepad and pen with me at all times, but my main notebook which had more thorough notes in, remained secure in the GOOP office. Although GOOP comprised a relatively small group of people at any one time, it was difficult to be discreet in making notes about things I had observed. I would, therefore, try and return to the office roughly every 15 minutes whilst observing on the main GOOP site;

however, when offsite, my memory and discreet note-taking needed to be very good to capture all the relevant information. There were a couple of occasions where I was sat at the desk in the office writing up notes more thoroughly, and some prisoners nosily tried to peer through the window and round the door to see what I was writing. Thankfully, my handwriting is generally so bad that only I can understand it, so I wasn't too worried about them looking over my shoulder and the implications for confidentiality. This experience, however, reminded me how discreet I needed to be.

At the end of each research session, when I had left the prison, notes were written up in greater detail to paint a comprehensive picture of what had occurred. On average, around 10-15 pages of A4 notes were typed up, after each research visit, ready to be analysed as the research period came to a close. I also referred back to Spradley's (1980) framework whilst thoroughly writing up the notes to ensure they were as accurate and descriptive as possible. In line with the consent forms and ethical agreements, direct quotes were not used from these observational notes.

The observational data collection was extremely enjoyable. As somewhat of an outsider initially, I relished the small group dynamic of GOOP and the opportunity to engage in various horticultural tasks as much as many prisoners seemed to. Firstly, within the context of an ethnographic methodology, the small number of prisoners on site provided me with a significant amount of time to gain a deep and thorough insight into all participants' experiences of GOOP, resulting in a strong rapport. Secondly, through my own experiences with anxiety and preferring quieter places with an avoidance of crowds, I was able to feel relaxed and at ease within the horticultural department, rendering the data collection relatively stress free.

As discussed previously, Spradley's (1980) observational framework was used as a guide to help me make detailed and accurate notes throughout the research period. During the exploratory study and in the early part of the main research study, I found it challenging to apply Spradley's work as it was frustrating not being able to utilise all nine items for each observational situation. I put this down to a level of obsessiveness with completing lists rather than anything problematic with the framework itself! I did consider dropping the

use of the observational framework at one point, but in the end I decided it would be used as a checklist when reading back through my notes of each session. It was challenging remembering all nine items whilst in the research field and having limited time to jot down key notes; therefore, it was when I wrote detailed notes and revisited them during the analysis, that Spradley's framework became most helpful. I was able to look down the list and add in further, necessary details regarding each situation.

Guided Conversations

Active participant observation was supplemented by guided conversations whereby key situations, comments and anecdotes were followed up and clarified with prisoners to limit deception, facilitate rapport and trust-building prior to in-depth interviewing (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). It is argued that bridging the gap between observations and interviews is essential in invoking frank and open discussions with participants, as it is considered to be an honest approach to research data collection (Goudy and Potter, 1975). Guided conversations were recorded in a similar way to the observational notes, with notes taken at the time of the event, soon after the conversations or questions occurred. Likewise, direct quotes were not used from these conversations.

Individual In-Depth Interviews

During the observational research, participants (prisoners and staff) were approached for an in-depth interview. The interviews were semi-structured with questions arising from guided conversations and events during observational data collection (Schmidt, 2004; Whiting, 2008) in order to allow participants to express their personal prison story (Turner, 2010). This allowed full engagement with participants, enabling participants' perspectives and experiences to be expressed and captured in their own words (Minichiello et al., 1990) away from the everyday goings on of GOOP (Di Cicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). In-depth interviews are appropriate for gaining rich data from participants, particularly after rapport has been established through the observations, as interviews can appear relaxed and natural (Fowler and Mangione, 1990).

The semi-structured approach of such interviews allows for some specific subjects, such as the research topic and current GOOP activities, to be covered with participants, but the format also encourages participants to expand on different points with interviews taking a different direction. In line with ethical requirements from NOMS, an example interview schedule had to be provided as a guide for what sort of subjects would be covered (Appendix 8). Initially, a biographic-narrative interpretative method (Wengraf and Chamberlayne, 2006), was considered for the interview style but due the complex training required it was a decided narrative-pointed semi-structured approach would suffice, drawing on the above method (Wengraf, 2004). A brief semi-structured interview schedule was written up before each interview with prisoners and staff, to ensure the subjects of horticulture, mental wellbeing and male behaviour/masculinities were covered as well as any other key incidents that may have arisen during observations. For example, an opening question of 'can you tell me about your experience on horticulture so far?', would often lead to comparisons between being outside and being on prison residential wings. This then naturally led to further questions about being outside. Further explanations can be seen in the interview schedule in Appendix 8.

Further, the semi-structured nature of open-ended questions were utilised to which encourage participants to expand on their personal stories before any further specific research topics were covered. I ensured that if anything unanticipated arose during the interviews that this was noted down for further questions during the interview. By noting down further points of questioning, this adopts a prompting and probing technique which shows the participant you are listening and therefore enhances rapport (Leech, 2002). Informed by the exploratory study, the interviews ran concurrently with observations due to the high turnover of prisoners, but I ensured a high level of rapport had been established with each participant that was interviewed.

Notes were made during the in-depth interviews as a reminder to myself to ask any further prompts/questions but otherwise, the content was recorded on a digital voice recorder, for which permission was granted by the security team. Due to the time-consumption of transcribing research interviews in qualitative research, consideration was given to paying an external, professional transcriber to transcribe the interviews. It was decided, though, that transcribing

the interviews myself would enable me to fully immerse myself with the data, gaining a rich understanding of participants' lives, in line with the ethnographic methodology.

Speaking to prisoners on a one-to-one basis was always something that friends and family couldn't believe I was doing. There were always questions about whether I'd be 'left on my own' with prisoners and 'wasn't I really scared' etc. In fact, whilst I adhered to all security protocols (e.g. sitting closest to the alarm), I felt very comfortable talking to the prisoner participants in a one-to-one scenario. In some ways, given the successful rapport that had been established, I felt the interviews gave prisoners a much-needed opportunity to open up and talk frankly about their experiences on GOOP. I tried to keep the interviews as informal as possible, so not to make it seem like a police interrogation, much to the amusement of several prisoners! The informality seemed to work well and the interactions often felt like chats rather than interviews.

With one prisoner, Niall, however, I did feel apprehensive about asking him if he would mind being interviewed. It took 17 weeks for me to pluck up the courage to ask him and make decisions on what questions I would use and how to phrase them. I was slightly nervous about interviewing him as he could be very defensive in response to questions, blunt in his views and aggressive in his tone of voice; I felt intimidated. Whilst I never felt in any danger or particularly unsafe in Niall's presence, it did take several weeks of observation for me to be totally comfortable when chatting to him. I found it harder to disconnect myself from Niall's violent criminal past in comparison to other prisoners' crimes. Niall was much more vocal about what he had done, showed little remorse and would often discuss violent and aggressive situations that he had been involved in.

Right from the commencement of my observational research, I was deliberating for weeks whether I would feel comfortable interviewing Niall but despite my concerns, I decided I couldn't miss an opportunity. On the second to last day of my observational research, I saw Niall stood on his own, unusually, in the polytunnel, leaning against the potting table enjoying the warmth. I approached him, asked if he would be around tomorrow and if he would mind giving up a bit of time for an interview for my research. Niall looked genuinely touched that I'd

asked him and then proceeded to tell me that he had been wondering why he'd not been asked when so many other lads had been; he explained that he thought he'd done something wrong and I didn't want to talk to him! At this point I felt dreadful that he had been thinking that and I wished I'd asked him so much earlier! This also, however, dispelled any interview concerns and allowed me to look forward to chatting to him – as I was sure it would be an informative and honest interview.

Overall, I enjoyed the individual, in-depth interviews greatly and it has inspired me to consider employment involving working with people in prison in the future. Although some of their personal experiences were quite traumatic, I felt privileged that so many participants appeared comfortable enough to open up to me.

Data Analysis

Once all the observational notes had been thoroughly written up and each individual in-depth interview had been transcribed, the data were inputted into the qualitative data analysis package MaxQDA. The individual in-depth interviews were transcribed by me and once I'd completed the whole recording, I listened and read again to ensure accuracy. With regards to the observational notes, these were written briefly, with bullet points, during prison visits and then expanded on in significant detail upon leaving the research site. Reference was also made to Spradley's (1980) framework to add in as much information as possible to really set the scene of each scenario. Each observational research session and interview transcription was individually coded and subsequently thematically analysed (both in the same way), using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic process. The six phases are named as:

Phase 1: *Familiarising yourself with the data*

Phase 2: *Generating initial codes*

Phase 3: *Searching for themes*

Phase 4: *Reviewing themes*

Phase 5: *Defining and naming themes*

Phase 6: *Producing the report*

Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic process provided a clear structure to follow when facing a significant amount of worded data and allowed the data analysis to be conducted in a deliberate and rigorous manner. The process of coding large data sets has been heavily criticised by quantitative researchers, implying that it weakens the robustness and reliability of the data (Hammer and Berland, 2014). Contesting this view is the proposal that completing a detailed and conscientious process of coding actually allows researchers to be sensitive to the changing contexts and situations in which research takes place (Chowdhury, 2015). A code is defined as a word or short phrase that provides a salient portrayal of part of a data set to create a link between data collection and the explanation of meaning (Saldaňa, 2009).

For each observational session document and interview transcript, each scenario and comment was coded using one or more codes. For example, if a participant had made reference to the enjoyment of being outside, this would be coded under 'being outside' and/or 'fresh air'. Overall, more than 16,000 items were coded on MaxQDA from the observational notes and interview transcriptions, highlighting the meticulousness with which the data were scrutinised. Reasons for the extremely high number of coded items are, firstly, the size of the data set; secondly, the depth at which every single note or comment was analysed; and, thirdly, the fact that most codes were coded under more than one heading. Furthermore, like any large data set utilising words, there were several coded items that did not fit into the subsequent themes and were therefore excluded from the total code count and the findings and discussion.

Once the codes were finalised, they were then grouped into broader themes: for example, 'being outside', 'horticultural enjoyment' and 'fresh air' were all placed under green space as an overall theme. These themes could then be broken down into sub-themes – for example, 'engaging with plants', 'freedom' and 'mental wellbeing' – and this is where reordering of codes occurred to establish links between themes and sub-themes.

Throughout the process of analysing data, it was essential to consider rigour, dependability and confirmability. It is argued that qualitative research relies on the power of language and therefore it is challenging to adhere to traditional, prescribed formulas as quantitative researchers do (Seale and Silverman, 1997). Anecdotal evidence of findings and themes allows readers to have greater belief and trust in qualitative studies (Miles et al., 1994). The detailed observational notes outlining specific scenarios and events evidenced findings ensuring confirmability. It has also been suggested that using advanced data-analysis computer packages, such as MaxQDA, allow for rigour in including all data and effectively organising themes (Silverman, 1984). I struggled with the amount of data I collected initially but having a computer programme undoubtedly helped organise the themes in an effective manner. The heavily emotive subject that arose during data collection also made the analysis process challenging, as emotional stories and moments were revisited. Emotions in prison research, however, can be used as an intellectual tool to actually increase the validity of social research as opposed to the assumed hindrance (Jewkes, 2012).

Using Bourdieu's (1980) framework also allows for some generalizability and confirmability of research findings, as the research seeks to apply the work to other settings. Although questions can always be asked of qualitative research with regards to truth and reliability, acknowledging biases, being reflective, using computer packages and repeating transcription tasks all contribute to effective dependability, confirmablity and rigour (Noble and Smith, 2015). On reflection the process of member checking is one thing I wish I could have completed as I believe discussing interviews transcriptions with prisoners, in particular, would have been greatly beneficial for ensuring accuracy in the findings.

Summary

Having outlined the aim and objectives of this study, this chapter has presented and reflected on my research journey: starting out (gaining access, undergoing vetting and securing ethical approval); getting started (considering the security

and safety aspects involved in conducting prison research); and undertaking the study (familiarisation/rapport-building, ethical considerations and issues involved in conducting the research). It also set out the epistemological and ontological positions (social constructionism and subtle realism), theoretical perspectives (interpretivism – symbolic interactionism and critical inquiry), overarching theoretical lens (Bourdieu – habitus, field and capital) and methodology (critical ethnography) guiding this research. The chapter then detailed the study design; presented the data collection methods – participant observation, guided conversations and individual in-depth interviews; and explained the use of MaxQDA for the purposes of coding and analysing data, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic process.

The next chapter will present the main findings of the research study under the three main themes of The Small GOOP Community, Sub-Cultural Masculinities and Changing Lives.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study site; set out my research journey – considering issues such as access, security, key handling, ethics and rapport-building, and incorporating personal reflections about the different stages in the process; explained the study's underpinning epistemological, ontological and theoretical perspectives; and outlined the chosen methodological position of critical ethnography before detailing data collection and data analysis methods.

This chapter introduces the research participants, summarises the background and design of the exploratory study, and provides an overview of research findings – drawing on data collected from both the exploratory study and the main research study. The findings are categorised under three headings, which emerged from a process of coding and analysis informed by Braun and Clarke (2006): The Small GOOP Community; Sub-cultural Masculinities; and Changing Lives. Within each of these themes, sub-themes are identified including building relationships; trust; community; presence of females; masculine performances; maintaining masculinities; rehabilitative cultures; green environments and mental health. Alongside participant quotes, vignettes drawn directly from the observational data are incorporated to illustrate and enrich the findings.

Overview and Context

Throughout the findings chapter, the GOOP site refers to the main location where prisoners come to work, various horticultural activities take place and key skills lessons occur. This is where the majority of the observational research took place and the in-depth interviews were conducted. Reference, though, is also made to various locations across the prison grounds, which the horticultural department is responsible for maintaining. Quotations (using changed names in order to ensure anonymity) are taken directly from the

individual in-depth interview transcripts to illuminate and provide support for the overall findings. Quotes are verbatim to represent both prisoner and staff voices, signifying their importance in the research. As discussed in Chapter 3, Spradley's participant observation framework (1980) was utilised as a guide for completing observations. Extracts from my personal observation and guided conversation notes are included, presenting reflections and descriptions of incidents and interactions throughout the data collection period.

Participants

On the first days of both the exploratory study and the main research period, horticulture staff introduced me to the current group of GOOP prisoners and I was given the opportunity to explain why I was on site and what the research was about. I then offered prisoners and staff the opportunity to read the PIS and consent forms and reassured them that there was no pressure to consent. Given the short time scale of the exploratory study, just three prisoners were approached for in-depth interview purposes; they were chosen based on behaviour and sentencing regulations in conjunction with staff.

Staff Profiles

From the start of the data collection period there were two members of staff, one male and one female, working as horticulture instructors within the department. Both have been employed directly through the prison service for over 13 years, promoted into their current roles four years ago after serving as Operational Support Grades. During mornings from Monday – Thursday, two teachers employed by the current provider, Novus, to deliver key skills in English and Maths, were present on the GOOP site. Additionally, there were three managers involved within the industries department, who oversee the day-to-day running of the horticulture department along with other 'industries' across the prison. Finally, one member of staff was often used as cover on horticulture who would act in place of either horticulture instructor in their

absence. Three members of staff were interviewed as part of the research process. Staff are listed by pseudonym and role in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Staff Participants

Staff Name (Pseudonym)	Job Role
Caroline	Novus English Tutor
Clark	Horticulture Instructor
David	Manager 1
Gerald	Novus Maths Tutor
Paul	Manager 2
Steve	Manager 3
Tom	Cover Staff
Vicky	Horticulture Instructor

In addition to the employed members of staff involved on horticulture, at any one time one prisoner has a role as a cleaning orderly. They are paid an additional £2 a week, on top of their basic horticultural wage of £12. During the research period, two prisoners that consented to participation in the research held this job role. This is a trusted and privileged position for the prisoners as they are permitted access to the areas such as the office without constant supervision, whilst they undertake their cleaning duties.

Prisoner Profiles

During the research period 51 prisoners consented to participate in the observational research with 13 prisoners being selected for the in-depth interviews. The age of prisoner participants ranged from 19-60 with sentences spanning from five months to life imprisonment. Fourteen prisoner participants were being held in custody for the first time in their lives and three prisoners had been in prison on multiple occasions, referred to as revolving door prisoners. The selected prison is a local, remand and resettlement prison, meaning there are unsentenced prisoners awaiting court hearings and those who are being integrated back into the wider community as part of their resettlement.

Table 3 below presents the prisoner participants, in pseudonym form to protect identity, along with their sentence length during the research period and how many custodial sentences they have had altogether. Participants are marked with an 'E' or an 'M' to indicate whether they were present for the exploratory study or the main research study, and one prisoner participated in both stages of the research.

Table 3. Prisoner Participants.

Prisoner Name (Pseudonym)	Current Sentence Length	Number of Custodial Sentences
Amir – M	Unsentenced	1
Andy – E	2 years 6 months	1
Bobby – M	6 months	1
Bradley – M	Unsentenced	1
Callum – E	Unsentenced	1
Charlie – E	2 years 6 months	1
Colin – E	10 months	3
Connor – M	2 years	4

Craig – E	Unsentenced	1
Daniel – M	5 months	3
Darren - M	Unsentenced	3
Dave – E	Unsentenced	4
Dean – M	Unsentenced	2
Freddie – E	8 months	3
Guy – M	18 months	5
Harry – M	18 months	1
Hamish – E	2 years	1
Ian - M	Unsentenced	1
Isaac – M	9 months	2
Jimmy – E	Unsentenced	2
Joe – M	Unsentenced	2
Kevin – E & M	5 years	10+
Kyle – M	Unsentenced	1
Lee – M	3 years	10+
Leo – E	Life	2
Liam – M	Life	1
Luke – M	4 months	1
Malcolm – E	4 years 9 months	3
Mikey – M	Unsentenced	1
Nazir – M	6 months	2
Niall – M	12 years	6
Nick – M	18 months	1

Nigel – M	18 months	7
Ozzy – M	Unsentenced	4
Paddy – E	Unsentenced	2
Perry – M	Unsentenced	1
Pete – M	7 years	4
Ray – E	8 months	7
Rob – E	Unsentenced	7
Roger – M	9 months	4
Ross – M	10 years	1
Ryan – M	Unsentenced	7
Sam – E	4 years 2 months	1
Stewart – M	Unsentenced	2
Sully – M	8 years	2
Terry - M	Unsentenced	1
Tim - M	6 months	1
Trevor – M	Unsentenced	10
Wayne – M	3 years	5
Will – E	2 years 4 months	1
Zak - E	4 years 4 months	1

Background and Exploratory Study Design

The purpose of conducting an exploratory study is to test out the feasibility of the proposed research methods (Thabane et al., 2010). It thus provided the opportunity to determine if any changes were required to the research methods ahead of the main research period, due to take place the following year. Additionally, it enabled me to ensure that I was comfortable in collecting data in a prison environment and to gauge how a research day would be structured, and offered an opportunity for prison staff on site to become familiarised with my presence and for me to get to know them. I previously discussed I was completely new to prison research so it was essential for me to build relationships with horticulture staff, other prison staff and prisoners working on GOOP. Whilst the turnover of prisoners is high at the selected, it was still beneficial for me to become accustomed to interacting with prisoners, practicing deflecting potentially challenging questions, developing an appreciation for security protocols and understanding the daily routines of working in prison.

During the exploratory study, 10 observational sessions took place across a three week period, with 18 prisoners and 3 members of staff consenting to participation in the data collection. The 10 observation sessions were followed by three individual in-depth interviews with prisoner participants. A GOOP 'session' is classed as either a morning (8:30-11:30 am) or afternoon (1:45-4:30 pm), in line with the prison's daily, working regime.

The exploratory study provided some valuable data, as well as giving me worthwhile interview practice and a comfort in knowing I could successfully carry out my research in such a complex, unpredictable environment. The only element I decided to change for the main study was the point at which I approached prisoners for interviews. There was one prisoner in the exploratory study whom I'd intended to approach for an in-depth interview, but one day I arrived and he had been transferred to another prison. Rather than adhere to the original plan – of interviewing prisoners following a period of observation – I decided to seize my opportunities and once I felt that a strong enough rapport had been established with a prisoner, I would approach them for interview and conduct these concurrently with the observational work.

Data Collection and Analysis

As explained in Chapter 3, during observational sessions, brief notes were taken using a small notepad that I carried in my pocket and later written up in greater detail using Spradley's (1980) framework. It was difficult to remain discreet whilst note-taking in the field itself, and I therefore quickly decided that it would be preferable to have a small notepad in my pocket to enable me to record significant moments, but also to return regularly to the GOOP site office to write up notes. Spradley's observational framework (1980) was used to compile and assist in writing notes up thoroughly following prison visits.

Using the interview schedule and subject check list (Appendix 8), individual in-depth interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, as approved by the Security and Intelligence department. I decided to transcribe all data myself as it meant I became immersed in the data, ensuring that rich, accurate information could be elicited from the research. Brief notes were taken during these interviews – not for inclusion in transcripts or data analysis, but for use as prompts or follow-up questions.

All observational notes and interview transcripts were inputted to MaxQDA and subsequently coded and thematically analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic process where key findings evolved. The three overarching themes and related sub-themes that emerged from the data collected through both stages of the study are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Themes and Subthemes.

The Small GOOP Community	Sub-Cultural Masculinities	Changing Lives

Escaping the Overcrowded Wings Building Friendships Trust A Place to Talk Staff-Prisoner Relationships Protecting GOOP	Gardening: For Males and Females Hypermasculinity on the Wings Hypermasculinity on GOOP Reducing Masculinities It's Okay for Men to Talk Group Hierarchy Gender Interactions	Challenges to Rehabilitation Personal and Social Development Learning and Skills Development Mental health and wellbeing

The Small GOOP Community

Escaping the Overcrowded Wings

In the context of prison overcrowding, this theme explores how the small group nature of GOOP impacted positively on prisoner participants, contrasting with their experiences on the wings. As a result of the small numbers involved in GOOP, prisoners were able to get to know each other and a mutual respect developed. GOOP provided prisoners with time and space to learn about other prisoners and created a support network.

One prisoner suggested that the small group dynamic encouraged him to get to know other prisoners properly rather than simply judging them for their crimes; he was able to overlook the offences and understand that they are human with something to offer.

> *'…I'm not the type of person to like prisoners. I know that sounds stupid 'cause I'm an inmate myself but I just don't like them… Now that I've been over here I've got to know people and they're not all bad actually. It's helped me understand people basically.'* - Stewart.

He also explained that he preferred being part of a smaller group as busy places increased his stress levels rendering it difficult to relax. Life on the wings, surrounded by nearly 100 other prisoners, was a significant struggle during his time in prison but the peaceful, smaller group on GOOP was greatly beneficial for him.

> *'It's a lot better here, yeah, I like being with a smaller group. I don't like loads of people around me… I'm the same on the out, I don't like shopping and that if it's dead crowded or dead busy. I like it when it's quiet. That's just me.'* – Stewart.

Stewart then elaborated further on the small group dynamic suggesting that the opportunity to pot and repot plants in the polytunnel, provided an environment in which he could open up and chat to one or two other prisoners in a quiet setting without the overwhelming presence of a larger group.

> *'I like it when I'm doing the plants in the plots, things like that, you know, when there's either just me or one or two other persons with me; I kinda like that. You know, you have like a one to one talk with someone rather than sharing it with a group. I don't like sharing things with a group of people, I like one to one. Get their ideas, their opinions and stuff, just get to know them better.'* – Stewart.

Equally, two prisoners remarked on the small group contributing to a more relaxed atmosphere. One believed that the small size of group allowed him to escape from his worried thoughts.

> *'You get to mingle with other prisoners, which I think can do you good because if you're agitated and, like, anxious like me, like I have anxiety with a lot of people, like if there's too many people it really affects me… like the mad jungle of C3 or C4 it did my head in but here I can connect with people and be like "alright mate?" like feel that connection and that.'*
> – Nick.

Similarly, another prisoner alluded to the fact that the whole horticultural setting adopts a laid-back approach, rejects any form of violent actions and fosters a different dynamic to the wider prison.

> *'It's a lot more relaxed over here, you know, it's anti-violent I think because on the wing you've always gotta be looking over your shoulder*

in case some dickhead's gonna start on you… When the lads come across here, you drop all that stuff at the gate… as soon as you walk into horticulture it's a completely different environment, you can feel more relaxed, it's a like a small community.' – Daniel.

Additionally, it was reported that being outside and working with plants provides a calm and relaxed alternative to being 'locked up' on the prison wings or even working inside on other projects, such as wing-cleaning or IT. Several prisoners commented on how being on the gardens allowed them to 'clear their head' of any anxieties and emotions that they sometimes struggle with on a prison wing. Horticulture clearly offers a calm atmosphere in comparison to overcrowded and potentially chaotic wings. Observations and guided conversations identified how some prisoners used horticulture as an opportunity to reflect, think and escape from their problems in a calm environment, echoing the feeling of freedom offered by participating in GOOP.

> *'It's well better down here, the weekends go so slow 'cause you're just sat in your cell proper depressed.'* – Will.

> *'When you're in your cell, your mind wanders, you're locked away literally and locked with bad thoughts but not down here on gardens.'* – Rob.

Another prisoner also suggested that the small group helped to ensure that people behaved when they secured a job on GOOP. Other than requiring prisoners to work hard, ask for help if necessary and use tools safely, Clark and Vicky do not clearly set any other rules that prisoners have to subscribe to. Any misbehaviour or trouble was highly visible and he felt that second chances wouldn't be given, enhancing the value with which prisoners regarded the GOOP job.

> *'…you're living on top of each other on the wings, aren't ya? There's about 150 lads or summin' on a wing whereas here there's only 20 odd max so if there's any trouble or anything you know that you've blown your chance. But we're a decent group of lads on here….You're not safe anywhere on the wings but you come here and see how kind some people are, it can change your sentence that.'* – Connor.

Building Friendships

This sub-theme explores how the small community of GOOP is conducive for relationship-building in a prison environment. The previous sub-theme highlighted the importance of having time to get to know other prisoners and appreciate how kind they can be. This resulted in friendships being built, certainly during their time in prison, something which was observed and confirmed in interviews.

On GOOP, there was time available for prisoners to interact with each other, develop constructive working and social relationships and, in some instances, make lasting friendships. As discussed previously, prisoners saw the value in being part of a small group, spoke in a relatively 'fear-free' manner and shared ideas, advice and opinions. I observed and discovered that prisoners did consider fellow GOOP workers to be friends, even though one prisoner was quick to insist that he didn't want to make friends whilst in prison, as he sought to escape a life of crime.

> '…at the end of the day I'm not here to make mates or owt, I'm here for punishment. Like I'm tryna get out of all this not meet new criminals!' – Connor.

One notable friendship that had already been established prior to GOOP involvement was between Niall and Darren, who had known each other most of their lives, having grown up in the same area. For them, it was a seamless transition into a working group and, naturally, they stuck together on GOOP. Niall and Darren spent much of their time working together in the woodwork room due to Niall's impressive joinery talents. Although Niall and Darren's friendship was deep-rooted, there were minimal signs of a clique and they were equally willing to build positive relationships with others in the group, not segregating themselves. Pete, also a skilled joiner, had enrolled on GOOP and developed a strong friendship with Niall and Darren as well as others.

> 'Yeah Niall and Darren, they're great lads… they're me work buddies aren't they? We're likeminded, all a similar age and we know jail. They're definitely friends yeah…I consider way more people here friends than I do on the wings… but even Clark, Vicky and yourself, I get on with all of yous and if I end up back in prison again that's a friendship, of sorts, made for the future you know?' – Pete.

Kevin was transferred to another prison during the research period and Niall alluded to the fact that he had been writing to Kevin since he had left. I often observed Niall and Kevin mingling and working together in the early stages of my research period and discussed the fact that they had developed a good friendship whilst on GOOP.

> *'You trust people more over here so it's easier to make mates and that, you know you've gotta be sound to be over here 'cause of the tools and that.'* – Kevin.

> *'Yeah you can definitely build friendships here, we all knock about together on here, on the wing, at the gym and that. We've all got our little groups like the polytunnel lads, woodwork lads and that but I've met loads of fucking top lads on horticulture. Like remember old Kev yeah? He was a top, top guy him, loved him.'* – Niall.

Kyle was also able to benefit from an environment in which friendships were developed. It was Kyle's first time in prison and despite his lively persona, he often sought advice from older, more experienced prisoners on GOOP. Kyle was awaiting sentencing and was expecting to be transferred to a Young Offender's Institute (YOI) prison which he associated with trouble and chaos. Kyle was on a wing which held a reputation as the 'lively' wing and was adamant that because all his younger mates were on there, he didn't want to move cells. On several occasions, however, I heard older prisoners trying to convince Kyle to keep away from all the aggravation and trouble.

Kyle was self-conscious about his tall, skinny physique and discussed this in-depth with Daniel, who, in contrast, worked hard to maintain a muscular stature. Daniel used the gym regularly and helped Kyle to develop muscles. Daniel often advised Kyle on the unwritten rules of prison life such as grassing, paying high interest rates for items on the wing, known as *double bubble*, and how to avoid trouble.

> *'It's been good spending time with the older lads yeah, 'cause they've been in and out of prison or are on like long sentences and that. I'm only young aren't I? So they just give me a bit of advice and that. Like if anything's bothering me, I know I can ask the lads over here… but not on the wing really.'* - Kyle.

Although positive relationships were established with Kyle, he did have the tendency to misbehave during English and Maths lessons. He seemed to latch on to other young prisoners that gained work on GOOP, such as Liam, Amir and Perry. There were occasions during English lessons in which Kyle strongly expressed a dislike of the subject and was unsettled by classroom-based work, acting petulantly. Daniel would often take the initiative to tell Kyle firmly to stop misbehaving and Kyle was much more content to accept a stern word from Daniel rather than a member of staff.

> *'It makes our job easier at times when some of the older lads, who have been here a while, help out. They're protective of their work so want to show the new, younger lads the right way, actually help others.'* – Clark, instructor.

> *'Because the young lads tend to be in a minority over here, they listen to the older adults. When young lads get together in a group that's when they get a bit daft, like on the wings, but over here they're separated and they're given the opportunity to listen and make their own mind up about things with no influence from their gang.'* – David, manager.

Trust

This sub-theme explores the strong presence of trust that exists on GOOP, not only between prisoners but also between staff and prisoners. Staff trusted prisoners to use tools in a safe and appropriate way on GOOP and several prisoners commented on how shocked they were that they were permitted to use tools, such as saws and electric drills. The fact that GOOP participants felt trusted by staff members was hugely appreciated and contributed to a developing culture of trust between prisoners and staff.

Firstly, several prisoners commented that even if they hadn't managed to make friends on GOOP they would still trust other GOOP prisoners because they were all there to achieve common goals.

> *'You trust people more over here because to get a job over here you have to be decent. You can't be dead violent because of all the tools and that, so that helps us all. We've all got the same mentality over here, we just wanna get out and do something good.'* – Kevin.

Clark and Vicky would ask the prisoners what they wanted to do and support them in making autonomous decisions. They were adamant that GOOP was the prisoners' workplace, so it should be up to them to decide what they wanted to do and get out of the work. For example, Clark asked the prisoners how they thought a scrubby patch of grass could be developed and improved.

Kevin, taking on a mentor role, led a discussion by asking for input from the others and a group of 10 prisoners came up with a joint plan of what could be done with the area. Taking account of both functional and aesthetic considerations they decided to create a rockery – with a small bark-covered pathway leading to the shed, two raised beds, a decking area and different shaped rocks, stones and pebbles. Each prisoner was delegated certain roles to ensure this was a team project.

This was just one of several occasions throughout the summer where teamwork, cohesion and trusting one another's abilities came to fruition. As the staff all touched on during interviews, trusting prisoners and allowing them a level of responsibility is of developmental benefit for them in terms of rehabilitation.

> *'If you have everything in place to protect yourself, the right procedures, a good induction then you're fine… you can never make it 100% perfect over here but if you don't reach out, allow lads some autonomy and responsibility, you become static. You're never gonna get anywhere are you? There has to be a certain amount of trust.'* – David, manager.

A Place to Talk

This sub-theme explores GOOP as a setting where people could talk, share worries, and be open and honest whilst seeking advice without judgement. Whilst the expressing of emotions and breaking away from the traditional hypermasculine norms will be discussed further in the next section of the findings, it was clear that a markedly high level of openness existed during the research period on GOOP and stigma appeared non-existent.

The GOOP site is considered by prisoners as a safe haven: their place to relax, chill and escape from the prison regime. A recurring theme throughout the

research was the lack of proper seating areas available on the GOOP site, which resulted in prisoners perching on equipment or the edge of planter ledges when breaks were taken. Interestingly, it seemed that the informality of everyone being sat around in different ways created a more relaxed atmosphere than the traditional 'circle-time' arrangements, encouraging informal interaction and 'opening up'. On numerous occasions, prisoners asked me or fellow prisoners if it was possible to sit down with them, simply for a chat. It seemed that this offered a rare chance, in the wider prison context, for them to let off steam and rant about their problems in a relaxed, informal setting.

> *'You don't express any emotions on the wings, I dunno why it's just a lad thing innit? But over here, the other day when I threw a bit of a tantrum, I could speak to Vicky and I knew Connor and Darren wouldn't be bothered that I was upset. It's weird, like I usually wouldn't ask for help but I don't feel ashamed to over here, 'cause you just do it whilst you're working away don't you? It's different.'* – Harry.

When prisoners first enrolled on GOOP, they had an induction with Vicky or Clark, where they were encouraged to say how they were feeling, whether that be stressed, upset, angry or even just tired. This meant that staff could keep an eye on them, help if possible and find appropriate jobs for them on site.

> *'More and more people are coming here and saying "can I have a word?" which I think is brilliant in a male prison because, you know, the stereotypical male is don't show any weakness and all that malarkey!'* – Vicky, instructor.

During one GOOP induction, a new member, Joe, completely broke down in tears, showing remorse for his crime and how he'd never felt so low in his life. Vicky spent just under an hour listening to him, trying to offer advice and sympathy. He explained that he'd been holding in his emotions for so long on the wings in fear of being ridiculed. Joe continued to discuss his emotional state openly with Vicky and, subsequently, Kevin supported him in moving to the quieter F wing with him and Niall there to offer support.

> *'Joe's a good lad yeah, he can relax over here and he's not as depressed and that, so it's easier for him to talk about how he's feeling I think.'* – Kevin.

On another occasion, towards the end of a morning session, I and five prisoners sat around in the area between the office and the storage containers. All the prisoners confided in one another about missing their families, accepting sentence lengths, struggling with the loss of freedom and their mental states. The empathy, support and non-judgemental attitudes presented in this GOOP setting really stood out, an observation further supported by both staff and prisoners.

> *'If you're missing your family or whatever then you'd be better saying it over here yeah, I don't know… you don't say much on the wings or you wouldn't say it loud anyway.'* – Clark, instructor.

> *'You can speak about literally anything over here and you know there's gonna be nobody sniggering in the background or taking the piss you know.'* – Daniel.

Throughout the 17 weeks of research I regularly observed prisoners asking for advice, confiding in one another and presenting high levels of empathy. In the GOOP inductions, Vicky and Clark made it clear that it is okay for prisoners to talk whilst on GOOP. Although some prisoners may have been initially sceptical of this phenomenon, they soon learned that it is accepted.

> *'… it helps when you have some of the older guys in…then you get the newbies, then if the older guy says "can I have a chat?" and a new guy sees that it's like "oh, that's alright here." Do you know what I mean? It's like "oh well they talk to them, so it must be alright."* – Vicky, instructor.

> *'They will always be more comfortable speaking to me and Vicky because we're not in a white shirt; we're gardeners too.'* – Clark, instructor.

Staff-Prisoner Relationships

This sub-theme addresses how important the staff contribution was in creating a GOOP community environment. Clark and Vicky set out to treat all prisoners equally and with respect and tried to build a non-pressured environment for anyone working on GOOP. Their attitude contributed to the respectful atmosphere. This was greatly appreciated by the prisoners and appeared to be in stark contrast with their perception of how they were treated more generally in prison.

Outwardly, Clark and Vicky treated the prisoners almost like work colleagues, meaning they shared jokes with and had a level of respect for the prisoners that committed themselves to the job. For Clark, this was about seeing people as equals and treating them as he would want to be treated, the same as he would do in any other walk of life – rather than reinforcing the prisoner 'label' they already have.

> *'Well they know they're in here for whatever, they're prisoners aren't they but I don't like to use the terminology. They're lads, we're a team, we all work together. Did I set out to do that? No, it's just the way it is. We treat as we find, respect where we're respected. If you're a knobhead, you'll get treated as one.'* – Clark, instructor.

Daniel alluded to the fact that he acknowledged the GOOP staff as part of the team. He described a scenario where prisoners' ideas were respected and implemented as much as Clark's initial plans and there was a clear sense of team cohesion to achieve a common goal.

> *'Like the other day yeah, we were down at the Japanese garden, you were there too weren't ya? And I was just sticking some pebbles in the dry stone river bed and I never would have thought of like brushing off the cement, like, you know, and I picked that up from Ross and even the teacher Clark said that he wouldn't have thought of that, so we all learn off each other together as a team.'* – Daniel.

Vicky emphasised the value of creating a relaxed ambience, highlighting the importance of humour and fun, something that many wouldn't associate with prison. Whilst a loss of liberty is, inevitably, part of the prison system, continual punishment is not how Vicky sees GOOP's role in prison.

> *'…this isn't big headed, but me and Clark have created a relaxed atmosphere. That's how we wanted it from the start; it's not a workshop, there's no targets, you just come over, potter around, do a bit of gardening, get on with the lads, have a laugh… You've got to have a laugh.'* – Vicky, instructor.

During the observational research sessions, there were numerous moments that provided laughter and humour amongst the group and the following excerpt is taken from my observational notes highlighting an example of how relaxed, jokiness existed on GOOP.

It had been a very laid-back and relaxed day on GOOP, as the whole group of us had been working on a rockery as a new display for the cottage garden, adjacent to the main GOOP site and opposite the neighbouring gymnasium. There were several new prisoners who had joined the group over the last week, most notably, Wayne, Kyle and Ian. Wayne and Ian were both middle aged prisoners and very keen to be involved in jobs and get their hands dirty, having had previous experience of manual labour. Ian was exceptional at building and mixing cement which proved to be extremely helpful during the design and construction of the rockery. Kyle, on the other hand, was described by the GOOP lads as your typical young, lazy prisoner; which seemed understandable at this stage as he was slightly moody looking and not interested in helping or learning.

As the morning session progressed and each prisoner was assigned job roles, there was a real sense of harmony and jokiness being established amongst the group. Kyle, on his second day, was learning to accept ridicule over his sulkiness and the lads continued to 'take the mick' out of the way he regularly used the words 'sick', 'lad' 'innit' and 'mint'. Gradually the whole group of us were deliberately integrating these words into our conversations, even more serious ones about building the rockery. Kyle begun to warm to group because of this banter, and you could sense that he felt accepted by everyone because of how well he took the teasing.

As the session came to a close, the lads gathered around the back gate, whilst Clark, Vicky and I stood just outside in the cottage garden, awaiting the call from the wing that the prisoners could return. This often took several minutes but it was a key time for prisoners to be in close proximity and chat with each other. Following the funny ridicule of Kyle's use of language earlier, this had started up again, however, this time it was Nick that was the butt of the joke. Vicky had noticed that there was a mint plant beside the gate where we were all stood and, sticking with the 'mint' jokes from before, Vicky pointed it out to Nick and said 'it's a mint plant!'

The lads all found this funny, because they understood that it was literally a plant of mint but Nick did not grasp this fact and then continued to point at everything labelling them as a 'mint gate' and a 'mint grass' much to the amusement of everyone. Kyle, who was not known for his intellect among the group, took the opportunity to try and explain to Nick that the plant was not only 'mint' as in good, it was literally mint, as in the flavour. Nick could simply not grasp this at all, he seemed to have no idea that mint grew on plants, and this also prompted further friendly laughter, as even Kyle knew something that Nick didn't!

Two prisoners specifically mentioned that they were able to have a laugh whilst on GOOP in ways that they felt unable to do on the wings due to the fear of being misinterpreted and this resulting in a violent or aggressive reaction.

> *'They just take the piss and have a laugh with you really don't they? We have a good laugh over here.'* – Ross.

Throughout the four month research period, I recorded 159 moments that were coded under the theme 'humour' which accentuates how enjoyable GOOP can be for people. For example, Nick and Kevin, two very outgoing and often lively members of the group, enjoyed being centre of attention – telling jokes, singing in funny voices, dancing and generally entertaining the group. The presence of humour can also link to the need for a relaxing, calm environment within a prison setting and enables a development of team contributions as individuals each have an important role to play in promoting cohesion.

Multiple discussions arose about life on the wings and how much prisoners disliked being locked away in their cells. One of the notable contrasts mentioned was in relation to the staff. Clark and Vicky were able to spend time getting to know prisoners in a more personal manner than is generally able to happen on the wings. Several prisoners emphasised the importance of being treated like a human and not feeling like a 'name and a number'. Clark and Vicky were also happy to be called by their first names, rather than Miss or Sir, which is common practice in the wider prison. Similarly, I also encouraged prisoners to call me by my name, to minimise any hierarchical status.

'They've always been alright with me yeah. They treat you like a human and not a fucking prisoner or criminal. They treat everybody the same, there's nae discrimination or owt, religion, skin colour, crime, doesn't fucking matter. We're all the same here.' – Niall.

'It's the little things that matter with them, like when we're moving down to the Japanese garden and that Clark will say on the radio thing that he wants to move 10 lads rather than 10 prisoners, where you don't get that on the wing. You feel human again and it's really good to be honest.' – Harry.

Clark also spoke about helping prisoners with small things in prison such as checking information on the computer. They realised that kind gestures can go a long way in helping prisoners, reducing stress and establishing a level of mutual respect.

'They don't get given proper information from officers on the wing, they get drip fed information. Checking healthcare appointments, visits, money… it's nothing, it's just something, the little things mean a lot in here… It's five minutes, not even that, it's nothing but it can be everything to them.' – Clark, instructor.

The relaxed atmosphere of GOOP has already been mentioned innumerable times and this also extended to the horticultural tasks that prisoners undertook. During each GOOP induction, Vicky asked what activities prisoners were interested in and if they had any previous horticulture experience. Whenever Vicky or Clark needed something making, such as decking or sleepers, prisoners would get on with the task but, pertinently, there were no deadlines to meet. Two prisoners commented on the minimal pressure to complete tasks; they volunteered to do something and were trusted to get on with it, without being directly supervised.

'There's no, erm, there's no pressure on you, there's no deadlines, there's no "you've gotta do this" or "you've gotta do that". – Pete.

Interestingly, Niall felt that due to his long-standing position as 'GOOP joiner', he had plenty of opportunities to visit other areas of the prison such as the health care garden, execute his skills and contribute to improving them. Assuming GOOP prisoners were cleared by security with regards to their IEP status (see Chapter 3), they were able to move round the prison to different

areas, with supervision, and this enabled them to have contact with other staff. Further, after seeing what GOOP prisoners were capable of across other areas of the prison, other staff also visited the GOOP site to purchase plants or produce, meaning that prisoners were able to interact with them, acknowledged as an important benefit.

> *'I'd say you meet new people, you know what I mean, I've met loads of new staff that I'd never speak to through being in the prison, obviously I've met them through being here, they come to horticulture and try and buy like flowers or fruit or whatever, and just whatever on a daily basis…Is it 'cause you're a trusted prisoner? I don't know but I've noticed they do treat you different, know what I mean.'* – Niall.

Protecting GOOP

This sub-theme explores the notion that current GOOP members were protective and territorial over the GOOP site and wanted to ensure any changes were good changes. When new prisoners began their time on GOOP, they were given the aforementioned induction and then left to explore and find their own way on the job. Clark and Vicky provided some direction in terms of what tasks were completed in each area of the site but it was understood to be their work and up to them to learn from others. There was generally a group of seven or eight prisoners who had been on GOOP for several months and therefore settled into a group. Perhaps understandably, I observed a sense of intrigue whenever a new person arrived on GOOP or a change occurred. Several prisoners implied that when you are settled on GOOP, something many are so comfortable with, they do whatever they can to protect its status; this is where prisoners and staff on GOOP became somewhat territorial over their work and began a process of 'sussing out' any new prisoners.

> *'We're a decent set of lads, you know…they seem to handpick the lads that come on here you know, I think we're a little bit special compared to the other lads, like, I think they seem to, yeah, find them kind of people. If you don't fit in or you're a gobshite over here then you're not gonna last 2 minutes on here, you know, they'll have you off the course straight away. We're happy with our little thing over here.'* – Daniel.

It was clear that a new prisoner's attitude and behaviour was important in how they were received and that a favourable first impression was key to being accepted as part of the GOOP community by both prisoners and staff.

> *'Within the first fucking five seconds you can know if somebody's not right for over here…Some people keep quiet and to themselves and don't come out their shell for a while… you get a vibe from somebody that's not right for the team and it's not just one person that thinks it, it's like everybody thinks it and like I said, they don't gel and when they don't gel, they isolate themselves.' – Niall.*

Unsurprisingly, given the process of 'sussing out', the crime committed plays a significant role in how pre-existing GOOP members decide whether someone is acceptable to be joining the group. Questions such as 'what are you in for?' were often asked of new prisoners enrolled on GOOP in an attempt to assess whether the person was genuine and worthwhile for the project. Whilst I wasn't preoccupied with the prisoners' crimes and rarely asked questions myself, many of them spoke to me in detail about their past wrongdoings and crime was regularly discussed within the group.

> *'You've gotta suss people a lot. I mean, a lot of people we know off the wing, so you already know before they come what they're gonna be like, I mean, there's only me off my wing in here now but, erm, I mean someone will come on and you'll be like "who's he?", "what's he in for?" or that kinda stuff, the usual anyway when you meet a stranger in jail.' – Pete.*

I came to realise that within prison culture there are certain crimes, such as sex offences, that are considered completely unacceptable by some prisoners. Those imprisoned for sex offences and for assault on a female would not be welcomed into the GOOP group by other prisoners; this was made clear on several occasions during observation discussions and interviews. Additionally, Ross was very open and vocal about having been convicted for assaulting a sex offender – a crime that seemingly added to his popularity amongst other prisoners on GOOP.

> *'Everybody just mixes. I think people talk about crime because nobody wants to get labelled as like one of the nonces. It's better to talk about it because if you're holding back on it you get labelled and that's when you get mither, beaten up and a hot kettle poured over you or whatever.' – Ross.*

> *'We have to judge people and suss them out yeah, definitely. It's not necessarily about being accepted because everyone is pretty much accepted, unless you're a sex offender, then you're gone.'* – Clark, instructor.

When Nigel joined GOOP, a greater awareness of crime did occur as I was informed by Clark and Vicky that he was serving a sentence for sex offences against children but prisoners were led to believe that he was in prison for another, more acceptable, crime. Given the tight-knit nature of the group of GOOP, Clark and Vicky were very aware of ensuring that the other prisoners didn't know about his crime, for his own safety, more than anything else. Things were complicated further when Trevor joined the group, as he was very vocal about his dislike of sex offenders.

Whilst Ross, Trevor and Nigel were present on site, suspicions built up and more questions were asked regarding Nigel's crime. Nigel would mumble quiet responses, doing his best to maintain a lie whilst in prison. Eventually, Nigel was removed from the course for his own safety as rumours were rife, but Ross and Niall in particular were furious that they'd had to work alongside Nigel for several weeks.

Violence on the prison wings and acting tough is something that was spoken of to a great extent during the research. Several prisoners alluded to the fact that whilst prisoners turned to violence in prison, that wouldn't be welcome on GOOP as it would damage the reputation and threaten the continuation of something they value.

> *'Yeah, I don't think the lads would tolerate violence over here. I don't think they'd like them neither. They'd be made unwelcome because if you're gonna be a knobhead then, well, like don't fucking speak to us like that. They'd be the ones that feel like the black sheep really I think, I think it'd reverse on them to be honest with you, like you know…'* – Daniel.

More generally, GOOP participants highlighted that a new prisoner joining and not fitting into the group because of their attitude and behaviour could completely change the atmosphere and result in existing members feeling differently about the project.

'…people come on that we don't really want here, you start to get a bit, territorial… there was a couple of lads on last week and I just didn't like them. I didn't want them in here and spoiling everything… we've got our own little clique, that doesn't bother me you know. I think it's good to have a little support group, a little community, a little communal area where you have your brews and stuff, have a gab, have a bitch.'– Pete.

Despite the need to protect GOOP, prisoners emphasised that they also tried to make others feel welcome, even if that was part of the 'sussing out' process. People could be quickly accepted if they appeared to be the right sort of person for the job.

'Everybody makes the fucking effort with new lads because we've all been there, so like the lads that have been there the longest yeah, you try and make and effort for the new people and make them feel welcome. Make them like, say, like this is such and such a body, this is such and such a body, stay the fuck away from him haha, but he's alright haha!' – Niall.

Having seen how protective the prisoners were of GOOP, I feel privileged that, as a relatively short-term visitor of the site, I felt I was accepted quickly. I never felt like I was intruding on their work and lives; I asked questions where necessary and responded to all their questions, bearing in mind the fine line of disclosing personal information. Some prisoners actually acknowledged that they saw me as part of team, and the staff also agreed that I'd been accepted as part of GOOP.

'Nah it's been great having you here, we've all been respectful to you I think and we've all enjoyed you being here, because, well, it's something different but you're just part of team aren't you, I think, that's what we see you as. Well that's what I see it is anyway.' – Connor.

'Yeah, I would say they behaved a bit different with you here initially. Well, a few lads anyway, for obvious reasons, your age, you're female. Also, the lads like new things, because life is mundane in here. It's like when you first join the job and you're new, the lads wanna find out more about you like a little, erm, like a new toy. They're here all the time, you're not. Me and Vicky are here all the time, whereas because you come and go, you're like a new play thing… so to speak!' – Clark, instructor.

Sub-cultural Masculinities

Gardening: For Males and Females

This sub-theme explores the perception that horticulture is a feminine job, involving growing flowers and not much more. Whilst many prisoners weren't overly concerned about this, there did seem to be a more general need for reassurance that horticulture was a 'man's job'. Further, some prisoners acknowledged that they felt that working with flowers was a feminine task but appreciated the wider benefits that come with the GOOP job, meaning any feminine association was overlooked.

From my observations, the majority of the time on the GOOP site was spent with small groups of prisoners engrossed in a variety of tasks, mostly involving keeping the GOOP area tidy. On occasions, however, when a delivery of supplies had arrived, heavy items needed moving or activities involving strength arose, the younger prisoners, in particular, were noticeably keen to exert themselves and display their strength.

In one instance, several soil bags arrived at the gate and without hesitation, Amir, Harry and Joe stopped the activities they were doing and bounded over. Jumpers were removed, sleeves were rolled right up to the shoulder to ensure their biceps were on show, heavy exhausted sighs were heard and sweat began to drip off their heads as they ensured everyone knew how hard they were working. It wasn't long before Kevin began to tease them, suggesting they were showing off their muscles in front of me. Amir, Joe and Harry laughed quietly to themselves but also brushed off Kevin's suggestion, assuring us all that they were working really hard.

During the in-depth interviews, two prisoners were adamant that having a job on horticulture isn't a feminised role; it is a tough job, involving digging and hard graft. It is clearly important, despite the lack of overtly masculine behaviours, to ensure that people know they are still working strenuously like men should.

> *'But this is a manly job really, it's not a girly job, there's a lot of digging and all that so it's not really all flowers is it?'* – Kevin.

There was some acknowledgement of the hypermasculine expectations that come with prison life. During observations and guided conversations, one

prisoner remarked that he "felt like a bit of a pansy" whilst working in what he clearly viewed as a feminine activity. Sam, a young prisoner, admitted that the fact there are more manly jobs did help justify his position on GOOP but also hinted at some envy that non-GOOP prisoners may have.

> *'I prefer woodwork cause it's physical… flowers is something your wife would do at home…it's a bit more feminine to mess with flowers…the lads see it as a bit girly but they're all jealous.'* – Sam.

An older prisoner also regularly asked staff if he was allowed to take plants back to his cell, (which unfortunately is not permitted) and didn't care what others would think of it suggesting that even in the welcoming, relaxed setting of GOOP, they seem content to acknowledge hypermasculine behaviours but not act upon them.

Further to this general insistence that horticultural jobs should not be feminised, one prisoner extended the defence of the GOOP role with reference to sexuality and transvestitism, both of which are intertwined with gender. Whilst attitudes from others led prisoners to defend the horticultural stereotype as being women's work, one prisoner used sexuality stereotypes to explain why the job role is a masculine one.

> *'I've heard people say that it's gay to mess with flowers and that but I don't care, they're just jealous aren't they?... Yeah it might be flowers but it's not like you're dressing up in pink ballerina's outfit or doing your hair is it?! You're playing with flowers, every garden has a flower, you know, just get on with it. Yeah it's not a girly thing at all I don't think.'* – Connor.

Despite several prisoners' efforts to appear strong and physically capable on GOOP, it wasn't just them that wanted to ensure that people knew how demanding horticulture can be. Clark alluded to this in the in-depth interview and I observed, on many occasions, his willingness and need to be involved in all heavy-duty activities and anything involving lifting.

> *'It's more than just flowers though innit, it's hard, it's tough, it's a proper job you know what I mean…Some people do see it as girly but this is a world of males, Monty Don, Alan Titchmarsh, Gardener's World, you know all these things. But people don't see it like that because it's flowers and that's predominantly a female profession, as in florists….'* – Clark.

Vicky made it clear, in her in-depth interview, that she doesn't think that prisoners come over to horticulture with a concern that their job is feminine; it isn't something she has heard mentioned during her time working on GOOP. She does, however, accept that many of the prisoners are keen to participate in activities perceived to be masculine, such as those using machines.

> 'They seem to like cutting the grass, they like machines don't they men? Boys and toys but they even care about the little seedlings too…and the way they were with them caterpillars! Personally, I've never heard anyone come over here and say "I'm not doing gardening, it's for girls." I'm sure they do get stick on the wings though, but that's just prison.' – Vicky, instructor.

Hypermasculinity on the Wings

This sub-theme examines the presence of hypermasculine behaviours on the wings at the prison in comparison to those that exist on GOOP. Whilst I did not complete any of my research on the prison wings, life back on the wings was regularly referred to and discussed in the interviews and on GOOP more generally. The prisoners often wanted me to understand what they were returning to when they headed back to the wings over lunchtime and at the end of the day.

Aggression, violence, conforming to type, bullying, drug-use and not appearing weak, were all factors mentioned by the participants as common behaviours on the wings. In contrast it appears that these – arguably hypermasculine – behaviours are prominently reduced whilst on GOOP because of the environment.

> '…it's hectic on the wings and sometimes it's very noisy.' – David, manager.

> 'On the wing? Yeah it's mad, two landings, or three and four and there's like 80 odd people on each landing, there's a lot of fellas running round like idiots.' – Ross.

During the interview with Daniel, he discussed how residing in an old, Victorian prison could influence masculine behaviours adding to the fear factor that

comes with being in prison itself. He admitted that, despite him being accustomed to prison life after several custodial sentences, others who are newer to the prison regime could find the place very intimidating.

> '…prison can be a very scary place can't it, it's very daunting…just the layout of this prison and with it being an old Victorian prison as well, it's very castle-like… it can be a scary place, I believe, for a lot of lads like, especially for a first time, they've never been before and they don't know what to expect and it's all these questions of violence and different things.' – Daniel.

Daniel also suggested that there are questions or perhaps even assumptions that violent actions will occur whilst in prison, so they expect to behave in a similar way. One staff member acknowledged that conforming can be problematic.

> 'The state of the wings invokes the masculine behaviour, of course it does. They all know each other so they stand at the end of the landing, it's like standing on a street corner so they'll egg each other on, it is a bit of bravado which sometimes goes haywire and has a really nasty effect on that individual's behaviour.' – David, manager.

Further to the idea that an individual's behaviour can be influenced by bravado, two prisoners touched on reasons why aggression and violence is more likely to occur on the wings. The feeling of being locked away, emotions running high and increased testosterone, are all factors attributed to negative behaviour on the wings.

> 'I think they make men fucking dangerous by putting them behind the door, keeping them locked up for a long period of time. When they're behind their door they get right anxious, they go through all different types of emotions and a lot of their emotions roll into anger, you know what I mean, because you're like a caged animal so you act like an animal.' – Niall.

> 'There's landings and you've got like a suicide netting, with a lot of lads all staring over at you and a lot of idiots just looking for trouble, a lot of testosterone with it all being male prisoners together. I think they look for a release by fighting or starting trouble.' – Daniel.

Issues relating to drugs and debt were also mentioned by one prisoner as being a problem on prison wings. During guided conversations with several prisoners,

there was much explanation about the negative effect that the contemporary drug, spice, has upon some prisoners and how their behaviour influences the overall atmosphere of the wings.

> *'I worry about getting involved with drugs and getting into debt then, and hanging around with idiots and stuff like that, you know, that are into drugs, debts and they've got a lot of people after them and stuff like that. I just stay away from all that and that kinda stuff. People do drugs, phones, you know, all sorts of different things. I don't want nowt to do with all that. It's not my kinda thing.'* – Stewart.

Hypermasculinity on GOOP

Interestingly, showing strength, proving yourself and not appearing as weak to others was a common focus when discussing life on the wings. Although the aforementioned concern to 'show muscular strength' was present within the horticultural context, this was only evident in scenarios where physical strength was actually required. One prisoner mentioned that this focus was, however, ever present on prison wings, often leading to aggressive behaviours.

> *'On the wings, they've got their jail heads on, I might say, they're aggressive, they're trying to prove something to people, in that kinda of a sense where you're, you've gotta show how strong you are or, you know, all that. That doesn't wash with me and it doesn't wash with most of the lads who are on here, no.'* – Pete.

With regards to the need to be strong, one prisoner believed that because he had confidence in his own strength, this enabled any fear factor to be taken away from him.

> *'I can look after myself so it takes the fear factor away. I'm not saying I'm anything special like but I go to the gym regularly and keep fit and everything else, so that takes a lot of that pressure away I think. That helps a lot like knowing that I can look after myself, I suppose.'* – Daniel.

Given that my observations only took place on the GOOP site itself, it is not possible to say for certain how prisoners behaved when they returned to the wings. It was clear, however, that problematic hypermasculine wing-based behaviours referred to by GOOP participants were not present on GOOP itself, while I was researching. One staff member suggested that this is due to

prisoners learning from others which behaviours are acceptable on horticulture, setting a precedent for future GOOP members.

> *'I would say that a lot of people who come across soon learn and watch other people and learn off other individuals, the behaviour that is acceptable over here. It's like a standard isn't it; this is the standard that we have and I think it's for the staff and the prisoners to maintain that standard within this area and that's what helps the individual to grow, you see.'* – David, manager.

Reducing Masculinities

Furthermore, several prisoners suggested that behaviours and actions are more pleasant on GOOP because of the relaxed atmosphere it creates. GOOP prisoners didn't feel the need to show any bravado and are able to let down any mask or guard.

> *'I think it's easier because everybody's more chilled over here, you know what I mean, you don't have the hostility and the animosity that you do on the wings when you're over here so is it easier? I would say so.'* – Niall.

Another prisoner also mentioned that spending weekdays on horticulture actually offers some form of respite from the wing environment, which he strongly disliked.

> *'Erm… you just get on with it, I just keep myself to myself. I just speak to a few people and that's it, stay out of all the trouble. Coming down here is like a break from that. I dread the weekends because it's being on the wing all the time innit.'* – Ross.

According to GOOP staff members, it is thought that the project can positively influence the behaviour of prisoners who can occasionally be disruptive on the wings. Both David and Vicky acknowledged the fact that GOOP can change prisoners' behaviours and ensure that they return to the wings, each day, as a different person.

> *'I know people who've come over here who are disruptive on the wings, they come across here and when they've gone back onto the wing as a different individual. It doesn't happen all the time because some people can play games, some people can adjust their behaviour depending on*

the situation but when they go back on the wing, go back to form, go back to type because he's with his friends.' – David, manager.

'A bit ago this officer, who has been here for years said "I don't know what they're doing over in horticulture but it's working". That was great to hear. Nobody ever refuses to come to work, we have awkward prisoners that we seem to turn and they're alright on the wing.' – Vicky, instructor.

Furthermore, it was not only the staff that noticed the change in behaviours; prisoners also discussed the impact that GOOP has on reducing aggressive tendencies, suggesting that the tranquil, relaxing ambience of GOOP meant that they were calm too.

'Well I just think they're idiots those that wanna be violent and that but saying that, it can help a person that's aggressive yeah, to come over here because it's a relaxing job and I've seen people that's come over here and that's been a bit aggressive on the wings that end up loving the job. So it does help. It helps people that can be violent, probably, well I would say it would.' – Kevin.

During an in-depth interview, one prisoner provided a pertinent quote which summarised and emphasised the idea that the environment in which you are placed can significantly influence behaviour. The quote alludes to residing in urban and rural environments, which metaphorically relates to the contrast between the wings (representing an urban setting) and GOOP (representing a rural setting).

'You go back to the concrete cell at the end of the day and a lot of people get aggressive because of the area they're in. You know it's like if you lived somewhere like just bricks you're gonna be a bit of an aggressive person aren't ya? Because you've got more people around and you've gotta protect yourself. Whereas if you live somewhere like the Lake District it's a bit more calmer. This is like a situation where the wing is like somewhere like Toxteth, Liverpool, proper shit, and then when you come over here it's like being in the lakes.' – Kevin.

It's Okay for Men to Talk

This sub-theme highlights the acceptance of displaying emotion on GOOP. Although prisoners admitted that showing any form of emotion is considered

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weak on prison wings, things were very different on GOOP, where participants felt more comfortable opening up, discussing their feelings and showing emotion.

The subject of crying and showing emotions occurred in almost all of the in-depth interviews when questions about opening up were asked. Prisoners were adamant that as a male, you couldn't visibly show emotion whilst on the prison wings due to fear of being viewed as weak and being bullied as a result.

> *'No, no, no. Definitely not. No crying at all. They'd just get terrorised for it. They'd start getting bullied, that'd be their weakness and people could use it against you to get whatever they want.'*– Connor.

One prisoner communicated a time when he began to shed tears during a phone call on the wing and was subsequently very conscious of other prisoners' reactions.

> *'I was proper welling up on the phone like and I was like "listen stop it, 'cause you're gonna make me cry now" and you can't really cry on the wing… I was like oh god and kept looking away like, 'cause there was lads around and it was getting to me.'* – Daniel.

Despite the fact that, in general, prisoners are reluctant to show emotion on the wings, Connor acknowledged the fact that this could be damaging for behaviour and also accentuates the initial worry.

> **'***Yeah it is a hard, harsh, environment so it's, it is hard to open up to someone, especially if you don't know them, you know, it's a hard thing. And then if you bottle it up it gets even worse for you, 'cause you get aggressive and that.'* - Connor.

In contrast to the negative response to crying on the prison wings, there was one occasion during my observations where visible emotions surfaced. A small group headed away from the main GOOP site and on a day when Harry was struggling to cope with his prison sentence and the crime he had committed. All the tasks that Harry tried to contribute to seemed to be going wrong; bags full of grass cuttings kept splitting, the wind was blowing the cutting back across the pathways and the cord on the lawn mower snapped because he'd pulled it too hard. Harry ended up slumped down against a prison wall, sobbing, with his

head in his hands. Connor and Darren were very supportive of Harry's struggle and he openly discussed what was on his mind.

> *'No, no I couldn't do it on the wing, no. You're just one of the lads you know. I can't… how can I put it? *pauses * I can't express my emotions to other lads. It's just a lad thing. I'd be so embarrassed. It was just it was weird that day… I felt like I could speak to Vicky and the lads, maybe like a motherly way, I dunno, which is good, 'cause you need someone to talk to in here. Erm, but yeah definitely not on the wing, I just, not bottle it up but, I just, erm, change my way of thinking I guess, just keep it all to myself like, yeah.'* – Harry.

It was observed that the GOOP project appeared to mediate troublesome behaviour rendering prisoners more relaxed in comparison to the prison wings. The GOOP environment means prisoners aren't 'on edge', trying to keep away from aggressive and threatening behaviours. Sam suggested that whatever was discussed on GOOP stayed on GOOP and in relation to mental health issues or concerns.

> *'…it de-stresses you to be honest…you can talk about things more here cause it's like an unwritten rule that stuff won't get taken back to the wings…'* – Sam.

In almost every session of my observations, I observed prisoners confiding in each other, giving hugs, showing emotion and talking openly about their feelings. GOOP is the place where prisoners cannot only talk, as discussed under the Small GOOP Community theme, but express how they're really feeling without worry of judgement.

> *'I'll let people know how I'm feeling here. It's cathartic. It's good. It's good to get your shit off your shoulders. I've got more mates here, like I said, than on the wing – even me own padmate. I don't really speak to him much. I'll wait 'till I come into work to speak to me mates, like.'* – Pete.

> *'…you know there's gonna be nobody sniggering in the background or taking the piss. You find that you come over here and, you're straight away you feel comfortable to talk, almost like a self-help group.'* – Daniel.

One prisoner, Rob, had just begun seeing a counsellor in the prison to help deal with depression, anxiety and anger management. He was comfortable discussing this with other GOOP participants who seemed accepting, attentive

and supportive. He also stated that he would struggle to cope if he didn't have GOOP.

> *'I'd cope, you have to, but it'd tear me up if it this was taken away… I don't think there's another job in prison that gives what this gives.'* – Rob.

Whilst on the project, he appeared content, engrossed in specific tasks and willing to work alongside others and helping younger prisoners. Interestingly he noted that his early counselling sessions had been helping but could've been improved by taking place on GOOP.

> *"They could do the counselling down here where it's a calmer area…anywhere away from the wings is calming but it's easy to relax and talk down here."* – Rob.

Group Hierarchy

This sub-theme focuses on one particular prisoner, Niall, who was present throughout the whole time of the research period. From my observations and in-depth interviews with David, Clark and Vicky, hypermasculine behaviour was not particularly prominent on GOOP. In many ways, however, Niall represented much of the hypermasculine stereotype: he had a large, muscular presence; he was loud, had a long history of violent crimes, swore every other word in a fierce manner and could, without doubt, 'look after himself'.

> *'I was a violent cunt, I am violent, I've been violent my whole life yeah, I'm not past it yet but I don't cause as much violence as I did 20 odd year ago, I've got a different mindset…Prison's about violence, you go the gym, you get massive, you fucking kick off.'* – Niall.

Clark acknowledged Niall's hypermasculine presence within the GOOP group, mentioning that there is nearly always one prisoner, at any given time, who has to be top of the hierarchical status.

> *'There's always going to be a bit of bravado. They'll push their chest out and pretend they're the toughest guy here but it does die down quite quickly here. I suppose there's like a pecking order 'me and my little clique' type thing. At the moment you've got Niall… he's the 'not to mess with' kinda guy, there's always one and there always will be one.'* – Clark, instructor.

Additionally, Vicky accepted that Niall was undoubtedly the 'big man' of the group and was reluctant to let any barriers down or to show any weaknesses. He was not seen, however, to be someone who would cause trouble on the job. Vicky also discussed Niall's caring side, which she had seen on occasions.

> *'Our Niall is the alpha male of the whole group isn't he? Don't let anything bother you, don't show any signs of weakness but then again, then he's got a really nice side to him. A really nice caring side because when I had me accident and I came back he was like "is everything alright?' so he cares but I don't think he likes to show it.' – Vicky, instructor.*

With Niall's behaviour and attitude proving to be somewhat of an anomaly within the current group of GOOP prisoners, Clark explained in a discussion with Vicky one afternoon that having someone like him could be beneficial. Likewise, she reflected that she felt very safe having someone like Niall around because she knew he was fine with them as staff members.

> *'…I think it's a good in a way due to the fact that Niall's on side with both. He doesn't talk to us like the other lads, as in like silly little things or general chit chat, none of that, but with Niall, he says it how it is, simple as that. And the other lads know that, he's been here a while, they know what he's like. And it's a bad crime as well, that makes a difference. Crime has a lot to do with it. "What's he in for? Robbed a charity stall, ahh that's nothing." "Oh, he's an armed robber, oh shit right." Big difference.' – Clark, instructor.*

On GOOP, visibly displaying emotion is something that prisoners appeared to adapt to, by talking, opening up and confiding in one another with worries. Niall however, did not conform to this behaviour and kept his problems very much to himself.

> *'…there's people you can talk to and that but you've got a set of things that you keep to yourself. I don't get to see my younger 2 so I kick off a lot about it but that's like that's the only way I know how to thingy so there's been a few days where I've felt like just going fucking nuts but like I say if I go fucking nuts then I'll lose everything I've got so it's catch 22. You've just gotta put it to the back of your fucking mind.' – Niall.*

Niall was very open during the individual interview but also expressed a softer side to him. Alongside Niall's GOOP job he had been trained by the Samaritans as a 'Listener' and it seemed to be that listening to other prisoners' problems and concerns each week may have altered Niall's attitude in some way.

> '…being a listener makes you realise that my problems are fucking nothing compared to a lot of people's. So there's people in here right who wanted to take their own life. That must be fucking hitting rock bottom when you think you've got nothing else but to kill yourself. So I'll fucking pray for them, the poor bastards.' – Niall.

Gender Interactions

This sub-theme explores the influence of having both a male and a female horticulture instructor (and, in the context of this study, a female researcher) on GOOP and how this impacts male behaviour.

During an in-depth interview, Daniel described his upbringing, implying that he had been brought up to be the breadwinner and had ensured that this value stayed with him throughout his life. His role was to provide for the females in his life and he firmly believed that this was the correct way to act.

> 'Being the man of the house is just the way I've been brought up like, you know, with my Dad. They're very old fashioned, my parents… the man goes out to work and provides for the woman. That's how it should be.' – Daniel.

With regards to his criminal offence in assaulting a convicted sex offender, Ross was adamant that the actions of his crime were positive in some way as he had fulfilled a duty of protecting children. Seemingly, this contributed to Ross' self-concept and wellbeing, as he had minimal concerns regarding questions over his crime and also did a 'good thing' in protecting children who could have potentially been harmed on day.

> 'In a way it makes me feel alright what I did 'cause I know I'm not in for robbing some old granny and no one's gonna bother me. I'm not here for like, you know, for breaking into someone's house, robbing some little, old, defenceless lady, taking some kid's fricking PlayStation or something like that. I've protected some children, I've saved some from being hurt which is alright with me.' – Ross.

Hypermasculine behaviours were rare occurrences on GOOP, however, one incident in particular stood out during observational sessions. A visit to the healthcare garden resulted in a non-GOOP prisoner shouting abuse at me as we visited another area of the prison. It was a challenging moment for me personally but it was the reaction of the GOOP prisoners that prompted detailed observational notes, as illustrated in the vignette below.

Observational Vignette 2. Healthcare Garden

It was a beautiful, sunny afternoon with a familiar relaxed atmosphere on the horticulture site. With Vicky absent and all prisoners present, Tom had joined Clark as cover staff and it was decided that the group would be split in two. Tom would then only have a few prisoners to be in charge of on site, whilst Clark could escort prisoners cleared by security to another area of the prison, where jobs needed doing. It was decided that Harry, Joe, Connor, Lee and Ross would join Clark and I at the healthcare garden. Tom would remain with 4 prisoners, who would be painting several large birdhouses, which were causing obstruction to much of the open area beside the gate on site.

The seven of us wandered down to the small, awkwardly shaped healthcare garden, which was a few gates down visits road. The garden was a real sun-trap, particularly at this time of year, and whilst each prisoner was assigned a job role, it was left for Clark and me to simply enjoy the sunshine and answer any questions the prisoners had. The healthcare building is a new build and its three story-high, red brick structure really stood out in the sun and in comparison to old, worn cell building beside. There are roughly 5 cell windows on each floor of the healthcare building that overlook the garden. I did not see anyone through the windows apart from one young man who stood with his face pressed against his cell window, staring out at us all. I soon noticed, however, it was just me his eyes were following. I tried to ignore his gaze by turning away, keeping myself busy and moving out of his eyesight, however, this did not deter the attention I was facing.

As the five GOOP prisoners quietly occupied themselves with mowing the lawn, pulling weeds and picking strawberries, the prisoner at the cell window gradually begun shouting; all directed at me. It was all horrifically abusive with some graphic and vulgar things being spouted. Although I was shocked initially, I deliberately continued to move away from the prisoner's eyesight in an attempt to ignore and stop the abuse, but it continued. The five GOOP prisoners did not react initially, perhaps due to my feigned ignorance or their own shock, but gradually they begun to turn round and react. The shouts from the cell became clearer, more frequent and, sadly, more disgusting. There were references to rape, sexual assault and how he believed women should be treated in general – all whilst staring directly at me. It was incredibly uncomfortable and somewhat distressing to have such words directed in my direction.

Joe was the first prisoner to react to the young man at the window, who still had his face right up at the window, eyes firmly focussed in my direction. Joe's use of language was protective towards me but also full of aggressive swearing as he expressed his disgust for what he was hearing. Connor and Ross' aggression and anger, however, soon superceded Joe's, as they went straight over to the window threatening the man and outlining exactly what they would do to hurt him if they saw him on the prison wings again.

Clark told the lads to calm down a few times, and encouraged them to complete their jobs and ignore him but it was becoming more and more difficult for them not to react. I also told them not to bother and that I was okay; they didn't need to respond in such a way to protect me. I did not feel unsafe, I just felt uncomfortable with being centre of attention. In my head I was there to research and ultimately find positive evidence to help prisoners, not be protected or cared for by them. However, I appreciated their concern and protection for me and it probably strengthened the rapport I had with the group.

As the abuse continued, Clark then made the decision to escort us all back to the GOOP site, as the lads were becoming distracted and agitated by the abuse and I think Clark also sensed my discomfort and

embarrassment. As we left the healthcare garden and returned to the GOOP site, Joe was quick to inform the other GOOP prisoners what I'd experienced and, as expected, they were keen to ensure I was okay.

With reference to what had occurred at the healthcare garden, I asked Connor, during the in-depth interview, about the incident.

> 'Yeah, it was horrible that. It's just a lack of respect do you know what I mean? And obviously because you're a woman, I was furious. I felt like I had to tell him, mate. He'd get battered if he ever ended up on the wings 'cause word will have got round about him. It's erm, at the end of the day I see it that you're someone's daughter or mother or whatever yeah, you know, it's they wouldn't like it if someone was talking to their, I mean I know you're not family to me but it's all this respect innit for women.' – Connor.

Although there are female officers on the wings, it seems that they are simply considered to be 'officers' rather than having their gender acknowledged. In contrast, having the presence of Vicky, the English teacher and myself in a small setting accentuated a female presence. Several prisoners discussed the benefit of having females around on the GOOP site, specifically referring to the difference in views, issues of respect and creating a more relaxed environment.

> 'Yeah, it's good to see a woman now and again and have a chat you know yeah. The lads will agree I'm sure, it's just really nice to see a female amongst the harsh male environment. Not saying that we're all weird or anything else, I don't know how to say it, you'll find everyone's really respectful towards you Flo. I can chat differently to women. I feel calmer I suppose, it's good, but sometimes it can be, I mean, female staff on the wings is different like cause they're officers.' - Daniel.

> 'Having a little bit of female around is... well, it just becomes like normal life basically. I think if it was all just men, it would feel like prison because it's a male's prison but because there's females introduced it takes it away a little bit.' – Stewart.

Clark reflected that having females in a male-dominated environment can be beneficial for the attitudes and masculine behaviours that exist in prisons, due to the respect prisoners have for females.

> *'The lads would act differently with two blokes because you'd then have an all-male environment whereas with a female… Females in prison can, not always, but can take the sting away from some of the bitterness, the nastiness, all the bravado.'* – Clark, instructor.

He also believed that he and Vicky have a good working relationship and that what they have 'works'. Each of them has qualities that complement the other and allow the project to flourish.

> *'Men with men can escalate due to pressure from others and can change with a single word. Women choose their words better than most men. It works better with like us 2, 'cause say like 2 females in here, I don't know how that'd work and 2 males I don't think that would work as well as it does now. It might be more of a laugh, with the lads but no one laughs forever. And Vicky is so OCD it's unreal. Fuck me, it's a joke. Whereas then there's me who is very relaxed.'* – Clark, instructor.

From my observations, Vicky and Clark took on almost parental roles within the GOOP group, something that was alluded to by several prisoners. Correspondingly, prisoners also indicated that having a male and a female as instructors offered the opportunity to make a choice about who to confide in and talk to.

> *'Some things you could feel…there's things out there that you couldn't tell a woman and you'd feel more comfortable speaking to a man. I don't know, it's helped me having both, 'cause there's a few things I've said to Clark that I've not said to Vicky…That's what it is, having a choice. I don't know they're just like a motherly role...'* – Connor.

From a staff perspective, Clark and Vicky both acknowledged that having the choice of who to speak to, be it a male or a female, is beneficial for the project. Vicky believed that because she is a female she doesn't see as much of the hypermasculine, bravado-type behaviours as does Clark. In contrast, Clark tended to hear less of an in-depth version of some prisoner's worries and believed this could be due to gender.

> *'If they're being their alpha male self they don't get the response that they would normally get but I think Clark gets more…. when the lads talk to Clark I think there's more of this macho thing going on. Then when they talk to me, 'cause I think they see me as a little old grandma! They know I'm a feisty bugger, they know that they can't get away with any shite but they also know that they can come and talk to me about*

anything. Absolutely anything, but they don't seem to do the macho thing with me.' – Vicky, instructor.

'Your Niall's and Pete's and Ross's, they don't say if they're struggling because they're big tough men in a big tough environment…Maybe they speak to Vicky more in-depth than me though, 'cause that's not man to man then. Some are more comfortable speaking to a female; call it the mother figure if you like.' – Clark, instructor.

Changing Lives

Challenges to Rehabilitation

This sub-theme of rehabilitation explores the notion that it is hard to rehabilitate prisoners because of the environment in which they are likely to return to following their prison sentence. There was a somewhat cynical acceptance from prisoners and staff alike that, whilst every effort can be made to ensure successful rehabilitation is accomplished, this is difficult to achieve.

During observations, I had many conversations with prisoners about how they found themselves in a cycle of reoffending. Whilst they emphasised a willingness to change, there was a cynicism that they did not expect to escape that way of life. Prisoners referred to upbringing, childhood experiences and the people they associate with as reasons for their crime-dominated lifestyles. Staff mentioned that whilst participants have the best intentions to change their lives whilst on GOOP, ultimately, it's up to the prisoners themselves.

'It depends on the individual. Some wanna learn, do more. Some are just passing time. But as a whole, nah. I'd like to think so but no. It's not gonna stop 'em doing whatever they do…You can show them the right and wrong way but as soon as they get out them gates they're on their own, pretty much. They're not gonna think "oh Vicky and Clark said do this." – Clark, instructor.

> *'We do what we can to point them in the direction of rehabilitation but no matter what you do for rehabilitation…It's down to the individual what choice he makes when he goes through that gate'. – David, manager.*

One prisoner discussed the impact that social disintegration has had upon reoffending behaviours, resulting in selfish attitudes and a lack of community. Prisoners reflected on how their experience of GOOP contrasted with this, making it uniquely placed to contribute to changing behaviours.

> *'It's just down to social decline isn't it, just people in general just don't care about each other…there's no community…that's been a factor since the 80s probably, because of Thatcher, but erm even in jail there was a sense of community but now, there's nothing…you're standing up for yourself, it's just all dog eat dog and fuck the rest. Apart from over here.'*
> *– Pete.*

Personal and Social Development

This sub-theme explores the benefits of GOOP in relation to personal and social development and how these factors could lead to successful rehabilitation. It seemed that whilst horticultural activities alone may not prevent reoffending, there were personal and social development benefits arising from GOOP which contributed towards a rehabilitative culture as well as the intention of prisoners to use the skills developed in their futures.

Whilst conceding that activities such as gardening and woodwork are unlikely on their own to prevent prisoners committing further crimes, one prisoner suggested that – in the wider context of society and the prison environment – GOOP offered a place of safety, belonging and a chance to learn about oneself.

> *'…it's sort of a safe haven, you can come here, you can open up…you're not gonna learn nothing in here that's gonna stop you committing crime so I wouldn't say it's rehabilitative in that sense but in the sense where you can feel a part of something and wanted by other people… I mean some people might have some crippling social anxiety and over here you find friends, you'd find yourself...' – Pete.*

It was also suggested that the regularity of getting up for work each weekday could be taken with them on release from prison. Almost all GOOP prisoners expressed their gratitude at being involved in such a positive project, commenting that other prisoners wished they had the same opportunity. Many

of the prisoners prior to sentencing were unable to hold down a regular job and therefore lacked structure in their lives. It was thus clear that GOOP provides a positive routine that potentially can enhance post-release opportunities. In interview, one prisoner stated:

> '*It's decent this for work…others on the wing…think very well of this project and they're jealous that we're outside all day instead of stuck in there.*' – Sam.

Prisoners and staff also emphasised that GOOP could positively impact upon a person's self-confidence and allow them to escape feelings of low self-esteem and anxiety. The environment in which these activities are completed and the behaviours that are encouraged, can help to change prisoners' behaviours and negative thoughts.

> '*It's self-esteem…I'm quite self-conscious but I'm starting to forget about it. I'd say prison, the best thing it's doing for me is giving me my confidence back.*' – Harry.

> '*…if you get someone who comes in like all nervous wreck and then at the end you can see they're a confident person then you've done your job, haven't you?*' – Vicky, instructor.

I also observed changes in prisoners on GOOP with regards to their confidence. Younger prisoners became more autonomous with their roles on GOOP and were keen to learn from others, taking on leadership roles themselves. Kyle was someone who was initially prone to misbehaving and not fully engaging with tasks, but he soon learnt from older prisoners how to complete tasks successfully and took on the role of raking the soil in the Japanese garden.

One prisoner argued that his self-confidence was improved by GOOP, in terms of seeing the things that he and others had created within the prison.

> '*…we do a lot of good things for the prison, well, we do a lot of good things for everybody, even ourselves by getting the satisfaction out of doing things. Like when I walk around the jail yeah, and I see things that I've done and it's like "fuck yeah, I made that!*" – Niall.

Many prisoners voiced their intention to engage in horticultural tasks when they are released from prison. The creativity and innovation on GOOP inspired

prisoners, providing them with an enthusiasm to apply their learning and the skills they had developed on their release.

> *'…my plan is when I get out I'll get myself a mower and all that and use what I've learnt with planting 'cause I've never done as bigger scale as what they do in here…From my Dad's little six foot greenhouse to all this. I might even get me own plot of land...then I can just get some plants growing and when I'm in gardens I can plant them up as well. Then when I like drive round streets or something, picking me kids up, I can be like I did that one, and that one, it'll be nice.'* – Ross.

The Japanese garden for the healthcare department was an influential project, and it seems that the progression of the garden enabled two prisoners in particular to think 'outside the box' and to be ambitious about what they could achieve on release.

> *'…I've been on the phone to my sister because she wants her back garden doing so I've said I'll do it, you know, I might turn it into a… Japanese garden! Everyone in Lancashire will be having a Japanese garden because of this! But yeah it's given me a few ideas.'* – Harry.

Additionally, a prisoner mentioned the fact that despite numerous custodial sentences, participation in GOOP had finally given him some hope for a future away from crime. He explained to me several times during observational sessions that he had tried countless jobs in prison and none of them had provided him with the level of assurance and willingness to change that GOOP had done.

> *'…hopefully this could help me stay out with what I've learnt this time and hopefully I will stay out. Well it's given me a bit of hope anyway, definitely. I can go out and do something with my life instead of just robbing shops and all that you know. 'Cause I don't wanna go out and do that but once you're sucked up in that life of crime, it's hard to get out of it.'* – Connor.

In relation to how GOOP can change lives, one prisoner alluded to the fact that involvement in growing produce has allowed him to try fresh fruit and vegetables for the first time in his life, opening his eyes to a healthier lifestyle.

> *'…trying fruit and veg 'cause I don't eat fruit and veg so, that's been a new one for me this year… I've been brought up with plain food so that's*

a new starter for me. It's just fresh innit, fresh stuff, but I don't know the difference between fresh and non-fresh because I didn't eat it anyway but everyone else says it's better fresh!' – Niall.

Learning and Skills Development

This sub-theme explores the impact that GOOP has upon learning skills for potential future use. Many of the skills that the prisoners develop on GOOP arise from the level of autonomy they are given, resulting in creativity and innovation. Furthermore, key skills lessons provided by Novus were also acknowledged as important for rehabilitation and competencies taken from these sessions could be used in the future.

Horticulture staff attitudes towards their job role on GOOP were relaxed and positive. On occasions where prisoners asked questions regarding possible activities, they would rarely dismiss prisoners' ideas and would find a way to make it possible. Staff participated in horticultural activities in a similar manner to prisoners and therefore were not seen as staff who were present to assess prisoners. Whilst there are set rules to adhere to on GOOP, such as being safe with tools and contributing to a team approach, prisoners were afforded a high level of autonomy and encouraged to find their own way. A senior GOOP staff member discussed Clark and Vicky's relaxed approach during the in-depth interview.

> *'They let prisoners make their own decisions so, in a lot of cases, even though we have set rules, prisoners are responsible for their own behaviour but they do have a certain amount of autonomy…I spoke to one of them last week and he said "I can't believe I'm allowed to do this, in this environment" and he said "it's just so much like I'm working outside".'* – David, manager.

Providing prisoners with autonomy appeared to result in innovative ideas, with numerous hugely impressive objects and floral designs created throughout the research. For example, Niall created a wooden model of a castle as a Christmas present for his daughter, Pete designed and made new shelving units for the GOOP office and Kevin arranged a mini Lake District flower and plant display for the main GOOP site. Vicky discussed the creations in an interview.

'Pete with them planters, we needed two planters, that was yesterday, he's done one already; a wonderful design that's just come out his head, it amazes me, it's brilliant… just giving them an area where they can be creative, just do what you wanna do. But they look at you all funny when you say that. Like "what?" yeah you just put whatever you want where you wanna put it and they're like "seriously? Oh right…"' – Vicky, instructor.

Linked to autonomy, it was also apparent that prisoners participating on GOOP were able to take on greater levels of responsibility than would usually be permitted within a custodial setting.

'They don't have responsibility, everything's took off them when they come in, so I honestly think you should give them more responsibility but because we're such a small area, you can just say "right, you're in charge of this polytunnel, you're in charge of that bucket over there."' – Vicky, instructor.

Furthermore, a prisoner acknowledged the contrast between the way you can behave and act on GOOP as compared to the rest of the prison environment, in terms of responsibility and initiative.

'…you can have the odd little break sometimes but I just like, I like to see things, I think when you walk round, you walk round and you have to use your own initiative, do you know what I mean, we can't do that anywhere in here….I see that things need sweeping and that might want watering today, you know.' – Nick.

Many woodwork creations on GOOP are constructed from recycled wood pallets or scraps of wood from other prison departments. Several prisoners reused wood to create something new, with one prisoner specifically mentioning how this could inspire him to redesign his largely concrete garden.

'I'm not a joiner or nothing like that but ages ago, I bought a house and it didn't have a garden. There was an outside bit but not a really a garden, it was terraced house, a nice terrace. I never thought that these pieces of logs, sleepers and planters that Vicky has taught us to make could make a nice garden.' – Kevin.

Given the fact that GOOP is primarily a therapeutic horticultural project, what struck me during the research period was the wide variety of activities available to prisoners; it is definitely horticultural in the broadest sense. As discussed

previously, the wide range of tasks cater for a range of mental and physical health needs but there are also wider benefits in terms of learning and skills development. Planting, designing, woodwork, brick work, flower arranging and cleaning are all important elements of what makes GOOP work as a whole.

> *'Load of job opportunities for us really. Maybe kitchen fitting 'cause you're messing with wood and things and then you've got bricky laying 'cause you're making things. There's certainly a few benefits. But I suppose it's just what job's out there…I wouldn't mind getting a gardening job one day 'cause there's always someone's garden that needs doing.'* – Connor.

> *'I definitely will use this stuff on the outside. If I'm gonna be inside for two years I wanna get something out of it instead of wasting the time.'* – Sam.

Observational sessions primarily took place outside hence I did not go into the classroom space regularly. There were small opportunities to observe classroom behaviours through the window of the office, which is located directly beside the classroom, but overall it was slightly detached from the main GOOP site. There were limited positive comments about spending time in the classroom as the preference was to be outside in the fresh air, completing more practical activities. Several prisoners, however, did accept that key skills in English and Maths would be beneficial in many ways post-release.

> *'I've put in for my exam for English entry 3…I know it's only low but I mean it's something else I can take away from here, it's something else I'm learning about, you know, writing an email with full stops and things like that. I've always wrote in capital letters, so I'm learning something new again now.'* – Daniel.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

This sub-theme explores how involvement on GOOP can increase both prisoners' and staff's mental health and wellbeing. The variety of jobs available on GOOP means there are different tasks to cater for each individual's needs – for example, potting helped with anxiety and tidying the GOOP site benefitted those who experienced Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Further, the visible progression from sowing and planting to harvesting, being in a changing

environment and working within the presence of colour and nature, all appear to increase the wellbeing of both prisoners and staff.

One prisoner discussed the impact of having continuous projects to work on and how, importantly, this allowed people to see the progression of their efforts. Unsurprisingly, this seemed to create feelings of pride and satisfaction, as discussed above, and to contribute to the wellbeing of prisoners.

> *'You get a real pleasure out of it and a real sense of satisfaction. When I'm out I'd go "come and have a look at this, I've grown them" and it's nice with plants cause you see a gradual progression. I can't wait to start this Japanese garden and make it look as good as the cottage garden area. But yeah I do love gardening and looking at gardens.'* – Kevin.

One prisoner, who suffered with anxiety and depression and had a history of drug-use, had for many years been unable to work outside of prison due to his health problems. He mentioned that once he is released from his short sentence, horticulture could be an option for him, as it has benefitted his mental health.

> *'…with me suffering from mental health maybe this might be the kinda thing should be looking into. You're on your own a lot with gardening to pot or whatever. Maybe that might be the right thing for me out there. Maybe I could find somebody who's willing to work with my mental health.'* – Daniel.

Equally, it isn't only the prisoners who benefit from GOOP. Vicky emphasised that she gains great contentment from working alongside the prisoners and seeing changes in behaviour. She discussed the value of encouraging little changes in prisoners' attitudes, particularly in the ways they refer to women. The growth in respect from prisoners that has been fostered by Vicky's beliefs had increased her wellbeing and enjoyment too.

> *'…working with the prisoners 'cause you can make a difference. It might be a really small difference but…even if it's just getting Kyle not to refer to his girlfriend as a bird… if you say it enough they'll start to realise…and you think, well, that little bit has got into you there whether it's a bit of respect or just watching someone's confidence grow.'* – Vicky, instructor.

Clark discussed the personal benefits of being involved in projects that arise through GOOP such as the Japanese garden. He jokingly added that because he's a 'bloke', he is reluctant to discuss how things influence his own wellbeing. From my observations, it was clear that Clark thrived upon direct participation in horticultural activities and regularly appeared as a member of the group, rather than HMPS staff member whilst completing tasks. On each return from the Japanese garden area he would be buzzing with how well the project was developing and keen to tell people about the progress.

> *'Doing the big jobs, erm, yeah, working outside is obviously beneficial, especially in the summer. Cold winters aren't the best outdoors but it's still better than being stuck in an office or something. But yeah, it can help I suppose. Anyway, I don't talk about that sort of stuff... cause I'm a big masculine bloke!'* – Clark, instructor.

I observed how the variety of tasks on GOOP enhanced different mental health problems. Firstly, two prisoners suffered with anxiety and were very open about their struggles. Neither had engaged in horticultural work previously but quickly found themselves potting and planting in the polytunnel. Only one or two prisoners would be in the polytunnel working at any one time and it seemed that this was the activity that offered peace and quiet – perfect for those identified with anxiety and keen to avoid chaos. Both prisoners mentioned how much the polytunnel work helped them feel relaxed and escape from their everyday anxieties.

For prisoners who openly disclosed that they were stressed or were prone to aggression on the wings, certain tasks seemed to offer an outlet. Stripping down wooden pallets involved continuous strikes with a hammer against thick wood and clearly offered an activity that helped reduce stress. I observed over 10 prisoners willingly doing this task and commenting on how they were releasing their stress.

> *'We have some that are like really stressed out and it's like "well, will you strip a pallet down?" because there's banging in it. So…if you know they're not violent and know they're not gonna do anything stupid, then bashing something up can relieve stress because they are de-stressing, which is good, but we also do need the wood.'* – Vicky, instructor.

With regards to OCD, two prisoners discussed their struggles in coping whilst in prison and how life in their cells could be challenging, with the need to clean and tidy constantly. A prisoner considered that the poor conditions and uncleanliness of the wings rendered him feeling stressed because he felt that there were always things to clean so he was rarely able to relax. Since he became involved in GOOP, however, he has felt that he is using his OCD productively to clean and tidy things as part of the team's work, rather than causing additional stress for himself in his cell.

> '…I can express myself here and there is stuff to clean. I'm free to do what I want, well not what I want but near enough what I want yeah…in here you can just go outside and, so, there's a lot of benefits from being on the job.' – Connor.

Similarly, another prisoner admitted that he continuously cleaned and tidied his cell as part of his nightly routine. He also used the cleaning and tidying job roles to his advantage as he felt that he was putting his mental health problems to a positive use. Whilst GOOP did not entirely eliminate issues relating to OCD, it enabled those living with this disorder to have purposeful jobs that fulfilled their tendencies.

> 'Making things, you make things tidier, tidying up, OCD, I've got OCD so I'm tidy, so I'm trying to make things, places cleaner and better. You know, this helps in that way 'cause it needs tidying.' – Nick.

Nick's need to be clean and tidy as he battled with OCD was a prominent factor each day that he was present on GOOP. The rigour with which he approached his cleaning job role was plain to see but also resulted in an aesthetically pleasing site. One notable incident, however, tested Nick's resolve and highlighted his severe problems in coping with uncleanliness. The excerpt below is taken directly from my observational notes.

Observational Vignette 3. Nick's Cleaning

It was a muggy afternoon on the GOOP site; the weather was close, muggy and sticky and the atmosphere was quieter than usual. I hadn't

been greeted in the same, jovial manner on my arrival and often this depended on Nick's mood. He muttered a hello to me before heading off with some of his cleaning materials which he'd placed on the planter ledges, towards the toilets to give them a clean and mop over. It was only a matter of seconds before he angrily marched returned to Guy, Roger and me, furious at the state of the toilet. He explained that someone, and he had a suspicion who but didn't want to accuse without proof, had left a disgustingly large, messy poo in the toilet and blocked it. He explained that the smell was absolutely foul and he's sick of cleaning up after people over here who don't appreciate what he does. Nick gets an extra £2 a week for being the official cleaner for horticulture but has become increasingly stressed with the role, because people seem to be making a mess deliberately to stress him out. I also had an idea of who could have caused the trouble, based on their attitudes since joining GOOP but, like Nick, did not want to comment. Nick loves everything to be perfectly clean and tidy and whilst this can de-stress him at times, over recent weeks he hasn't seemed to be thriving from the role in the same way as he previously did. He then started a huge rant about how people don't respect what he does, he is always wiping up teabag stains in the classroom, putting folders away, cleaning the toilet after people leave it in a mess and it's winding him up and upsetting him. He expressed that he thinks people don't like him anymore because of his problems and that's why people are purposely trying to wind him up, so he reacts and gets kicked off GOOP.

Guy can see how much this is upsetting Nick and comes over to give him a hug. Vicky then overhears what's happening and comes out of the office to investigate what has upset Nick so much; she has a lot of time for him and I can see she clearly cares about his current mental state. Pete then reminds Nick that he is a valued member of the team and the lads that matter over here all really appreciate his role. Nick does manage to crack a smile at Guy and Pete's affection and complimentary behaviour, which was lovely to see.

Guy insists to Vicky that it will be Sully who deliberately made a mess in the toilet to annoy Nick but also create some disharmony in the group, as he doesn't like the attention Nick receives. Vicky sees what is left in the

toilet and heads back into the office with a really determined, angry stride and I can see she is irritated about what happened. She shouts out to the group in the classroom about how disgusted she is and Sully is the only one to respond, suggesting that he is being wrongly accused; in Vicky's eyes this makes him look even guiltier.

Guy then knocks on the door and explains to Vicky how worried he is about Nick and he wants to help him with the cleaning. He says that he doesn't want any extra money for it; he'd just be happy to help Nick because he's so stressed and upset and he doesn't want him to go and quit the job role and then be unhappy. He also says that he'll help him clean up the toilet mess now as Nick isn't in a good frame of mind and is nearly in tears beside the toilet looking at all the mess in there.

We head over and talk to Nick who he nearly in tears and is stressed over whether to leave his role as cleaner. He says he feels bad having to accept help from Guy when he's the one getting paid for it. Guy, who is already in the toilet cleaning up, reassures Nick that he really doesn't mind helping; he's in a good place, wants to help and doesn't want to see him upset. Nick is overwhelmed with Guy's kindness and Vicky asks if they're both okay to continue the cleaning together. The overall situation was quite tense and it highlighted to me the severity of OCD and how much it was affecting Nick's quality of life but, moreover, the rarity in which discrimination for mental illness occurs on GOOP.

Nick also openly disclosed his struggles with other mental illnesses, referring to schizophrenia, bipolar, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), depression and anxiety on different occasions. Within the context of GOOP, there was never any stigma attached to Nick's mental health and he was respected and valued within the group. From discussions with both Nick and staff, mental health assessments on his arrival to prison determined that it was safer for him to be in a cell on his own and Nick was very honest in explaining the reasons behind this.

> *'Mental health put me on my own but I need to be on my own…I need my own space, I can't have anybody with me. I'd feel trapped. I'm not always*

too good with people and when I'm in a confined space…like I could explode. I could explode and hurt them. It's like that and I don't want that.' – Nick.

Nick, however, also discussed the benefits of getting out of his cell and how his unpredictable behaviours had reduced since his involvement on GOOP had enabled him to escape the feeling of entrapment.

> *'I used to get really agitated and angry in my cell. Until you're eligible enough to be accepted to come out to horticulture or wherever on the outside, you're stuck. You know, I'm stuck behind the door, stuck behind them 4 walls really you know. So getting out is good. It's doing me the world of good now.'* – Nick.

With regards to anxiety and having worries whilst in prison, Nick would often turn up to the GOOP site with concerns that he would share. Nick saw himself as a private person but on many occasions, I observed him openly talking to everyone about his mental health. His worries were mostly associated with sentencing, potential loss of housing on release from prison and mental health. He would take Vicky's advice if he was feeling particularly uptight and would work quietly potting plants in the polytunnel.

> *'…I'm a bit of a worrier me but I don't really tell many people about my things. You know, like mental health, my family know but not many other people know, a few friends know, like my friend Geoffrey, but apart from that, I deal with it. But here, Vicky says if I don't feel too good, I can go potting in the polytunnel and potting plants, that's nice, I like potting plants. I find potting plants good. Yeah, I find that very therapeutic. That's my favourite thing here. Getting involved with the plants I like.'* – Nick.

In the above quote, Nick refers to his friend Geoffrey, who was in fact a voice rather than a real person, and who had become a significant part of Nick's life through his struggles with schizophrenia. Whilst I did hear Nick talk to and about Geoffrey throughout the research, he believed that involvement in GOOP was positive for his schizophrenia and other problems, as being busy working seemed to reduce his symptoms.

> *'I don't hear the voices and see the shadows so much over here because I'm occupied, do you know what I mean? I think it's a stress thing. I think it boils down to a stress thing me voices and that, like when I'm on me own or if I'm feeling a bit stressed with my anxiety and I'm on me own but not over here.'* – Nick.

Clark also acknowledged the change and improvement in Nick's behaviour and was convinced that working outside and being involved in GOOP was the reason for this.

> *'There's no doubt about it, it does help. We see it daily, especially with people like Nick, he loves coming over here. He's got a hell of a lot of issues but over here, I don't know what it is, but he just tells you everything. He's very relaxed over here'.* – Clark, instructor.

Nick was not the only prisoner during the research period to endure a serious mental health condition or to feel depressed. Stewart, a quiet GOOP member, opened up greatly in the in-depth interview about how much he would struggle with his prison sentence if the GOOP opportunity hadn't arisen.

> *'I'd be lost without this to be honest. I don't know where I'd be or what I'd be doing. I wouldn't be in a good place I don't think, probably tryna escape or kill myself. I'd have gone off the rails…I can't cope with prison stuff, it's not my kinda thing. I find prison life very difficult. Very difficult. Having this job has just saved me, it's just changed my whole prison experience.'* – Stewart.

One staff member also discussed the number of prisoners who had arrived on GOOP on an open ACCT document for prisoners deemed to be at risk of suicide, but within a few weeks on GOOP had come off it. Whilst there is no definitive proof of a causal link to participation in GOOP, many prisoners believed it to have had a positive impact upon their mental health and wellbeing whilst in prison.

> *'I mean I've known quite a few prisoners who've been across here on the ACCT document and within sort of a few weeks, the positive comments that have gone into the ACCT document and they've come off the ACCT document, and they've actually said it was because they've come across here. It's enabled them to think straight, but think straight with support.'* – David, manager.

Summary

This chapter has presented the research findings. The chapter began by providing an overview of the research context with tables presenting the

prisoners and staff who consented to participate in both the exploratory and main studies. The findings were separated into three main thematic findings: The Small GOOP Community; Sub-cultural Masculinities and Changing Lives.

The Small GOOP Community outlined how a small community was developed resulting in friendships, support networks and positive relationships between prisoners and staff. Further to this, trust was established between GOOP members allowing for open and frank conversations to take place about any potential concerns.

Sub-cultural Masculinities examined the presence of hypermasculine behaviours, noting how they were significantly diminished through involvement with GOOP, with violence and aggression virtually non-existent. Comparisons were made to the wider prison and how the environment in which prisoners are located can influence masculine performances. There was an acknowledgement of horticultural connections to femininity and the need to ensure than prisoners were completing a 'man's job' in order to avoid ridicule. Further, prisoners were still keen to display strength in physical activities and to be vocal in their protectiveness towards women and children. Additionally, there tended always to be one prisoner who was viewed as being top of the masculine hierarchy.

Changing Lives investigated how GOOP offered a unique opportunity for prisoners to undertake a wide variety of activities, encouraging them to think differently, develop personally and socially, learn new skills and find a place of escape in a prison setting largely without green space or nature. The outdoor, green environments within which many GOOP activities occur are held in high regard by prisoners and staff alike, and the feeling of not being in prison and feeling free from prison life was an important factor in encouraging prisoners to have hope for the future and a willingness to change their lives. The environment of GOOP also promoted positive mental wellbeing amongst prisoners as well as the amelioration of specific mental health problems.

The next chapter will provide an in-depth discussion of the research findings, drawing on previous literature to analyse what the findings may mean in a wider context.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The aim of this research study was to identify and explore the influences of a selected GOOP project on the hypermasculine norms and mental wellbeing of male prisoners. Both prisoner and staff behaviours and perspectives were considered, with the aim of increasing understanding of how GOOP contributes to a therapeutic and rehabilitative culture. Overall, the research sought to illuminate the potential interconnections between horticulture, hypermasculinity and mental wellbeing in a male prison environment.

Having communicated the research findings (structured around the themes of *The Small GOOP Community, Sub-cultural Masculinities* and *Changing Lives*) in the previous chapter, this chapter recaps on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital (Bourdieu, 1980) as an overarching interpretivist theoretical lens informing the discussion and briefly summarises other key theories of particular relevance. It then provides a short overview, recapping on the findings presented in Chapter 4, before offering an in-depth discussion, considering the three umbrella themes in relation to wider theory and previous research.

Guiding Theoretical Lenses

Bourdieu – Habitus, Field and Capital

As discussed in Chapter 3 I have chosen to use ideas developed by Bourdieu (1980) notably the concepts of habitus, field and capital. Habitus lends itself to represent the prisoners and staff themselves and how they feel whilst working and interacting with the GOOP project. The field allows the actual setting of GOOP at the research site to be observed and considered when drawing conclusions about how it functions as a sub-culture and how the prisoners and staff utilise this environment. Finally, the capital component of Bourdieu's (1980) work allows the findings and discussions to be applied to the wider culture of prisons across the criminal justice system meaning that they are not isolated to one prison.

Deprivation and Importation Theories

Deprivation and importation theories provide a supplementary lens to guide the discussion. In the 1950s, Sykes's (1958) research into the society of captives resulted in momentous findings representing what life is like in prisons and how it can be understood. Ultimately, Sykes argued that the deprived environment of prisons contributes to the negative attitudes and behaviours that are often prominent amongst prisoners. Contesting the deprivation argument, Irwin and Cressey (1962) proposed an importation theory, suggesting that too much focus has been placed on structural deprivations. They argued that prisoners import behaviours into prison environments which render the setting problematic due to prisoners' pre-prison experiences and lifestyles.

Unsurprisingly, it has been argued that prisoners' behaviours can be explained by a combination of both deprivation and importation factors, as well as the specific situational factors (Jiang and Fisher-Giorlando, 2002). Nevertheless, as highlighted in Chapter 3, both theories have stood the test of time in terms of prison research and are frequently applicable to prison studies.

Connell's Masculinities

With regards to the hypermasculinities component of this study, Connell's (1993) iconic theory of masculinity provided a guide for defining and exploring masculine behaviours and is therefore heavily featured throughout the discussion. The theory proposes four types of masculinity: hegemonic, complicit, subordinate and marginalised. Firstly, hegemonic masculinity refers to a male or groups of males sustaining a leading position within society, established by cultural ideals and, to an extent, institutional power. Secondly, complicit masculinity refers to situations where men intellectually plan to dominate another group/society. Thirdly, subordinate masculinity describes men who do not meet the necessary description of a hegemonic male as they are too emotional, effeminate or weak. Fourthly, marginalised masculinity is applied to those who do not conform to the traditional masculine role, mostly due to their personal characteristics, such as sexuality, disability or race.

Biophilia

Given the dominant focus of horticulture and the association with green spaces, it became obvious that the idea of biophilia and, subsequently, biophilic design should be utilised as another lens through which findings are discussed. Biophilia is defined as a human's innate connection to nature and living things (Wilson, 1984). The prominence of nature and biophilic design (Kellert et al., 2011) within this research study encourages discussion surrounding connections to nature and health, furthering the need to reform and aesthetically change prison settings.

The Small GOOP Community

Introduction

This section discusses the main findings under the theme of The Small GOOP Community. The issue of overcrowding in prison is addressed and the subsequent impact of being involved in a more peaceful environment is investigated. The positive working relationships and friendships that were established on GOOP are discussed, with the importance of age, humour and group identity highlighted as key concepts. Furthermore, the presence of trust in both a social and working capacity is judged to be significant to the successful working of GOOP.

Overcrowding

Overcrowding in English and Welsh prisons is a common feature of custodial establishments (MacDonald, 2018) and finding a small, quiet space away from the chaos, according to prisoners, of prison life, is seldom a possibility. Although the operational certified normal accommodation of each prison generally determines how overcrowded a site may be, this can still impact upon other industries within prisons such as horticulture, workshops, gymnasiums and education settings. The attitude of 'if you build it they will fill it' is a trend that has continued to exist in the prison system, perpetuating the problem of overcrowding (Guetzkow and Schoon, 2015). Despite some disregard to the

size of some new prisons, geographical designs are now considering the impact aesthetics can have on rehabilitation. HMP Berwyn, the recent 'super prison' in North Wales, has received attention in relation to its substantial size and whether this is conducive to reducing reoffending (Jones, 2018). It is important to note that smaller prison sites should not be portrayed as idealistic as there can still be problems, it is more about the culture and ensuring prisoners are treated humanely, decently and lawfully (Madoc-Jones et al., 2016).

This research, however, demonstrated that engagement with GOOP provided a less crowded and small community-like feel for prisoners in contrast to their experiences on the wing. During the study period, no more than 18 prisoners were enrolled on GOOP at any one time and with healthcare and legal appointments occurring during the working day, group numbers were often much lower for each working session, therefore not so overcrowded.

Whilst research observation sessions were not conducted on the residential wings, it was evident from descriptions by both prisoners and staff that life on the residential wings was hectic and often referred to as a 'jungle'. The use of the word 'jungle' infers a chaotic, overcrowded, noisy and perhaps unpredictable setting, with references also made to violent and animal-like behaviour that occasionally occurred. The prison 'jungle' is related to survival and suggests a natural pecking order within the social hierarchy (Jewkes, 2002), as prisoners seek to navigate their way through the minefield of situational power (Coyne, 2003). Using metaphorical comparisons can be useful in the creation of theory as it highlights the key human portrayals of a social scenario (Marks, 2001) and contributes to the formation of a 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1980). Despite continuous references being made to the residential wings, it was challenging to build up a real picture of life in this setting, given that the ethnographic research was taking place only on the GOOP site and similar outdoor settings at the prison. It is important to acknowledge that the symbolic importance and idealistic way in which GOOP is experienced could be accentuated through the predominantly negative descriptions of the residential wings. In relation to Bourdieu's concepts (1980), the symbolic importance of GOOP affirms the production of social capital in responding to a social arena; attitudes towards the 'jungle' are more likely to influence behaviours between group cohesion and personal habitus.

In contrast to residential wings in prison, GOOP offered a safe haven for prisoners and created a rare place of relaxation and respite. On the wings, prisoners felt that they were looking over their shoulders and on edge, but within the small dynamic of GOOP they were able to escape this. Where prisoners are renowned for creating solidarity amongst each other as they challenge the pains of imprisonment, there is also a level of brutality that exists as inmates seek to survive (Sykes, 1958). Given the locality of the prison, some would argue that this could result from a combination of deprivation (ibid.) and importation (Irwin and Cressey, 1962) – influenced by both the intense environment of prison and behaviours exhibited on the streets prior to imprisonment. Over recent years, research into criminal cultures both inside and outside of prison has concentrated upon the aggressive and violent behaviours that are present in the 'jungle life' of prison (Dolovich, 2018).

If a prisoner does not comply with their peers' expectations, they are viewed as betraying their 'buddies', creating a fear of exclusion (Kupers, 2017). It does, however, affirm the view that from both prisoners' and staff's perspectives, prison culture is often filled with fear, mistrust and aggression (Crewe et al., 2014), suggesting that GOOP delivers a unique place of serenity. Referring back to Bourdieu's (1980) notion of 'field', it appears that the uniqueness of GOOP together with its juxtaposition to other prison areas provides a symbolic meaning for those involved, as they associate calm, non-aggressive behaviours with their surroundings.

Prisoners alluded to life on the residential wings as a threatening setting with a prevalence and fear of gangs (Pyrooz et al., 2011). Inadvertently, the mutually shared values and behaviours of those in a 'gang' in prison are likely to be formed in a similar way to the group that developed on GOOP; but with positive connotations. Those in gangs may conform to that culture in order to feel a sense of belonging (Skarbek, 2011), presumably to avoid the aforementioned social isolation, albeit in a potentially damaging way. Following the infamous Zimbardo Stanford Prison Experiment (1973), conformity is frequently portrayed in psychology research as a negative consequence of group structure. Observation, though, of attitudes and behaviours (Bandura, 1986) suggested that prisoners on GOOP also conformed, but that in this scenario conformity was more of a positive notion linked to personal gains associated with a settled

community, with the potential for friendships. Many prisoners come from and have conformed to what could be considered dysfunctional settlements, compounded by drugs, alcohol, offending and anti-social behaviour (Inwood and Maxwell-Stewart, 2015). Becoming involved in the GOOP project offers a complete contrast in terms of behaviours and attitudes, as prisoners are able to gain an understanding of how a community can be a positive aspect of life. A settled community refers to residing in a safe environment whilst experiencing feelings of trust, belonging and opportunities to learn (McMillan, 1996). In contrast to traditional prison communities, which exist but with minimal social structure, with dishonesty and deception overshadowing empathy and cooperation (Clemmer, 1940), GOOP represents an alternative intervention that creates a strong and positive sense of community. When applying Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954), experiencing a sense of belonging within a group can contribute to self-actualisation and self-transcendence, suggesting that engagement with GOOP in the social sense is undoubtedly beneficial. Equally, though, Maslow's theory also goes some way to explaining why prisoners are likely to appease others in order to feel such a sense of belonging in adverse circumstances. The phrase 'punishment in the community' has been used to imply that custodial sentences are not always necessary (Worrall, 2014). Ironically, however, the dysfunctional communities from which many prisoners come may actually prove to be a social punishment as they live in such challenging circumstances (Beichner and Rabe-Hemp, 2014).

Separating the Crime from the Person

Feeling part of the GOOP community allowed prisoners to get to know each other to a point where they were more than simply fellow prisoners or acquaintances. Prisons are not normally settings conducive to making friendships due to the absence of trust, the hostility and the majority of prisoners subscribing to the 'keeping yourself to yourself' attitude (Corley, 2001). It is acknowledged, however, that establishing friendships in prison can be beneficial in terms of support (Wulf-Ludden, 2013) and the GOOP site was a perfect setting for such interactions. For example, following a departure of one

prisoner from GOOP, another remained in contact with him via letter and insisted that he was a friend for the future. Individuals' habitus in relation to GOOP is, then, one of positivity and friendliness, producing strong symbolic power for those involved. Prisoners' connectedness thus symbolises a representation and ability to form meaningful relationships with others, consequently increasing the chances of rehabilitation and stability post-release. Despite the number of people in prison, social isolation is a common concern (Liebling and Maruna, 2013) and therefore having a place in prison that encourages social connections is greatly beneficial for individuals (Cochran and Mears, 2013). Further, creating a friendship network between different age groups, which GOOP clearly helps to facilitate, can act as a moderator for misbehaviour, particularly in younger prisoners as they learn from older, more mature prisoners (Reid, 2017).

Evidently, GOOP did not discriminate against any prisoners who wished to participate, with a diverse mix working together; however, when a number of younger prisoners worked on GOOP at the same time, they seemed to group together, occasionally resulting in misbehaviour and encouraging one another to disengage from the horticulture tasks. To some extent this echoed the gang behaviour associated with negative conformity on prison wings (Skarbek and Freire, 2016). Sykes' (1958) iconic work in 'Society of Captives' highlighted the problematic issue of gang involvement, which is also addressed in more recent studies acknowledging covert behaviour, drug pressures, organised groups and aggression (Crewe, 2014; Wooldredge and Smith, 2018) – suggesting perhaps that there has been minimal change in prison culture over a number of decades. Due to the pressures of engaging with fellow young prisoners and the subsequent misbehaviour, older/more mature prisoners perceived younger prisoners as troublemakers and unreliable as GOOP members. Equally, some older prisoners preferred to guide and protect younger prisoners, encouraging them 'not to end up like them' – and more mature prisoners, although perhaps it not being their main purpose, assisted in the prevention of bullying and offered support in navigating the prison system. It could be argued that the aforementioned friendship element of GOOP forming participants' habitus, may result in positive attitudes passing from older to younger prisoners.

Linked to the establishment of successful friendships and mentoring relationships, one prisoner discussed his enjoyment at getting to know other prisoners in a way that detached them from crime. Prior to his involvement in GOOP, he had simply viewed other prisoners as 'criminals' and nothing more, but GOOP gave him time to learn about other's lives so that GOOP prisoners became people. According to Klein's Object Relations Theory (1975) this could imply an act of 'splitting' from the parts of their life they deem to be undesirable in order to protect themselves internally. Furthermore, for male prisoners, abusive and troubled backgrounds leave them grappling with themselves and over whether they are 'man enough' to survive a prison environment (Haney, 2011), consequently splitting to protect themselves. Where many prisoners openly discuss their crimes to project an element of fear to other prisoners, i.e. 'don't mess with me' (de Viggiani, 2018), GOOP was characterised by a tendency for prisoners to disassociate themselves from their crimes – suggesting that involvement in GOOP does not reinforce potentially damaging elements of prisoners' backgrounds, and implying self-transcendence (Maslow, 1954).

Whilst crime was discussed amongst the group, it was their characteristics, personalities and skills that defined each group member. Interestingly, with regards to crime, one prisoner did not consider himself to be a 'proper criminal' in comparison to other revolving door prisoners on GOOP. It was his first time in a custodial setting and he held a self-fulfilling prophecy view of other prisoners, expecting them to behave in a certain way that was different to him (Merton, 1948). Self-fulfilling prophecies are often hard to change as they are ingrained and become almost subconscious (Holt et al., 2015), which meant that this prisoner, took more time to adjust to life within the GOOP group than those who were already accustomed to prison life.

Younger and Older Prisoners

For the final two months of the research, one younger prisoner maintained his job on GOOP and, despite several warnings from horticulture staff regarding his misbehaviour, became a significant member of the team. The presence of a younger prisoner sometimes resulted in paternal and mentoring type friendships developing. Previous research using Bandura's social cognitive theory (Astray-Caneda et al., 2013; Bandura, 1986) demonstrated that having a strong pro-social environment allows offenders to learn about acceptable behaviours upon release. Hope, self-efficacy, motivation and pro-social modelling are established on GOOP, particularly through interactions between older and younger prisoners, reinforced by the instructors' approach, all of which enhance the rehabilitative culture.

Furthermore, it could be argued that the willingness of more mature prisoners to advise younger prisoners on prison life and behaviours, relates to prisoners' need to seek reconnection with others in terms of fatherhood and paternal instincts (Dyer, 2005). Several older prisoners seized the opportunity to help and advise younger GOOP members on prison life, perhaps to replace their feelings of helplessness of not being there for their own children or dependants (Arditti et al., 2005). Additionally, displaying paternal traits may also resonate as a form of hope with prisoners, and how their futures could be improved and transformed. Traditionally, hope derives from a religious and theology background, offering 'something to hold onto' whilst in adverse circumstances (Pierce, 2014); however, the fundamental traits of hope – wanting to achieve, planning how to succeed and having the ability and autonomy to accomplish goals – all enhance wellbeing (van Ginneken, 2016). The autonomy given to prisoners on GOOP, to independently pursue personal goals and seek to change their lives, highlights the agency made available to participants, and also equates to the important notion of instilling hope for a different future.

In terms of masculinity, older prisoners on GOOP thrived on the opportunity to fulfil their hegemonic masculine roles of being a father, but perhaps also adopted a traditional feminine role of being a care-giver (Schippers, 2007). Horticulture itself is also considered to be a caring and nurturing activity, and in this context offered males in prison an opportunity to provide care and express a healthier level of dominance over a specific project, for example the growth of plants and flowers.

Friendships and paternalistic acts on GOOP are reminiscent of mentor roles in prison, albeit in an unofficial capacity. Mentors have been successful in various capacities in prison previously, helping with education (Coates, 2016), rehabilitation (Petersilia, 2011) and generally offering advice and guidance through the criminal justice system (Morselli et al., 2006). For some younger prisoners on GOOP who were beginning their navigation through the penal system, the positive relationship with staff was slow in developing due to the 'us vs. them' culture. Accepting advice, therefore, from older prisoners rather than staff enabled them to maintain a job and develop a positive role on horticulture.

Social Identity

As previously stated, there was a core group of around 12 GOOP prisoners who formed a significant part of the research study. Prisoners alluded to the fact that they were the 'horticulture lads' and saw themselves as a unique group within the wider prison representing a symbolic interactionist perspective within the GOOP site (Strauss, 2017). Groups are often bound together by a sense of shared social identity, which is the case on GOOP; prisoners have been identified as well-behaved and sufficiently trustworthy to be on horticulture, resulting in the mutually shared accomplishment of being a GOOP participant (Haslam and Reicher, 2012). GOOP prisoners wanted to separate themselves from the stereotypical aggressive, chaotic prison culture (Schanz, 2017) and created their own safe haven on horticulture. Whilst conformity on GOOP forms one side of each prisoner, uniqueness and finding an identity is another factor (Jung, 1960). The views and beliefs of prisoners integrated on GOOP formed their habitus based on the positive experiences they had whilst in the job, which led to the symbolic power of that environment contributing to their prison time.

There is a strong sense of shared social identity on GOOP whereby both prisoners and staff jointly identify as members of that particular group (Tajfel and Turner, 1979); they acknowledge their belonging on GOOP but also possess individual idiosyncratic attributes that contribute towards the whole structure (Howard, 2000). Previous research indicates that prisoners naturally possess a criminal identity and are therefore more likely to become deviant

when breaking rules and turning against authority (Cohn et al., 2015). In contrast, the social identity of GOOP mediates the criminal personas often projected by prisoners, allowing their own individuality to become the salient identity. GOOP members construct beliefs about themselves and enhance their self-concept and this contributes to maintaining individuality, establishing bonds with others and feeling included within the wider horticultural group (Sedikides and Brewer, 2015). Conventionally, the assumption is that immersion within a tight social group can result in deindividuation, a loss of self and a lack of behavioural control (Reicher et al., 1995); however, the solidarity of GOOP suggests that social groups can produce positive outputs or social capital (Bourdieu, 1980). Through a symbolic interactionist lens, it is the meaning that each individual attaches to others and objects involved in GOOP, and in this case, positive behaviour reflects those values (Howard, 2000; Sandstrom et al., 2013).
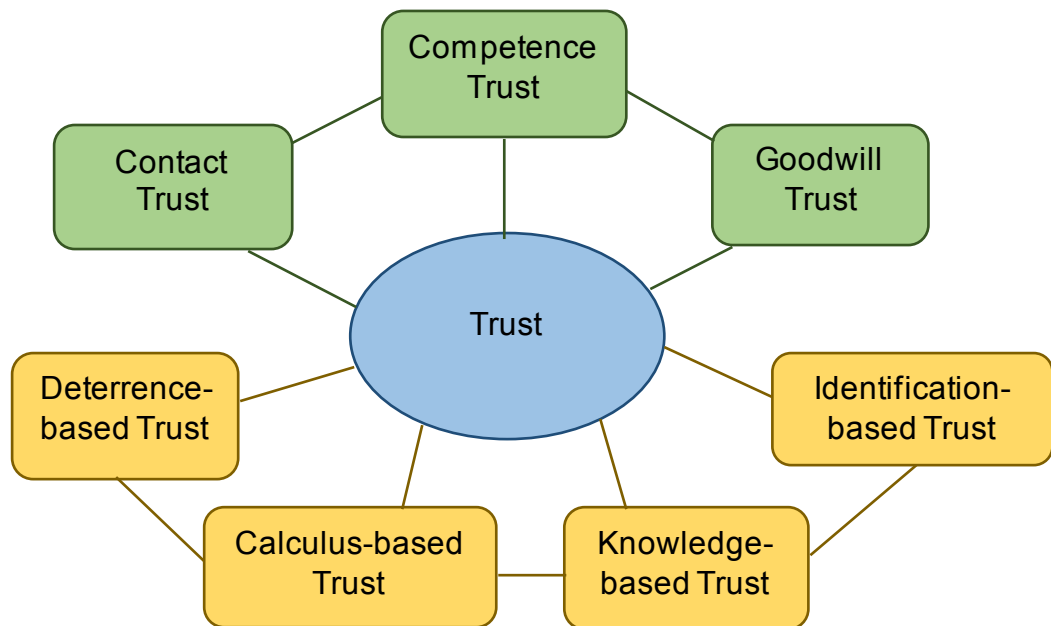
Trust

Whilst prison culture renders it challenging to trust other people (Corley, 2001), this was not the case on GOOP. Trust is a key ingredient of a successful friendship (Silver, 1989) and although it has been argued that 'real' friendships cannot be created in prison (Karp, 2010) and are often at low levels (Liebling and Arnold, 2012), the trust displayed on GOOP contests this view. There is a fine line of trust that exists between staff and prisoners; trust is required to fulfil the GOOP job role, but equally, staff are mindful of the potential risks that can occur within a sometimes unpredictable group. It is proposed that trust is based on three key concepts: ability, benevolence and integrity (Dietz, 2011); all of which were prevalent and encouraged to some extent on GOOP. A key influencing factor in the development of trust was the use of tools for horticultural activities. Prisoners commented on numerous occasions how shocked they were to be permitted to use tools such as drills, saws and hammers.

Trust can be defined as the extent to which an individual or a group is willing to depend on someone or something, with a feeling of relative security despite

potential risks (Josang and Presti, 2004). There are numerous types of trust in different social groups (Dietz, 2011), as illustrated in Figure 3. Neupert (1992) proposed 'contract trust', 'competence trust' and 'goodwill trust', whilst Kramer and Crook (2004) added 'deterrence-based', 'calculus-based', 'knowledge-based' and 'identification-based' trusts to the theoretical literature.

Figure 5. Types of Trust Diagram.

With regards to Neupert's (1992) propositions, contract trust originally derived from business research but represents an agreement and acceptance of rules between two parties, in this case the rules and expectations of prisoners' behaviour whilst enrolled on GOOP. Further, competence trust exists when individuals or groups perform specific job roles and share their skills with others, for example, the GOOP prisoners who primarily worked in the woodwork container. Goodwill trust, however, is more personal, where immediate returns or favours are not important and the mutual indebtedness sustains relationships over time. The length of time and commitment that was expended on GOOP resulted in the introduction of goodwill trust as prisoners moved through the phases of contract and competence.

Kramer and Crook's (2004) first proposal is deterrence-based trust which refers to the fact that trust is based on the degree of punishment that will occur should the trust be broken. The threat of punishment is likely to encourage sustenance of trust as opposed to a reward. In a prison context, this represents the carrot and the stick approach where more often than not the enforced punitive aura of prisons reduces the presence of positive outcomes for prisoners (Kahan, 1998). Conversely, the IEP schemes in prison have encouraged positive behaviours through the motivation of supplementary benefits, such as phone calls, visits and televisions. The atmosphere on GOOP is one of positivity, seeking to reward prisoners' behaviour. Consequently, deterrence-based trust is not so prominent, but equally prisoners are aware of the implications of losing their GOOP job should misconduct occur. The balance between punishment and rewards on GOOP accurately represents calculus-based trust as the benefits of creating and sustaining a place on GOOP are up against the costs of losing it. Prisoners' autonomy and agency is important in these instances as they seek to preserve a valued job and sense of community-belonging in a wider environment invoked with misdemeanours.

Knowledge-based trust (Kramer and Crook, 2004) occurs over a longer period of time as it is founded upon information and characteristics that form a picture of what an individual or group is capable of. By seeing prisoners perform and behave in various scenarios, e.g. in the woodwork room, Japanese garden or in the classroom, staff and prisoners are able decipher whether actors are capable of succeeding in new settings and with different activities. Finally, identification-based trust is arguably the final stage of trust development and arises when groups are harmonious and understanding of each other's desires and needs. Identification encourages groups to think, feel and respond like another person and will delegate roles and responsibilities based on what is best for all. In relation to GOOP, one prisoner with OCD had an innate need to maintain the cleanliness of the site and tidy up where possible, therefore the official role of the GOOP cleaner was assigned to him through the information and personal characteristics understood by others.

In order to reach the point of identification trust, prisoners had to be present on GOOP for a certain amount of time, particularly if they did not already have previous experience of using tools. It seemed that a triangulation of trust was

created as result of the tools needed on horticulture. Prisoners trusted the judgement of staff regarding who could use tools, staff trusted prisoners to use them correctly and prisoners trusted one another because of the trust instilled in them by staff. The element of trust can also be closely aligned to feelings of safety, both emotionally and physically, and how the presence of such equipment did not deter from the safe setting ascribed by prisoners themselves. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) also highlights the importance of safety in achieving self-actualisation, something which GOOP is providing. Additionally, many prisoners have arrived in prison from unsafe/unpredictable environments, enhancing the possibility of importing negative behaviours into the prison setting (Irwin and Cressey, 1962). By providing prisoners with a more realistic, outside working environment, however, GOOP is not depriving prisoners as significantly as other prison locations, resulting in more favourable behaviours (Sykes, 1958).

Figure 4 below provides a visual representation of how trust is generated between a GOOP prisoner, GOOP peers and horticulture staff. The presence of potentially harmful tools, the encouragement of social cohesion and the potential space of GOOP itself, from a symbolic perspective, all result in the promotion of trust. Winnicott's (1971) description of potential space implies that areas of engagement can result in creative and fantasising thoughts of what is possible, therefore GOOP could represent an arena for prisoners to reimagine relationships with themselves and others and what kind of experiences are possible in prison.

Figure 6. Triangle of Trust.
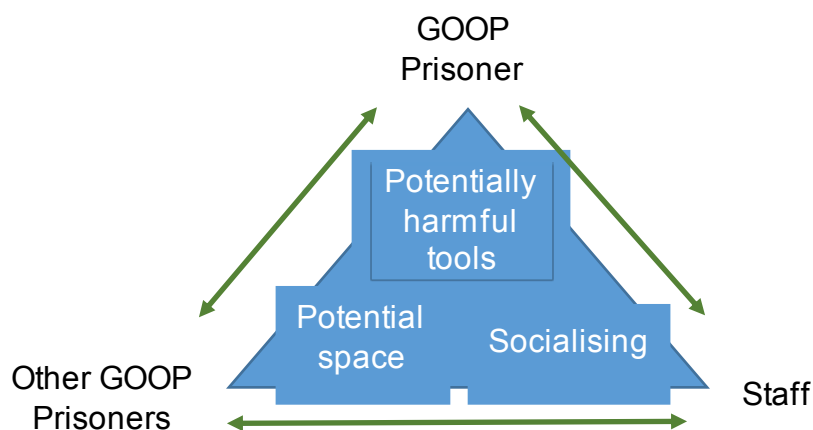
The wide range of crimes committed by GOOP prisoners did not prevent staff trusting prisoners with tools. It would be easy to express shock at a violent prisoner having permission to use a sharp saw, for example, however, there was a purpose for these tools and the trust instilled by the staff resulted in a positive, well-behaved response from prisoners, regardless of their criminal history.

From the GOOP staff's perspective, they firmly believed that having trust and faith in prisoners was a positive thing and this allowed for a level of autonomy within the group. So often, prisoners are resistant to the regime and punitive nature of prison life, and have any responsibilities and control taken away from them (Dhami et al., 2007), such as budgeting, decision making, household skills and independent living. Life in prison can be controlling with a strict regime of actions, and prisoners are expected to abide by the punitive rules, thus it can become a challenge to escape and find any space for oneself (Ugelvik, 2014). Whilst structure can be a positive alternative to chaotic, disorganised lives on the outside of prison (Goomany and Dickinson, 2015), for the prisoners in this research study, they appreciated the autonomy to decide what they wanted to do, within reason, each time they arrived for work. Although certain projects, such as the prison Japanese garden in healthcare, and specific tasks like watering, had to be completed, prisoners were encouraged to look for activities themselves without direction.

Tackling Stigma

Social stimulation, support and emotional feedback are all considered areas of concern for prisoners entering custody (Toch, 1992) but due to the friendships created through GOOP, these were to some extent eradicated. The small GOOP community became almost a self-help group in providing a place to talk, without fear of judgement or stigma. Prisoners accepted that being on GOOP enabled them to discuss worries and concerns with other GOOP members and staff and felt comfortable in sharing problems, whereas on the prison wings they wouldn't dare speak out through fear of being ridiculed and appearing weak. This suggests that the atmosphere of GOOP fostered the values of a supportive

and therapeutic community, encouraging prisoners to speak out about mental health problems and other worries.

Stigma can be understood as a lack of knowledge or understanding, resulting in ignorance towards an issue (Thornicroft et al., 2007) and has long been an issue surrounding mental health (Corrigan, 2004). More generally, males find the idea of opening up challenging, in relation to masculine expectations (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Stigma – defined as the occurrence of labelling, stereotyping, status loss and discrimination in which power is exercised (Hatzenbuehler et al., 2013) – is, perhaps not surprisingly, prevalent on residential wings where status and power are so dominant (Crewe, 2012; Edgar et al., 2014). Observations, however, showed that on GOOP, damaging concepts such as labelling and discrimination are extremely unusual, allowing prisoners to comfortably open up. Utilising the concepts of habitus, field and capital (Bourdieu, 1980), it seems that the comfort in opening up in such an environment may influence how individuals value horticulture and how it has the potential to be more than simply a place for work.

Within a wider societal context, media campaigns such as Andy's Man Club, #itsokaytotalk and Break The Stigma have all aimed to tackle the stigma associated with mental health amongst the male population (Clement et al., 2013). In this study, the majority of conversations about personal issues took place either whilst prisoners were working on tasks together or whilst they were waiting to return to the prison wings, sat informally on various pieces of equipment/raised beds on the GOOP site. Men have a history of being reluctant to engage in group therapy due to its formality, but when placed in groups sharing a common goal, in this case horticulture, the engagement is more fruitful (Rabinowitz, 2005). GOOP was not advertised as a self-help group and therefore deep conversations and supportive relationships developed organically; there was no pressure or expectation to talk like there can be at formal therapy sessions. Therapists and clinicians are often aware of the sociocultural barriers and expectations that men face in living up to masculine norms (Allen et al., 1991); however, in a group setting like GOOP, the absence of a professional 'therapy leader' can perhaps help to eradicate the fear involved in disclosure. Although group leaders can appear naturally in group

settings (Forsyth, 2018), the absence of medical and health-related jargon or personnel within GOOP clearly contributed to its informality.

Further, the organisation and layout of GOOP offered different scenarios in which to talk. There were places to sit and talk, containers where groups of three or four prisoners worked and chatted, an office where one-to-one conversations took place, an indoor area in the classroom, a semi-outdoor area in the polytunnel and completely outdoor areas; somewhere to suit everyone's needs. When prisoners worked on GOOP each day, they weren't specifically coming for a chat about their feelings, but this appears to have been a positive by-product of participation. The polytunnel was the most serene and peaceful location within the GOOP site, where many would go for a quiet moment. Aesthetically, the natural environment that GOOP represented provided an important means of achieving feelings of self-actualisation (Maslow, 1954).

Staff and Pro-social Modelling

The horticulture staff played a vital role in the success of the project. From observations, the light-hearted approach to their job role ensured that prisoners understood the horticulture environment was extremely different to other prison areas they were accustomed to. The small number of prisoners enabled staff to get to know prisoners on a deeper level than perhaps elsewhere in the prison, due to the time constraints and other job pressures.

A key factor in the horticulture staff's success in forming positive working relationships with prisoners was the fact the staff were considered an integral part of the GOOP team. There were still boundaries and rules implemented by staff but their approach meant that they also considered themselves part of a team with shared goals of improving the prison grounds. Horticultural staff did not wear traditional prison uniforms, choosing to attend work in gardening attire, much like prisoners were asked to dress, albeit with prison-provided clothing. Previous research has suggested that a clear 'us and them' culture exists between uniformed staff and prisoners, with an obvious line between who is in charge (de Viggiani, 2007). In contrast, GOOP staff were democratic or even laissez-faire in their leadership approach (Akers, 1977; Yang, 2015), allowing

prisoners the freedom to make their own decisions and for ideas to be discussed as a group. By allowing this level of autonomy and freedom, prisoners' behaviours are always likely to be presented encouragingly as they are not being deprived of basic human needs of choice and preference (Sykes, 1958).

Interestingly, there was to some extent an 'us and them' culture between the GOOP group and the rest of the prison. Both horticulture staff discussed their ownership and pride of what they had achieved over the years on GOOP and how it had taken a prolonged period of time for other staff and prisoners to appreciate therapeutic horticulture. As in a previous study about therapeutic groups, horticulture staff found a balance between flexibility and control, which resulted in reducing the 'fear factor', creating a healthy structure and instilling rehabilitative mind-sets (Van der Helm, 2011). Further, horticulture staff insisted that prisoners called them by their first names, as opposed to 'Boss', 'Gov' or 'Miss', something which can be unusual for prisoners given their adherence to the prisoners vs. staff culture.

The small number of prisoners present on GOOP at any one time meant that there was a high staff to prisoner ratio, allowing for more meaningful relationships to evolve (Beijersbergen et al., 2015). The horticulture staff's interpersonal styles allowed prisoners to be comfortable in their presence, as they were positive about their ability to connect with all new GOOP members. Research suggests that prison staff who are confident and friendly towards prisoners enjoy their work role with enthusiasm (Gredecki and Ireland, 2012). Whereas prison officers generally face a battle between providing a level of care as well as maintaining authority and control (Sykes, 1956), the horticulture staff adopted roles as 'true carers' and were engaged in the supportive nature of prisoners' needs (Tait, 2011). Public services are ever-changing environments and subject to governmental scrutiny; however, the horticulture staff's efficacious approach to their job role enhances Liebling et al.'s (1999) argument for applying appreciative inquiry whereby employees continue to do more of what is working rather than seeking to find further problems to fix. In alignment with the fundamentals of critical ethnography, a grounded observation of the instructors' approach arguably presents the best of 'what is' and the impact it can have upon 'what might be' in a wider context (Bushe,

1995). By displaying the aforementioned actions whilst practising their job role, it could be suggested that more prison staff could adopt similar traits in order to enhance wider social capital output from prisoners (Bourdieu, 1980).

Further, the conflict between policing and the use of discretion is also significant with the horticulture staff's job role, as they look to maintain order and accepted behaviours alongside distributing a certain level of privilege to prisoners, on the GOOP project (Liebling, 2000). It could be argued, however, that GOOP allows staff to apply an appreciative approach to their work as they focus on the best aspects of their profession in the conditions in which they function, as they implement peace-keeping techniques and discretion (Liebling et al., 1999). This implies that the horticulture staff are able to create a positive symbolic association to the GOOP setting, thereby enhancing their own habitus and expectations of what the project can offer.

The NOMS Model (Raynor and Maguire, 2006) focussed on the benefits of supervisory staff presenting positive behaviours in order to enhance the process of pro-social modelling. This involves displaying behaviours and attitudes that go beyond simply setting a good example, to moulding pro-social as opposed to anti-social behaviours (ibid.). In addition, the renaming of NOMS to HMPPS in 2017 also highlighted the importance of frontline staff working with prisoners in demonstrating pro-social behaviours with the intention of reducing anti-social behaviours and reoffending (Carr, 2017). Pro-social behaviours are deemed common sense and despite previous successful examples of applying such behaviours with offenders, they remain far from common practice amongst prison staff (Cherry, 2017). HMPPS's agenda for providing a rehabilitative culture in prisons is explicit in its suggestions for staff's pro-social modelling and how this can contribute to prisoners re-shaping their lives (Tangen and Briah, 2018).

From observations, it was evident that prisoners responded positively to the horticulture staff's pro-social behaviours on site, which enhanced the overall atmosphere of the workplace. Horticulture staff displayed enthusiasm for activities, instilled trust in group members, and were transparent and honest in their expectations, clear in objective setting and treated each GOOP member as individuals (Cherry, 2017). Demonstrating pro-social behaviours can also lead

to positive social climates, including feeling safe, enhancing mental wellbeing and contributing towards reducing reoffending (Bennett and Shuker, 2018). Within the cycle of reoffending that many prisoners find themselves in, a display of the aforementioned behaviours can link to cultural and social norms, which may otherwise have been absent in a pre-prison context (Travis and Waul, 2003).

Humour

With reference to the relaxed nature and camaraderie within the GOOP group, much of this came from the instructors' humour and need to 'have a laugh' in their job. Humour has been known to unite groups within prison, even if this is traditional 'black humour' (Crawley, 2004), and to neutralise feelings of danger and fear that are common in prison environments (Crawley, 2011). Equally, horticulture staff were careful in their humorous approach, showing sensitivity to each individual's background and applying a 'common-sense' attitude to prison work (Bennett et al., 2013).

Horticulture staff were adamant that having a sense of humour on GOOP was an essential ingredient in creating a prosperous working environment, particularly between prisoners and staff (Williams and Winship, 2018); it was clear that humorous exchanges could be used to regulate potential masculine clashes within groups (Kehily and Nayak, 1997). Additionally, the use of humour in therapeutic settings can also accentuate the soft-power leadership of the horticulture staff and deconstruct any barriers of authoritarian power, easing any psychological struggles (Laursen, 2016). Deconstructing barriers of authority within a prison environment is also essential to promoting agency within the field as prisoners seek to regain responsibilities and experience empowerment (Cheliotis, 2016). As highlighted within the findings chapter, several prisoners were comfortable in joking with one another, singing, dancing and generally providing entertainment for the benefit of the whole group. From a social capital perspective, actors involved in providing an environment or sub-culture where humour is acceptable, gain in confidence and connectedness to others. This

holds the potential to lead to social characteristics transferring from the inside to the outside of prison on release.

The GOOP Group Dynamic

Due to the aforementioned social and supportive benefits of the GOOP group, it was interesting to observe how changes to the group impacted the atmosphere. Fortunately, for both GOOP's success and this research, there was a consistent group of around 12 prisoners who had been working on GOOP for several months, establishing a core group dynamic. Historically, within the psychology of groups, cohesion and success are often greatest when there are defined group roles for each participant (Benne and Sheats, 1948). In the case of GOOP, these roles could have been skill-related, for example 'the joiner', or simply what an individual offered in terms of personality, for example leadership instincts or entertainment. Further, GOOP could be considered an informal group, due to its relaxed and autonomous nature, making positive conformity amongst members more likely (Harvey and Consalvi, 1960).

When new prisoners enrolled on GOOP it took time for pre-existing members and staff to suss out whether they would accept them into the group (Sabo et al., 2001), due to the high regard and value with which they held GOOP. The presence of social identity within GOOP enhanced the esteem and the positive regard in which it was held, meaning that 'out-groups' could be discriminated against to avoid threat to the social status (Deaux, 1993). Both personalities and criminal activities were factors that existing GOOP members tried to suss out about new prisoners. Prisoners commented that if someone didn't 'fit the mould' of GOOP, they didn't enjoy coming to work each day because of how different the horticulture site felt; the small community meant that any change was illuminated. Similarly, horticulture staff had to go through a process of sussing out, determining whether prisoners could be trusted on the job.

The term 'group' is difficult to define but the importance of communication and mutual dependence are frequently stressed as significant factors in creating a successful group (Forsyth, 2018). A group is made up of individuals, who each bring to it their own characteristics and skills; however, once they are seen as

being part of something larger, this can be classed as an invisible group as it focusses on what the group offers as a whole, rather than just individual contributions (Agazarian, 2018). Whilst GOOP provided overwhelmingly positive benefits for prisoners engaging with the project, the strong sense of community and group dynamic could be perceived in a negative light by some new members – with the small group 'clique' making it challenging to be approved by GOOP members (Clavreul, 2006). By expressing strong signs of unity and belonging to a group dynamic, social ranking and differentiation can quickly become prevalent (Homans, 2017). Whilst cliques can help define who individuals are, enhance self-concept and provide a sense of belonging, they can make it hard to understand for others away from that clique and disengagement from wider society is likely (Harger et al., 2003). Relating to Bourdieu's (1980) notion of capital, the clique-like nature and strong identity of GOOP could produce qualities such as loyalty, affection and belonging, in order to avoid feelings of isolation and neglect in the future.

One new GOOP member appeared to refuse to be accepted into the group dynamic by not obeying the outlined rules of the job. Due to this, others were unwilling to involve him in activities and he did not have a proper social categorisation within the GOOP setup: key to ascertaining a group role (Moreland, 1985). This specific prisoner's deviance on GOOP resulted in negativity from others, disharmony and an undesirable atmosphere (Marques et al., 2008). It seems likely that he had imported such attitudes and behaviours from his life outside into the prison system (Peterson, 2017) and rejected conformity to the non-violent, relaxed ambience of GOOP. The strongly held symbolic importance of autonomy, ambience and belonging within the GOOP community for long-standing GOOP members had not yet been developed by this new member, meaning that his habitus of prison life and a new horticultural job role differed greatly (Bourdieu, 1980). This prisoner originated from a minority ethnic group and there have been studies suggesting that those deriving from other cultures have found it difficult to immerse themselves in dominant groups in prison subcultures, due to prejudice and oppression (Cochran et al., 2016). Consequently, there is a possibility that he had previous negative experiences of integration and was reluctant to establish himself as a GOOP member.

Equally, it is essential to acknowledge that whilst most prisoners generated positive associations with GOOP, the differing views of others are as valid when considering a social constructionist approach with multiple meanings and truths. More often than not, given the positive behaviour of GOOP prisoners during this research, it seems that the GOOP project supports the situational theoretical model of prisoner behaviours (Jiang and Fisher-Giorlando, 2002). Whilst the deprivation and importation theories are appropriately prominent in exploring and understanding prisoners' behaviours, the situational model argues that it is purely the specific environment in which prisoners are present that influences their behaviour (Ibid.). Many studies applying the situational model have highlighted the negative aspects of prison life perpetuating misconduct (Wortley, 2013).

Sub-cultural Masculinities

Introduction

This section of the discussion focusses on the theme of 'Masculinities' and explores how masculine behaviours were present on GOOP. Firstly, masculine and feminine stereotypes are discussed, particularly in relation to perceptions of horticultural job roles. The interactions between male and female staff/researchers on GOOP are investigated and the impact of gender interactions are considered. The role of horticulture and biophilia upon masculine behaviours is investigated with the concepts of caring masculinities, nurturing and ownership being referred to. Finally, the differentiation of crime is contextualised through the lens of masculinity and how this influenced masculine performances.

Masculinity and Femininity

Hypermasculine behaviours in prison formed a significant focus of this research project. These have consistently been acknowledged as ever present in male prison contexts (Morse, 2017) and often been deemed a negative consequence

of prison life (Toch, 1998). Much of the discussion and analysis related to hypermasculine and masculine behaviours draws on Connell's (1993) iconic and influential masculinity theory, highlighted in the exploratory literature review in Chapter 2 and earlier in this chapter.

Distinguishing between masculine and feminine roles within society has always existed but women's liberation at the end of the 1960s has arguably resulted in the cultural construction of being masculine or feminine and how individuals meet these stereotypes (Connell, 1993). A feminist perspective on horticulture and the wider ecological world highlights how women have always had a mythical association with this field, hence the term 'Mother Nature' (Twine, 1997). Despite this, jobs related to agriculture, farms and gardens were historically considered to be male-dominated (Gowdy-Wygant, 2013), as the tasks involved hard labour and use of tools which have long been associated with the men's work (Gelber, 1997). Since the Second World War and rise of the Women's Land Army, more connections have been made between gardening and the female role (Backer, 2015). Women were no longer seen as housewives but as workers who excelled in ensuring food was grown in more physical ways at home and in community gardens, as well as in creating aesthetically-pleasing settings for homecoming soldiers (Clarke, 2008; Schor, 2013).

The shift in ecological attitudes from masculine to feminine (Salleh, 1992) has perhaps informed the association of gardening and femininity. As a result, prisoners participating on GOOP were aware that they needed to maintain their masculinity to prove it remained a 'man's job'. Several prisoners mentioned teasing and ridicule from non-GOOP prisoners and staff on prison wings, suggesting that they 'just played with flowers', characterising horticulture as a feminine profession. Given the wide range of tasks available on GOOP many of the men were keen to involve themselves in the more physically demanding tasks, such as lifting soil bags and moving heavy rocks, echoing previous research focused on community gardens (Parry et al., 2005). Reproducing masculinity in terms of dominance and taking ownership of job roles is common in perceived feminine roles, as men try to distance themselves from any labelling (Simpson, 2004). Perhaps ironically, though, the more nurturing gardening roles involved in growing fresh food can clearly fulfil the role of

'providing for one's family' (Bhatti and Church, 2000). From a social capital perspective (Bourdieu, 1980), prisoners may view themselves as more worthwhile as they re-adopt a responsible role as a provider, albeit in a prison setting.

Specifically, several prisoners had discussed the presence of flowers on GOOP and acknowledged that other prisoners may perceive that working with flowers is a feminine job role. Traditionally, outside of prison, undertaking floral design and ensuring gardens are aesthetically pleasing were past-times for stay-at-home women, only later becoming professional careers (Seaton, 2012). Although male associations with the garden, does have some history in relation to feeding the family, the creative and aesthetic component is largely attributed to women (Munroe, 2017). Although many of the famous 'TV gardeners' are male – for example, Monty Don and Alan Titchmarsh – this means that males, particularly prisoners in a male-dominated, masculinised environment, may well be reluctant to associate themselves with such activities as they seek to maintain their masculine image (Franck and Rosen, 1949). The cultural gendered description of various job roles means that masculinities are challenged when 'feminine jobs' are undertaken (Buschatto and Fusulier, 2013). In the same way, however, that slaughtering animals and selling meat tends to be viewed as a masculine profession, this simplistic way of gendering job roles is one that is a long-standing stereotype (Zinn, 2013) – hence the need for prisoners to present a maintenance of masculinity on GOOP. Prison, however, is an environment that enables the reinforcement of masculine stereotypes, so GOOP may be framed by prisoners through this particular lens.

The above ideologies go some way to explaining why men buying flowers for women is a traditional gift, as opposed to food or drink gifts for men: the tenderness with which flowers are treated in the growing and nurturing process is reflected in the tenderness of a male to female gift (Seager and Thummel, 2009). A recent study, however, has shown that if a male is involved in a flower-related profession it must mean they have considerable talent suggesting that masculinity can be associated with professional competence (Zinn, 2018). Those prisoners who were long-standing members of GOOP and were involved in several projects may have been trying to maintain their masculinity through

excelling in an activity rather than disassociating themselves from flowers or exaggerating the physical of horticulture.

This is also closely related to Goffman's Presentation of Self theory (1990) where people seek to navigate a social setting and discover ways in which they feel comfortable in presenting themselves. By gaining a role on GOOP where they can fulfil their masculine needs, prisoners may begin to behave differently in other areas of the prison. When men enter the prison setting they are deprived of the basic responsibilities associated with surviving in the wider community (Sykes, 1958). They are almost stripped of their personal and self-characteristics as they enter a new way of life within a 'total institution' where decisions become scarce (Goffman, 1961), leaving them emasculated. GOOP's autonomous and freedom-promoting qualities allow prisoners the rare opportunity in an institution to regain a sense of their previous selves but without resorting to violent and aggressive tendencies. This also links to notions of structure and agency; if GOOP prisoners feel more comfortable in making their own choices and decisions within the context of horticulture work, this breaks away from the structural regime that is ordinarily faced (Rubin, 2015).

Masculine Stereotypes

Whilst some prisoners did not express concern or seem to care about possible feminine perceptions of horticulture, it was largely younger GOOP members that were keen to establish or maintain a masculine persona. Two prisoners referred to remarks made on prison wings which also highlighted stereotypical and prejudicial comments that related horticulture not only to femininity but also to homosexuality and transvestitism.

For the younger prisoners involved, these views were taken offensively and considerably challenged their masculine identity (Cross and Bagilhole, 2002). Being seen as having feminine, homosexual or even transgender characteristics in male prisons, prompts stereotypes of weakness; and adopting a role as a subordinate or even a marginalised man within the masculine hierarchical structure (Connell, 1993; Ertan, 2008). Although recent research has demonstrated that prisoners believe transgender prisoners should be

treated in the same way as any other prisoner (Sumner and Sexton, 2016), there is still a need for heteronormative prisoners to avoid potential ridicule. Younger prisoners were self-conscious, to a degree, about these labels for fear of being placed at the bottom of the prison hierarchy in the homophobic, misogynistic and toxic prison culture and being seen as 'less than a man' (Kupers, 2010). There has, however, been a decline in homophobic abuse in wider culture, and indeed in prisons, with boundaries becoming blurred with regards to sexuality (Hefner, 2017). In line with this cultural change, De Boise (2015) suggested that Connell's (1993) hegemonic masculinity theory initially 'went too far' in terms of negativities towards homosexuality and transvestitism.

It is suggested that males who enter a profession deemed to be for the opposite gender will seek to recreate their own perception of what it means to be a man and find ways to express this wherever possible (Lupton, 2000); something observed on GOOP. Hegemonic masculinity recurrently involves presentations of physical strength (De Visser et al., 2009); therefore, laying down rocks, mowing the lawn, using joinery tools, breaking up wood pallets and removing filled waste bins were all popular horticultural tasks involving large muscle groups. It was these activities that were engaged in largely by prisoners who needed to reacquaint themselves with manual skills in order to fulfil a hegemonic masculine role and perception (Gelber, 1997).

Gender Interactions

Following on from the hegemonic masculine notion of needing to protect women (Donaldson, 1993), the presence of a female instructor, and for a short period of time myself as a researcher, did influence hypermasculine behaviours to some extent. Although men traditionally prefer to display traits as the dominant gender, prisoners and the male horticulture instructor were content to accept female leadership on GOOP, therefore reducing hypermasculinity (Carli and Eagly, 2001). It was also mentioned that by having a female present on the GOOP site, the nastiness and bitterness that is so often invoked in male-dominated environments is 'toned down' somewhat due to the respect exerted by men towards women (Salter, 2016). Conforming to masculine norms within

male-dominated environment often results in accepting the objectification of women (Seabrook et al., 2018), but the smaller group and presence of a female and a male horticulture instructor seemed to resist from allowing such negativities to occur.

Due to the enhancement of job equality for women, men are more accustomed to working alongside women in what would have once been 'men's jobs' (Kittay, 2013). This may not, however, be the case for male prisoners, given their limited exposure to regular jobs and time spent in male-dominated prisons (Visher and O'Connell, 2012). It is possible to suggest that working alongside women in a job they may have once viewed as a male role could enhance opportunities for employment upon release from prison.

Previous research has demonstrated that ordinarily males can experience feelings of inferiority and become emasculated when females outperform or display similar capabilities to them (Dahl et al., 2015). In complete contrast to this, male prisoners on GOOP did not appear to articulate any signs of subordination arising from either the female instructor's horticultural talents or any involvement I had during tasks – once again, signifying the limited expressions of hypermasculinity on GOOP.

Masculine Appearances

The location of the GOOP site was positioned directly beside the prison's gymnasium, with many horticultural activities taking place in view of those engaging in gym workouts. From a hegemonic masculinity perspective in terms of muscular physique and showing strength, this provided an interesting juxtaposition. From observations, I would not describe the prisoners on GOOP as hypermasculine, but the opportunity to show muscles was not dismissed, particularly in the cottage garden situated directly in front of the gymnasium. Although hypermasculinity in prisons is more than simply looking strong, with attitudes and expectations equally as important (Sabo, 2001), the need to appear physically capable was essential to some prisoners. Perhaps due to the awareness of effeminate associations of horticultural involvement, appearing

physically strong provided some prisoners with masculine dominance and an ability to appear intimidating (ibid).

Within a wider societal context, perfecting the toned, muscular, athletic 'billboard' look has become the idealistic way for men to present themselves (Gill, 2008). Ironically this has led to men engaging in conventional feminine vanity behaviours, albeit to perfect masculinity (Gough, 2018), and caring for one's appearance is very much part of everyday masculinity (Goble, 2017). It is just as important to look masculine as it is to 'do' masculinity (Maycock, 2018). Men's clothing also falls under the umbrella of masculine vanity and how men choose to present themselves through attire. Given the fact that sentenced prisoners are all provided with similar custodial outfits, this deprives them from achieving their 'perfect' self-presentation. Men often use clothing to conceal or reveal parts of the body to accentuate muscle tone (Frith and Gleeson, 2004) but with GOOP prisoners wearing the stereotypical baggy prison attire, it became difficult to alter their clothing according to their preference. In contrast, prisoners completing their session in the gymnasium were provided with vests, much like the gym instructors. When engaging in horticultural activities outside the gymnasium, many prisoners opted to roll their short-sleeved t-shirts up to their shoulders perhaps in an attempt to match the gymnasium prisoners who could easily present toned muscles. This supports the idea that men often conform to masculine expectations and pressures in the drive for muscularity (Gattario et al., 2015). Further, this evidences the diminished level of independence GOOP prisoners experience whilst involved in the horticultural job role. Prisoners were able to adapt their prison outfits in an attempt to meet their personal, aesthetic desires without sanctions, highlighting the freedom and encouragement to be yourself whilst on GOOP. With regards to Bourdieu's theory (1980), the field itself encapsulates prisoners' needs to distinguish themselves as an individual, rather than as 'just another prisoner', but also rejects the deprivation norms (Sykes, 1958) faced in other parts of prison.

The male horticultural instructor also spent most lunch times in the gymnasium and often engaged in conversations about the gym with prisoners. When reading the literature regarding hypermasculine appearances, such as large muscles and tattoos (Cuddy et al., 2015), the instructor very much succeeded in fitting the visual stereotype. It could be argued that, in the first instance, his

presence as a hegemonic male within the GOOP group placed him at the top of the hierarchy rendering prisoners the subordinate group within this dynamic (Budyati et al., 2016). Of course, he is a member of staff in a position of power and whilst both instructors adopt a *laissez faire* approach to their leadership, he may be top of the hierarchy anyway. The prisoners' awareness, however, of his physical presence and capabilities may contribute to their well-behaved manner through the fear and intimidation that develops through a hegemonic, hypermasculine physical appearance (Edwards, 2016).

Changing Masculinities on GOOP

Drawing on the breadth of research investigating masculinities in prison, it could be argued that staff and prisoners subconsciously assume that males in prison are trying to reach the top of the hegemonic hierarchy (Morey and Crewe, 2018). The female horticulture instructor, however, did not view the prisoners that she worked with on GOOP as being overtly masculine in any way, and had not heard anyone express unease over horticulture due to the feminine connotations. She accepted that GOOP prisoners often expressed enthusiasm in using machines, referring to 'boys and their toys' but did not consider this to constitute 'true' masculinity. By using this phrase, there was a reinforcement of the working man masculine stereotype, implying a self-fulfilling prophecy that certain prisoners are expected to engage in horticultural activities involving machines. Interestingly, when examining the deprivation model in prison culture, where male prisoners are deprived of essential qualities of manhood (Sykes, 1958), providing them with tools or machines can be seen as helping them to regain a sense of 'the working man', meaning that the need to try and maintain a hypermasculine presentation is lessened. Whilst the labour market has changed somewhat since Sykes' proposal back in the 1950s, the fact that the 'working man' stereotype is still sought could suggest that the deprivation model continues to be representative of the times and the environment from which many prisoners derive.

The aforementioned horticultural activities could also play a part in explaining the reduction in hypermasculine behaviours on GOOP. The change in labour

markets over recent years has resulted in a decline of traditional manual labour jobs, meaning that companies require more 'soft skills' for employment resulting in adjustments to male views of masculinity (Morey and Crewe, 2018). Emotional labour, providing services, deference and other traditional feminine roles and behaviours are now ever present in the job market, precluding men from achieving their idealistic masculine persona (McDowell, 2011). It could be argued, however, that the traditional tradesmen-like activities (Morey and Crewe, 2018) available to prisoners on GOOP (such as the joiners' work in the woodwork room involving muscular work and machinery) enable the men to meet stereotypical masculine needs. This could help explain the positive behaviour by GOOP prisoners on residential wings, as there is less need to resort to violence or aggression to seek a masculine status.

From my observations, supported by staff perspectives, one prisoner (highlighted in chapter 4) was noted as meeting the hypermasculine stereotype and was portrayed by staff as being top of the 'lads' hierarchy' on horticulture. This prisoner's long-standing association with GOOP meant that his experience permitted him to exhibit a leadership role in the woodwork room, rendering him a higher status than newly-enrolled prisoners on GOOP. His high level of joinery skills also helped ease the pressures on horticulture staff, and added to the level of trust and team cohesion within the whole GOOP group (Crewe, 2011). This further demonstrates the behavioural advantages of instilling trust within groups of prisoners.

By providing a high level of responsibility over the woodwork activities, this prisoner was distracted from other thoughts and focussed on important, horticultural tasks. According to the prisoner himself, his aggressive and violent behaviours were also reduced on his return to the residential wings, due not only to the high regard in which he held his role, but also because he felt that he had a dominant leadership role over his work commitments. Violence on prison wings has been ascribed to Sykes's deprivation theory (1958) and the pains of imprisonment. The social and institutional structure of a typical prison setting not only fuels the violent tendencies of men but also encourages non-violent individuals to follow this path; however, as individuals seek to navigate their way around the 'map' of the prisoners' social system (ibid.), relating this to Bourdieu's (1980) idea of social space and social capital goes some way to

explain why prisoners' behaviours alter on GOOP. As prisoners become engaged with the GOOP social space they are able to find distinction through meaningful activities and receive reciprocal acceptance within the wider group, in contrast to struggling for distinction in other prison areas (Bourdieu, 1980; Sykes, 1958). Although it has been argued that applying habitus only invokes personal meanings within a social space; due to the friendships made on GOOP this can be extended further to symbolic meanings and symbolic capital, as prisoners no longer see themselves as wanting to be noticed in isolation (Neuber, 2011).

Interestingly, the female instructor did acknowledge some delicate GOOP tasks, such as growing seedlings, carefully repotting flowers and caring for caterpillars on site. There was, however, an indication that these were the softer and finer motor-skilled tasks that maybe wouldn't be associated with prisoners trying to live up to the masculine expectations of prison. I also observed these behaviours and it could be argued that engagement with plants, caterpillars and other living organisms encourages GOOP prisoners to demonstrate a gentler side, as they take responsibility and care for something else, traditionally a feminine role (Evans, 2002).

From a sociocultural perspective, the increase in men as primary care givers to children has resulted in a new type of masculinity arising; 'caring masculinity', which is viewed as a broadening of hegemony rather than an isolated concept (Hunter et al., 2017). Men engaging with caring characteristics are less likely to seek dominance, more likely to embrace positive emotions and interdependence, and are open to build meaningful relations (Elliott, 2016) – all of which were present on GOOP. This would indicate that by providing a setting in which something needs to be looked after, men are likely to adopt a position of caring masculinity and are content to work as part of a team to achieve successful caregiving.

The idea of caring masculinities (Elliott, 2016) relates closely to the concepts of nurturing and looking after plants that comes with horticultural work (Matsuo, 1996). It has been argued that the positives of engaging in a process of nurturing only come to fruition outside of custodial settings rather than prison itself (Moran and Jewkes, 2014). GOOP prisoners, however, referred to their

enjoyment of watching plants grow and likened the development to 'seeing your child grow' suggesting that nurturing and caring for plants was present in a custodial setting. Nurturing and caring are concepts habitually associated with women and femininity (Glenn et al., 2016); however, 'green care' (Jewkes and Moran, 2015) and the need to look after plants that were so highly valued by prisoners meant that they displayed their more feminine nurturing traits. Further, applying a nurturing approach to horticultural projects has been found to promote a therapeutic culture, as it can enhance whole person care (Leach and Moore, 2018).

Displaying protective-like traits over the GOOP environment could also be associated with territoriality, which frequently features within socio-geographical settings (Wastl-Walter and Staeheli, 2013). It is argued that fulfilling the hegemonic masculine role involves taking territorial gains of specific social regions and possessing ownership within social groups (Connell, 2005). Men battle for territorial gain over spaces and places, as a way of asserting masculine power over other subordinate groups (Pillay, 2006). In this case, prisoners back on the wings who are not involved in GOOP could be considered to be subordinated in the minds of the dominant GOOP group, who have established a form of control and power (ibid.). Those involved with gaining territorial status of an area are also likely to have strong feelings of belonging and are often reluctant to detach themselves from the group/place (Gustafson, 2009). Although some would argue that displaying territorial masculine traits is negative in terms of maintaining a strong masculine persona, it can be argued that establishing a favourable connection to a specific location in prison (in this instance, the GOOP site) could be beneficial in gaining a sense of place and associating more positive and rehabilitative outcomes with prison. One of the few theorists to recognise that power should not always be viewed negatively is Foucault (1980) and it can be a necessary, productive and positive force in social environments.

Life on the Wings

As previously mentioned, no observational research took place on residential prison wings; therefore, pictures and descriptions of the wing environment were purely built up through stories and anecdotes from prisoners, staff, previous prison research and my brief visits to wings on tours of the prison. Prisoners referred to their life on residential wings frequently and expressed their strong dislike for the wing-based environment in comparison to their experience of GOOP.

Life on the wings was reportedly dominated by violence and drugs, rendering GOOP prisoners fearful of becoming involved in such activities. Research has shown that prisoners often feel victimised, isolated and intimidated by actions witnessed on prison wings (Edgar et al., 2014), which unsurprisingly exacerbates hypermasculine norms of aggression and violence (Michalski, 2015). On residential wings an unwritten code is adhered to, where prisoners 'don't grass', keep themselves to themselves and maintain a stiff upper lip to avoid bullying/trouble (Lander and Ravn, 2016), features that were all discussed by GOOP prisoners. The existence of masculine expectations on the wings often encourages prisoners who aren't ordinarily violent to conform to and learn about these harmful behaviours (Jewkes, 2005). Once again, these behaviours could be accounted for by the deprivation theory, where prisoners adapt to a perceived negative situation via misconduct and poor behaviour (Sykes, 1958).

On residential wings it is widely accepted that prisoners need to maintain a masculine façade (Karp, 2010) by wearing a mask and putting on a front (Crewe et al., 2014) as a coping mechanism for surviving their time in prison (Jewkes, 2005). In complete contrast, the atmosphere and behaviour on GOOP was relaxed and calm, two words not often associated with prison life. GOOP prisoners were able to 'let their guard down' and drop the masculine bravado that exists on residential wings at the gate of the horticultural site. The impression management techniques where prisoners seek to maintain a persona were temporarily forgotten and there was suddenly no requirement to keep looking over their shoulders for fear of trouble (de Viggiani, 2012). Whereas many prisoners maintain their new prison identity throughout their time inside (Schmid and Jones, 1991), GOOP prisoners seemed able to be

themselves whilst at work on horticulture and re-establish a sense of self-identity. This evidently contributes to the development of a rehabilitative culture: by finding one's sense of pre-prison self, the processes of rehabilitation and reducing recidivism are likely to be more successful due to less conformity (Maruna et al., 2006). The importation model, once again, is also applicable here as the truth of this depends on what the pre-prison self is/was and where a prisoner has come from (Irwin and Cressey, 1962). Therapeutic communities and interventions (Benner, 2015) have been found to encourage prisoners to find themselves, redefine their true self and promote pro-social changes to an individual (Stevens, 2012). By escaping the hypermasculine residential wing environment, prisoners engaging with GOOP were able to refresh their prison identity and be true to themselves, increasing the likelihood of changing their lifestyle. Contrastingly, in some prisons, such as higher security establishments, where prisoners are more circumspect of both their peers and institutional power (Liebling and Arnold, 2012), there may be less space to open up emotionally, and more risk in doing so (Crewe, 2014).

Masculinity and Biophilia

The enhanced amount of physical space that GOOP prisoners experience on the horticultural site is hugely significant in allowing personal space, being given more responsibility by staff and creating increased feelings of safety, all of which have been found to reduce violence and misconduct (French and Grendeau, 2006). With regards to the spatial design of the GOOP site, it is not a wide open space; however, in comparison to the overcrowded, narrow wings, the GOOP site offers a low ratio of prisoners to space available and there are other opportunities to visit spaces within the prison. There is no doubt that having an open and inviting environment, rather than high walls, concrete cells and minimal outdoor visibility, reduces the need to resort to misconduct in prison (Wener, 2006).

There have been arguments that prisons actually promote violent behaviours simply through their design and operation (Specter, 2006). The GOOP site itself could not be described as a green space in the traditional sense, but it has

adopted biophilic design to create green and natural features in an urban setting (Soderlund and Newman, 2017). Biophilia refers to a human's innate tendency to seek connection with living organisms and nature (Wilson, 1984). Drawing on this theory, an increasing number of architects have adopted biophilia in their designs, enabling contact with plants and flowers – understood to result in a reduction in stress (Soderlund and Newman, 2015) and in enhanced health and wellbeing (Bringslimark et al., 2009). Biophilia goes some way to explaining the positive behaviours displayed by GOOP prisoners, particularly the reduction in tension which is imperative for reducing hypermasculine, aggressive tendencies. Griffin (2004) proposes that biophilic spaces create *"delight when entered, pleasure when occupied and regret when departed"* (p. 7), a quote which seems pertinent to the prisoners' and staff's appreciation of GOOP.

People exhibiting characteristics of hegemonic masculinity tend to avoid showing emotions of joy, sensitivity and pain and are reluctant to search within themselves to find their spirituality and delve into how they really feel (Fox, 2010), traits extremely common within male prison settings (Evans and Wallace, 2007). Engaging in a biophilic setting, however, is known to encourage emotional attachment and provoke a spiritual connection (Wilson, 2017), which could diminish prisoners' willingness to achieve hegemonic status. In recent years, the term 'ecological masculinity' or 'ecomasculinity' (Hultman, 2014) has been coined, implying that if men could discover a spiritual connection with nature they could experience feelings of being an 'eco-man' – one who regains a sense of dominance and mastery, but in a healthier manner than traditional masculinity. Ecomasculinity provides an opportunity to be caring and infuse connections with others at a time when males are socialised to be discrete and suppressed by male oppression (Pule, 2013).

The characteristics of ecomasculinity are undoubtedly present on GOOP as prisoners have time to engage with nature, form connections with other prisoners and staff, and experience a sense of healthy pride and dominance as they create an improved environment for the prison as a whole (Hultman and Pule, 2018). To return to Connell's (1993) work on categorising masculinities, it could be proposed that GOOP prisoners are, within their own group, achieving a hegemonic masculine status in a 'healthy' manner, whilst to the rest of the

prison they may actually be considered a subordinate or marginalised group, purely given the numbers of them in comparison to non-GOOP members.

GOOP prisoners described the prison as being like an old castle and expressed dislike for the brick walls and urban features of the buildings. There were metaphorical references made about the contrast between residential wings and GOOP, suggesting that the former represented an inner city urban area such as Toxteth in Liverpool and the latter represented the Lake District. Previous research suggests that rural environments, in this case GOOP, are more likely to encourage positive behaviour and be viewed as a special retreat away from a chaotic urban setting, in this case the residential wings (Mayes and Lewis, 2012). Escaping from the urban areas of the prison to the rural retreat of GOOP could also enhance the feeling that prisoners were leaving prison to go to work, replicating the feeling of rehabilitation as they gain employment (Baybutt and Chemlal, 2016). Contentment, good behaviour and mental wellbeing all increased as a result of the modified urban, green environment of GOOP, and in relation to masculinity it seemed that the GOOP site could account for the reduction in negative masculine behaviours. There is a wealth of research about creating a 'healthy setting' (Dooris, 2006) and the benefit that greener, more natural environments have upon an individual's health (Carrus et al., 2015). Given the fact that masculinity within prison is deemed to be unhealthy, engaging men in a healthy setting, such as this area of the prison, could improve the overall health of these prisoners as well as reducing the hypermasculine traits some may possess or adhere to. It could be argued that the evidence provided through this research in terms of improving behaviour through reducing hypermasculinity, reinforces the need for greener prisons (Van Der Linden, 2015).

Prisoners' Behaviour in Relation to Deprivation and Importation Theory

As discussed, GOOP prisoners' behaviour, in relation to misconduct and violence, was almost impeccable and notably different to what reportedly occurs on residential wings. Once again, much of this could be associated with social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986): as prisoners come and go on GOOP, they observe the correct and expected way to behave. A previous psycho-

educational study also echoed this, reporting how using a social learning approach in an attempt to reduce prison misconduct had worked through using a strict structure to mediate behaviour (Auty et al., 2017). On GOOP, however, there is not a particularly strict regime imposed by horticulture staff and the relaxed, trustworthy approach could also be attributed to a reduction in aggressive actions. Furthermore, prison groups that encourage greater participation, offer increased contact with the outside world and are led by highly-trained staff are likely to be more successful in reducing violence in prison (Christian et al., 2006; Coyle and Fair, 2018). GOOP certainly adopts the traits of effective group participation being led by highly trained horticulture staff, accounting for the positive behaviours (Cooke, 1991). Although contact with the real outside world remains the same as it would if prisoners were on residential wings, the considerable contrast between the GOOP site and the rest of the prison provides GOOP prisoners with the feeling that they are closer to freedom, encouraging better behaviour.

Research referring to both the deprivation and importation models tends to focus on negative behaviours, resulting either from deprivation within prison or from the social backgrounds from which prisoners derive (De Lisi et al., 2004). On the contrary, the situational model is more positive, accounting for positive behaviour depending on a specific context in which prisoners are placed, considering prison architecture, staff and other prisoners present. The data suggests that the excellent behaviour, honesty and trustworthiness displayed by GOOP prisoners could, in part at least, be due to the 'situational' characteristics of the GOOP site.

Of interest too is a recent study suggesting that the importation theory could work in reverse, implying that negative behaviours learnt within prison could then be taken back into the community following release, thereby increasing reoffending (Walters, 2016). Although insights from this study are likely to be true for some prisoners, the hope and positive intentions expressed by prisoners participating in this research suggests that the opportunities offered by GOOP could result in positive attitudes and behaviours being 'exported' on release, thereby conversely contributing to a reduction in reoffending.

As discussed previously, the small, tight-knit community that was present on GOOP rendered the prisoners more comfortable in opening up and trusting one another with problems and worries. Due to the prominence of hypermasculinity on prison wings, expressing feelings and emotions is extremely rare for fear of ridicule, labelling, stigma and judgement (Kupers, 2010). It could be argued that GOOP provides a therapeutic culture, which this research study sought to investigate, encouraging open conversations and cathartic opportunities for prisoners. Persuading males to start talking and show emotion has been subject to much media attention over recent years, with the #ItsOkayToTalk social media campaign, due to the traditional unwillingness of men to open up (Holmes, 2015). These research findings indicate that providing a space for men to open up, but allowing this to develop organically rather than label it as a place to talk, may be an alternative and profitable solution. Previous research has demonstrated that an 'out of office' type of approach to men's therapy is the most suitable setting to encourage a therapeutic setting (Brooks, 2010), which also aligns with GOOP with the outdoor environmental focus. Further, due to the social capital of being able to talk and open up deriving from involvement on GOOP, this implies an upstream approach to health promotion in this setting, despite the problems associated with deprivation and importation upon health (de Viggiani, 2006).

Crime Differentiation

As previously mentioned, one prisoner was portrayed as being top of the GOOP hierarchy in comparison to other GOOP members. Although it would be easy to describe his physical appearance as stereotypically hypermasculine, therefore displaying a potentially intimidating presence, it was actually his criminal offences that seemed to override this. The openness about his violent crimes, in both interviews and group discussions, ensured that everyone knew of the harm and damage he was capable of; he was vocal about his aggressive past – using his criminal stories as a way of saying 'I'm not to be messed with' (Butler, 2008). Once again, the deprivations of being incarcerated could have associations with how individuals choose to present themselves in a given social space, to protect themselves and maintain an image (Goffman, 1961), but also to gain personal

symbolic meanings from a social field. Previous research has indicated that violent behaviours and aggression are associated with low self-esteem (Ostrowsky, 2010). The decision to vocalise personal criminal offences could be a verbal rather than physical way of expressing hypermasculinity, specifically with regards to more dangerous crimes.

Violent crimes are notoriously associated with men (Doude, 2014), therefore those that had committed the more serious of such offences were viewed as potentially threatening to new GOOP members (O'Donnell and Edgar, 1999). Much research suggests that the performance of masculine behaviours in prison is largely negative (Kiselica and Englar-Carlson, 2010); however, maintaining a certain level of traditional masculine traits may have some positive results. For example, whilst fellow prisoners may expect some level of bullying on prison wings from more violent prisoners (Ireland, 2010), having a prisoner on GOOP with an overt violent criminal past behaving well could help to change others' perceptions. Further, where the aforementioned prisoner had been classed as challenging by officers on the wings, his impeccable conduct on GOOP implies that horticulture can contribute to reducing violence for some prisoners and that confining dangerous prisoners to a specific unit is not necessarily the correct way to manage violent offenders (Edgar et al., 2014).

In contrast to violent offences, prisoners associated with harming women or children, in particular through sexual offences, were deemed the 'lowest of the low' and almost all prisoners on GOOP made their feelings known. It is not uncommon for vulnerable prisoners (Blaauw, 2013) to be subject to bullying in prisons, and the rise in the sex offender population, negative community perceptions and media frenzy have heightened the stigma (Mann, 2016). Masculinities are viewed as being malleable, fluid and altered based on the perceived risk or danger in a given situation (Ricciardelli et al., 2015). Although hypermasculine behaviours were low on GOOP in general, responses to sex offences were characterised by anger and disgust. Hegemonic males can consider women and children to be subordinate in a wider societal context, as they perceive themselves as dominant but it is those who have committed crimes against such population groups that are now marginalised (Connell, 1993). In the context of GOOP, it could be argued that it is in these specific

situations that prisoners present complicit masculinity in order to deliberately reject another group (ibid.).

One long-standing GOOP prisoner was adamant that his crime was committed against a sex offender in order to protect women and children, and was therefore lauded by fellow prisoners. Sex offenders are often aware of the stigma they face from fellow prisoners (Sanders, 2016) which goes some way to explaining why one prisoner remained so quiet and withdrawn from the GOOP group during his three week spell on the project. When questioned, he would lie about his history of criminal offences in order to avoid vilification and attempt to survive his time in prison (Mann, 2012). Once this prisoner had been removed from the GOOP job for his own personal safety, prisoners began to learn the truth of his offences, through hearsay on the residential wings. It was at this point that the complicit masculine responses occurred, with anger and an expressed need to protect women and children (Carpenter, 2016). This research evidence suggests that whilst GOOP is predominantly an inclusive space, there is still some way to go to ensure that vulnerable prisoners can safely work on GOOP without judgement and fear of threats and marginalisation.

Additionally, the presence of vulnerable prisoners or those suspected of sex offences appeared to increase hypermasculine behaviours in terms of aggression and dominance on GOOP. This could be attributed to the small GOOP community and how each prisoner involved in GOOP became known and sussed out in a smaller group dynamic than that of the wings. This suggests that it could in fact be safer for vulnerable prisoners to be within a larger group to avoid negative responses from fellow prisoners. Sex offenders, therefore, are likely to avoid activities that could involve devaluation and discrimination (Mingus and Burchfield, 2012), implying that GOOP does not provide a rehabilitative culture for offenders.

The presence of suspected sex offenders on GOOP effectively created an 'in-out' group within the GOOP dynamic. Sex offenders are often viewed as inhumane due to the nature of their crimes, leading to a period of dehumanisation when interacting with other prisoners (Viki et al., 2012). Sex offenders, such as the one temporarily working on GOOP, do not fit the core in-

group of a social dynamic and as a result they are socially excluded and become a non-member (Akerstrom, 1986). This heightens the 'us versus them' culture that exists at multiple levels within prison, as sex offenders' positions within the prison hierarchy is cemented at the bottom; both staff and other prisoners view themselves as higher up the pecking order.

In an idealistic prison world, sex offenders would be able to integrate seamlessly into prison culture and rehabilitative programmes (Willis et al., 2010) however, the public disdain and emotive responses to their crimes mean they will continue to struggle to be accepted within social groups (Cubellis et al., 2019). The negative attitudes and social exclusion experienced by sex offenders often leads to bullying and vigilantism, synonymous with hypermasculine violent behaviours as the hegemonic male seeks to punish those considered sub-human (Scrivens and Ricciardelli, 2019). Whilst nothing of this severity occurred on GOOP, tensions did rise and the small geographic space heightened the emotions of those present. There is a suggestion that although the horticultural activities would be of benefit to sex offenders as much as other prisoners, the attitudes override the tasks meaning it is unsafe and unsuitable for all types of criminals to integrate in such social settings.

Changing Lives

Introduction

This section of the discussion examines the theme of changing lives whilst in prison. It focusses on specific mental health conditions and these are discussed with reference to suicide and self-harm, OCD and schizophrenia, considering how involvement in GOOP can address the effects of such illnesses. Encouragingly, GOOP appeared to provoke feelings of hope amongst prisoners, providing multiple opportunities to learn and develop practical and personal skills. The challenges of ensuring prisoners are committed to rehabilitative interventions are acknowledged, highlighting the cynicism and complex home lives that can prevent successful rehabilitation. Moreover, the powerful impact of the environment is explored with a specific focus on biophilic

designs and how this invoked feelings of freedom and not being in prison and a belief that there is more to life than crime.

Suicide and Self-harm

Engagement with horticulture has a long history of enhancing the overall mental health and wellbeing of participants (Elings 2006), and more specifically prisoners (Baybutt et al., 2018). Suicide, self-harm, depression and personality disorders are common mental health-related issues in the current prison climate (Hawton et al., 2014) and in response to such problems, ACCT documents are opened (Humber et al., 2011). Several prisoners arrived on GOOP with open ACCT documents, having expressed thoughts of suicide and self-harm – but within weeks these documents were closed due to their uplift in mood. One prisoner explained in detail on induction his feeling of 'not wanting to be here anymore' but his behaviour changed dramatically after only a few weeks work on GOOP. The rates of suicide and self-harm have been at alarming levels in English and Welsh prisons (Borschmann et al., 2018) with mental health teams in prisons aiming to find effective interventions to prevent rates from increasing. GOOP appears to promote a positive setting for prisoners to discuss their suicidal feelings and personal problems and has a good track record of helping prisoners come off ACCT documents.

Potting plants and simply being in the presence of plants has been found to reduce feelings of anxiety (Park and Mattson, 2009) and the abundance of plants in the polytunnel, as well as the wider site, provided this opportunity to GOOP prisoners. As previously discussed, there is a significant problem with overcrowding in prisons in England and Wales (MacDonald, 2018); the polytunnel offered a stark contrast away from chaos and noise. The study's findings suggest that, from the perspective of mental health, there are clear benefits to providing prisoners with a space away from crowds, even for a short space of time. Further, it has been suggested that 'getting close to nature' through contact with plants can have positive health effects and contribute to a reduction in irritability, fear and worry (Arvay, 2018; Vitalia, 2017).

Complex Mental Health Problems

The findings of this research study delve deeper into specific mental illnesses and how engagement with GOOP contributed to easing the negative effects of specific problems, most notably schizophrenia, anxiety, depression and OCD. One prisoner, described in the findings chapter, had a wide array of diagnosed mental health problems: schizophrenia, ADHD, depression, anxiety and OCD. Schizophrenia is a heterogeneous syndrome recognised by peculiar beliefs, social withdrawal, disorganised behaviours and unusual sensory experiences (Harvey, 2013). It is important to note that such experiences do not always have to be negative, with some hallucinations providing comfort or reassurance (Andreasen et al., 2012). This prisoner's schizophrenia would involve hearing voices and seeing shadows, mostly of an imaginary male 'friend' whom he could often be seen talking to and about on the GOOP site, which are known as auditory hallucinations (Barta et al., 1990). Although this prisoner experienced times of distress and struggle with his mental health, the hallucinations at times offered him relief.

Firstly, schizophrenia is often associated with negative perceptions from others due to the complexities and misunderstanding of the illness (Olabi, 2009) and this stigma can result in low self-efficacy and poor coping for sufferers (Kleim et al., 2008). Other than asking the odd inquisitive question, however, GOOP group members seemed to be largely accepting of the prisoner's behaviour. Secondly, engagement in horticultural programmes for schizophrenic patients has been found to increase self-efficacy (Eum and Hee-Sook, 2016) – making it more likely that, if any judgement did occur, this prisoner would have developed coping tools.

Research about schizophrenia is continuously testing new means of treatment but due to the difficulty of fully understanding the condition, successful treatment varies from one sufferer to the next (Tandon et al., 2010). More often than not treatment for schizophrenia and other personality disorders involves a combination of medication and practical therapeutic interventions (Parvin et al., 2016), but there is minimal evidence that pharmacological treatments correct underlying biological abnormalities (Cooke, 2014). Arguably, this strengthens the need for non-medicated interventions and treatments for schizophrenia and

similar mental illnesses. Given the overall success in enhancing mental wellbeing through horticultural projects (Cipriani et al., 2017), recent studies focussing specifically on schizophrenia have found a reduction in psychopathological symptoms of the illness (Oh et al., 2018) and slight improvements in depressive episodes (Liu et al., 2014).

Neuroscientific studies investigating schizophrenia suggest that auditory hallucinations can trigger abnormal behaviours and increase difficulties in processing information and languages (Gaser et al., 2004; Pesold et al., 2004). Many of this prisoner's symptoms, however, were manageable or at least became less problematic for him during his time on GOOP. Previous studies combining neuroscience and biophilic design have found an increase in cognitive functioning, reduced stress (Browning, 2016) and invoked cortical activity in the brain (Papale et al., 2016), therefore strengthening the argument for implementing a biophilic approach in prisons for mental ill-health (Hagerhall et al., 2015; Soderlund and Newman, 2017). Similarly related to GOOP, Chatterjee (2014) proposed an aesthetic triadic framework to explain how sensory and emotional experiences invoke a sense of meaning and knowledge about a particular location. For this prisoner, his struggles with schizophrenia contributed to his struggle in life outside the prison and subsequently in prison, but involvement in GOOP provided him with positive sensory and emotional experiences through purposeful horticultural activities and social engagement, counteracting the negative neuroscientific symptoms of his illness.

Like many mental illnesses, treatment for OCD involves a combination of medical and non-medical treatments (Patel and Simpson, 2010). Several prisoners with OCD felt that their need to clean/tidy/order was put to good use on horticulture. The neatness and structure required for floral displays, together with the necessity to maintain the cleanliness and tidiness of the overall site, provided a sense of purpose and filled hours that would have been otherwise spent unnecessarily rearranging their cells. Engagement with horticulture, and in particular floristry, has been found to enhance cognitive impairments through the visually pleasing arrangements created (Mochizuki-Kawai et al., 2010).

Overall, although it is widely accepted that exposure to nature and horticultural projects are beneficial for human health and wellbeing, this study has identified

the positive impacts that GOOP offered for a prisoner experiencing schizophrenia, and highlighted the particular benefits of using potting and aesthetic design for anxiety and OCD respectively.

Hope for the Future

As this research was conducted over a relatively short period of time, and with prisoners whilst they were serving a custodial sentence, it is almost impossible to say whether GOOP contributes to successful rehabilitation and desistance from future crimes. For this reason, one of the research objectives was to explore how it impacts on the development of a therapeutic and rehabilitative culture, rather than assess its relationship to recidivism. Many participants and staff conceded that reoffending was inevitable and suggested that rehabilitative programmes did not tend to work because of prisoners returning to their home lives and deprived communities. There was also a strong element of positivity and hope, though, instilled in the GOOP prisoners as they began to take ownership of the project and feel a sense of belonging. This links to previous evidence of green settings reducing recidivism and enhancing mental health (Van Der Linden, 2015), although this study focussed more on how GOOP contributed to the development of a rehabilitative culture in the prison setting.

If rehabilitation really is something to be achieved by individuals, attitudes and thoughts need to be aligned with positive behaviours that link to rehabilitation (Simourd et al., 2016). One of these concepts is that of hope, which is crucial in ensuring that prison is a turning point, offering a hopeful future and finding meaning in prisoners' lives (Vignansky et al., 2018). The opportunities, responsibilities and respectful treatment on GOOP were all key factors in instilling hope and willingness to change for prisoners. Creating a social climate based on hope and humanity in custodial settings can enhance quality of life, mental wellbeing and feelings of safety (Bennett and Shuker, 2018). Although GOOP may not have initially set out specifically to promote hope, the concept was prominent in the study's findings. It has been acknowledged that at times of adversity throughout life, particularly in prison, hope can be the last thing that prisoners hold on to in order to survive their sentence (Pierce, 2014). This

research supported this, suggesting that, given the complexities of GOOP prisoners' lives both in and out of prison, the presence of hope was all the more valued. Hope is a powerful concept comprising thoughts, feelings and emotions, which can act as a placebo effect for positivity (Peterson, 2015). As projected by Groopman (2005), it is essential for changing futures:

"Hope can arrive only when you recognize that there are real options and that you have genuine choices. Hope can flourish only when you believe that what you do can make a difference, that your actions can bring a future different from the present. To have hope, then, is to acquire a belief in your ability to have some control over your circumstances. You are no longer entirely at the mercy of forces outside yourself." (p. 26)

Expressions of hope in prison have often been told through the form of writing and poetry, as prisoners seek to find solace that one day something might change for them (Hartnett, 2003). Further, prisoners' expressions have also taken the form of artwork (Nugent and Loucks, 2011) and music (Tuastad and O'Grady, 2013), both of which include imagery of hopeful futures and intentions. On GOOP, it seemed that the expressions of hope stemmed from the range of activities available within the realms of horticulture. The emphasis of learning new skills opened up the possibility of a more successful release from prison due to qualifications (Fletcher, 2010). Although potential horticultural jobs post-release were mentioned by prisoners, it was the creative elements of the work and the inclination to re-create what they had learnt on GOOP back home that prisoners linked to hope for the future. It has been argued that having a sense of hope and a vision for the future contributes to a sense of overall mental wellbeing (McKee, 2017), suggesting that hope connects rehabilitative and therapeutic cultures on GOOP. When considering prisoners' positive tales of hope and how prison can 'save lives', it is essential to consider the pre-prison contexts from which prisoners have come. The intersection between an individual prisoner, their background and the adaptation to an institution is paramount in their perspectives of what could contribute to change (Martin et al., 2014).

Prisoners' personal life stories are often rife with complexities and hopelessness (Leder et al., 1999), but GOOP's role in reinventing individual narratives should

be in the context of the pre-prison reality. Some prisoners benefit from returning to the familiarity of their home neighbourhood, but due to a high level of social disorder and the unpredictability of deprived communities, their hope of maintaining change can be short-lived (Harding et al, 2013). As such, it is understandable why repeat offenders may hold negative attitudes towards rehabilitation. For those on GOOP, however, who do believe in life transformation post-release, there is perhaps a danger that this level of hope could be idealised and fantasised due to the overwhelming contrast with their home environments. This can be closely linked to Jefferson's (2013) idea of imaginary reform where reformative or rehabilitative programmes are organised through a top-down approach and fail to recognise the embedded experiences of prisoners within institutions. As a result, whilst hope is a positive feeling for prisoners, there is an imaginary component when the origins of personal narratives are overlooked. Across the life-course of a prisoner, hope is likely to shift depending on their surroundings, home life or prison, and for many the opportunities in prison do not accurately address discourses considering all aspects of prisoners' lives (Jefferson, 2003).

Environmental Impact on Hope

The aesthetic and spatiality of a prison setting are essential in ensuring safety, enhancing wellbeing and altering public perceptions about what prisons are like (Jewkes and Moran, 2017). Further research has now incorporated the notion of hope into prison architecture, suggesting that by creating an aesthetically pleasing environment for prisoners, they could experience a sense of hopefulness for the future (Jewkes, 2018). Jewkes' work implies, however, that with a large number of prison establishments being old and unfit for purpose, the architecture of hope may only work in newly designed, efficient locations. In contrast, it could be argued that what GOOP has achieved is to create an architectural haven of hope within the old, Victorian prison walls.

Furthermore, Jewkes et al. (2017) proposed the idea that prisons have now become 'non-places' for 'non-people' and that rehabilitative efforts are restricted due to prisoners and staff experiencing manipulation by the environment. In

other words, the settings have become less and less conducive to facilitating successful rehabilitation. By constructing architecturally flourishing and humanising settings, prisons can visually be places of success, promoting kindness, trust and decency (ibid.). Whilst this particular GOOP site only encapsulates a tiny part of the prison system, the creativity of displaying a visually pleasing retreat for prisoners, staff and visitors in what is, arguably, an architecturally adverse building, appears to influence the hope and wellbeing of prisoners positively. Jewkes (2018) suggests that architects and designers should be mindful of the links between beauty and 'being just' as this enhances the possibilities of healing.

Within prison architectural research, the concepts of biophilia (Wilson, 2017) and biophilic design (Kellert et al., 2011) are closely linked to ideas of penal aesthetics. Introducing nature into the design of settings involves the presence of 'living things', to which humans are innately connected (Wilson, 2017), and connections can be made to hope and the development of rehabilitative cultures. The spiritual, emotional and metaphorical benefits that arise in the presence of live nature, act as a representation of sustainability and conservation (Booth, 2015).

In the case of prisoners, seeing the progression and growth of plants and flowers can offer a real-life situation where something has changed, grown or developed into something new. This can be understood to mirror the rehabilitative prisoner endeavour during incarceration and post-release. Previous research implies that surrounding oneself with nature and living organisms provides a rare opportunity, particularly for prisoners, to view the world through a new pair of eyes and discover new possibilities (Sanchez et al., 2015). From the perspective of GOOP, this represents the symbolic power that nature has upon prisoners and their innate connection to GOOP as a project and site.

In contrast to the prison service in England and Wales, the Norwegian approach to prison has heavily incorporated the use of trees, something which is considered a security risk elsewhere (Moran and Turner, 2018). The Nordic prison system is frequently considered to be the most humane due to staff-prisoner ratio, residential conditions and the incorporation of nature (Berger,

2016). The evidence from GOOP regarding the application of biophilic design, albeit minimal in comparison to some, furthers the argument for architects and carceral geographers to pay greater attention to the banal geographies that often characterise prisons and wider institutions (Moran and Jewkes, 2014). Similarly, Piacentini and Slade (2015) propose that prisons have adopted a sense of institutional thoughtlessness where design is concerned and this enhances state power and manipulation through the physical environment. Foucalt's (1980) interest in prisons resulted in the suggestion that physical bodies in a prison environment are subjugated to and behave in certain ways through the wider social setting which he termed 'bio-power'. The biophilic design of GOOP influences the behaviours of prisoners and staff in a similar manner.

Rehabilitative Challenges

Throughout the long history of prisons, the initial purpose of punishment has transcended into providing a place of rehabilitation and reducing future reoffending (Esherick, 2015). Although regularly referred to within the UK criminal justice system, the term rehabilitation is somewhat under-interrogated and is in danger of becoming a 'buzzword' associated with crime that has no real meaning (Hall, 2017). When the specific subject of rehabilitation was brought up through interview questions or group discussions, there was a cynicism from both participants and staff – a perception that rehabilitation was a myth that doesn't work. In contrast, when justice system terminology such as 'rehabilitation' and 'reducing reoffending' were not mentioned explicitly, prisoners on GOOP expressed views and displayed actions that implied a willingness to change and demonstrated that they had some hope that their lives could transform. It appears that prisoners choose to reject the system's jargon regarding rehabilitation in a personal bid to deviate from accepting authority. Traditionally, prisoners struggle to accept the controlling nature of prisons and are reluctant to allow the system to help their rehabilitation in a bid to maintain their own identity (Fielding and Fielding, 2000). The actions and attitudes, however, displayed on GOOP suggests that the informality of the project prompts the feelings of hope and intention to change.

Cynical attitudes have long been acknowledged as problematic within custodial settings (Farmer, 1977), with both prisoners and prison staff expecting reoffending to occur, as they see so many revolving door prisoners in establishments (Jewkes et al., 2016). Staff within the criminal justice system frequently deal with the paradox of prisoners claiming they 'won't be back' and then being seen sooner rather than later, resulting in staff holding sceptical views as to whether they are genuine in their willingness to change (Burnett, 2013). Desistence from crime refers to a person's pattern of behaviour shifting from significant involvement to non-involvement with crime (Bushway et al., 2003) and whilst many GOOP prisoners accepted their misconduct and expressed some level of remorse, they attributed their offences to their home environment (Petersilia, 2003).

One prisoner on GOOP referred to prison as a *'University of Crime'* implying that when prisoners are held in custody, they learn more about crime than they did before entry, and meaning that on returning to their communities they are likely to use their new found 'criminal tools' to reoffend. Through the lens of Bourdieu's (1980) notions of habitus, field and capital, this suggests that prisoners' 'habitus' could be altered based on their encounters with other actors on GOOP and ultimately result in an increase in negative social capital. Equally, however, the positive relationships established on GOOP are also key in invoking positive social capital through the means of trust, team building and friendship.

Furthermore, the argument of the importation theory (Irwin and Cressey, 1962) is enhanced somewhat as prisoners import their ingrained criminal attitudes to the prison setting itself. Further, Walters' (2016) inversion of the importation theory could also be applied here as prisoners export prison behaviours into the community. This also affirms previous research indicating that prisons have a criminogenic effect and have the unanticipated impact of making communities less safe (Cullen et al., 2011). Alternatively, GOOP's overwhelming positive outcomes for prisoners imply that the project could provide a setting where the *'University of Crime'* is combatted.

Equally, many prisoners enter custody from deprived and excluded backgrounds, having been in care, been homeless and/or experienced chronic

drug and alcohol problems, and causes of their pre-custodial needs are seldom addressed (Williams et al., 2012). This was no different on GOOP, with many prisoners alluding to deprived upbringings, problems with secure housing and concerns over what would be out there for them on release. Once again, the imported social behaviours, attitudes and experiences are influencing prisoners' perceptions as to whether they can successfully transform their future (Irwin and Cressey, 1962). Moreover, the importation of such experiences almost results in the prison arena becoming indigenous for negative consequences to imprisonment (Dhami et al., 2007). Consequently, for all the goodwill prisoners have on the GOOP job, it could be concluded that many of them know that they will be returning to unstable lifestyles and are not convinced that the experience will be sufficient to ensure effective rehabilitation.

Despite the social problems related to criminal activity and reoffending, the UK government's most recent prison reforms have strongly enforced the need to focus on rehabilitation (Carr, 2017). Prisoners who adopt specific roles in prison and on GOOP, such as a listener or mentor, may develop a normative commitment to the institutional aims as they seek to adhere to good behaviour and reject misconduct (Coates, 2016). Further, women are more likely to be receptive and positive towards engaging with rehabilitative programmes and believe they can change (Haghighi and Lopez, 1998), implying that the issues of masculinity are present when rehabilitation is mentioned. Hegemonic masculinity encourages men to practise masculinities and perform in their chosen manner, and crime only enhances the problem of masculinity as well as further criminal activity itself (Robinson and Hamilton, 2016). Despite expressing positivity regarding activities on GOOP, it could be perceived as weak or naïve to buy into the ideology of rehabilitative prisons, therefore prisoners are unlikely to admit that the prison system could actually help them.

Unsurprisingly, prisoners have long periods of time to think and reflect, which can lead to them analysing their crimes (Huddy et al., 2016). Extended periods of reflection can contribute to prisoners' personal identities and how they choose to present themselves in relation to their crime (Medlicott, 1999). Many prisoners experience feelings of shame, regret and guilt over the crime they committed which can sometimes lead to desistence from crime as the emotion overwhelms them (Warr, 2016). Establishing new personal narratives, as many

did on GOOP, encourages prisoners internally to replace their label as a 'criminal' and prompts a prison experience to contain a deeper meaning and purpose, in the pursuit for forgiveness (Maruna et al., 2006). Some prisoners on GOOP were regretful about their current and previous crimes, and therefore took the steps necessary to begin to change their self-perception to seek self-actualisation (Maslow, 1954).

Equally, though, some prisoners may admit to some level of wrongdoing, but benchmark their behaviour implying that they do not deserve the sentence or punishment they have received, and therefore are unwilling to accept full responsibility for their actions (Sandberg, 2014). It could be argued that by not accepting, or externally presenting responsibility for criminal activity, male prisoners are enacting the masculine persona of maintaining a 'fear factor' label (Braithwaite, 1989) and seeking to exert dominance over their victims but also over other 'weaker' prisoners who have conformed to the justice system's rehabilitative agenda (Gueta and Chen, 2016). As the intersectional theory (Nash, 2008) suggests, narratives that form personal identities are constructed through other contexts and as they interlock, systems of power impact the most vulnerable in society. Consequently, because identities are influenced by this contextual intersection, prisoners may choose to present themselves and their crime in ways that are negotiable to maintain oneself (Crenshaw, 2005; Rajah et al., 2014).

Moreover, it has been argued that the cynicism of prison staff, whereby they expect male prisoners to reoffend and exhibit masculine appearances or behaviours, plays a significant role in building up a profile of a serial criminal (Estrada-Reynolds et al., 2017). Although horticulture staff presented behaviours akin to pro-social modelling, their scepticism towards effective rehabilitation implies a degree of cognitive dissonance as they have inconsistent attitudes towards behaviour change (Festinger, 1962). Many prisoners consider staff to be role models (Liebling et al., 2010) and this was particularly evident on GOOP, given the aforementioned pro-social modelling and behaviour generated by GOOP's existence. Prisoners are so often socially excluded from communities, so searching out someone to represent and guide them to moral imagination offers hope once more; it constitutes a form of social solidarity, something undoubtedly prevalent on GOOP (Silver, 1994).

Symbolically, this can be powerful in illustrating what community really is and how accepting direction from those in a role model position can contribute to a reduction in recidivism.

In an ideal world, there would be a seamless transition for prisoners from prison to community, but this has been coined as a 'penal imaginary' (Carlen, 2013); a description that GOOP prisoners seemed to relate to as they retained a degree of scepticism that their lives could change. Another frequently expressed view was the horticulture staff referring to successful rehabilitation being solely 'down to the individual' as to whether they wanted to achieve a new way of life, away from crime. Horticulture staff suggested that they could only do so much to help and guide prisoners in the right direction and to some extent prisoners accepted these views too; however, with regards to the governments' latest rehabilitative culture prison aims, the supportive environment in which prisoners are placed can contribute to their rehabilitation irrespective of their own beliefs.

Freedom

As an adjunct to hope is the feeling of freedom; a word not ordinarily associated with prison, due to the ordered tradition of prison life (Sparks et al., 1996). Despite the overcrowded, punitive and conceivably obsolete style of the wider prison, however, nine prisoners described being on GOOP as 'not feeling like a prison'. This implies that feelings of freedom were experienced by prisoners as they associated the GOOP project with things akin to the outside world, such as colour, smells and the overall ambience. Connections have already been established between biophilia and sensory modalities, i.e. colour and smells (Heerwagen and Gregory, 2008), but further connections could be made to feelings of freedom and liberation for prisoners as they are reminded of the outside world. This extends the argument for biophilic prison designs (Moran and Turner, 2018), away from the old-fashioned 'human cage' (Johnston, 1973) and towards a transformative justice setting (Schenwar, 2014).

Creating a sense of freedom has been applied in previous studies with findings including a sense of hope, increased self-esteem, compassion and successful rehabilitative outcomes (Duncombe et al., 2005; Holmboe, 2013). The concept

of space, and feeling free within that space, runs more deeply than simply considering the surroundings, items and architecture, as it can invoke feelings of attachment and belonging (Barrett-O'Keefe, 2014), and is symbolic in prisoners' time inside as they connect a prison space to the wider community. In considering how GOOP helps to develop a rehabilitative culture, the notions of freedom and prisoners not feeling like they are in prison could be understood to lead to positive goal-setting and aspirations (Kasser, 1996), congruent to potential successful desistence from crime.

Whilst the security and surveillance of the GOOP site followed stringent safety protocols just like the rest of the prison, the power of the aesthetics of horticulture meant that the bars, barbed wire and heavy gates were not a central focus for prisoners. In a similar study with women in an Australian prison, traditional surveillance, discipline and punishment were replaced with a safe and secure emotional space where prisoners had the freedom to explore (Yuen, 2011). This demonstrates that prisons do not always have to follow the traditional, punitive route of incarceration and that modified, creative spaces can be provided in a safe manner promoting feelings of freedom rather than a complete loss of liberation.

Personal Development and New Opportunities

Aside from the more spiritual, nurturing and liberation-related benefits of engaging with nature, the fruit and vegetables grown on GOOP offered the chance for prisoners to supplement their current diet, contribute to their understanding of healthier eating and learn how to grow food sustainably in the future. Some prisoners had never eaten freshly grown food before and were astounded at the sharp, fresh tastes they produce. Prisoners are known to have worse physical health than the general population and, therefore, encouraging healthier eating can promote nutritional benefits (Baybutt et al., 2014). Of course, it is not known whether these foods will definitely be eaten once prisoners return to the community, but exposure to and education about healthy foods could certainly be of value.

Improving self-perceptions, including confidence and self-belief, were also two personal development traits attributed to involvement in GOOP. Self-esteem is often low in prison environments due to the effects of bullying and loss of identity (Ireland, 2002), but several prisoners on GOOP discussed their increased self-esteem, self-belief and self-efficacy as they became integrated into GOOP. Being part of the small GOOP community offered a support network to prisoners, which appeared to be rehabilitative in terms of increasing self-esteem and creating more favourable expectations of life post-release (Visher and O'Connell, 2012). Further, with GOOP assuming a therapeutic community role, this has been found to enable prisoners to find themselves – discovering a 'new' and 'better' person with personal identity influencing future plans (Stevens, 2012). The confidence of prisoners grew as they became more accustomed to the everyday life of GOOP and they were able to adopt more responsibilities and learn different skills using different equipment.

Increases in self-efficacy are also beneficial in traditional learning environments, such as classroom work (Allred et al., 2013), which was an integral part of prisoners' enrolment on GOOP. Whilst few prisoners expressed actual enjoyment of Numeracy and Literacy classes, their positive experiences and subsequent self-confidence established through the outdoor, horticultural activities meant that they persevered with the subjects, with many gaining their Level 1 and 2 qualifications. Whilst there was once a strong history of lowering recidivism through engaging in educational courses and qualifications, overcrowding and unstable continuity of services has shifted prisoners' attitudes towards education (Hughes, 2016), with a growing sense of cynicism. The experiential learning within GOOP, however, is likely to enhance individuality, expand knowledge, and is perhaps closest to replicating real-life situations (Kolb, 2014), pertinent for prisoners currently living in what is a somewhat artificial setting unrepresentative of 'normal' life.

Considering Bourdieu's (1980) proposals along with the symbolic interactionist theoretical approach of this research, it is germane to discuss Dweck's (2013) 'meaning systems' approach when discussing personal development and change. As people develop their 'self', meanings are created related to the surroundings that cause them to feel in such a way, and as a result change their thoughts, feelings and behaviours to match the initial thought (Dweck, 2013). As

prisoners develop their skills and situation-specific confidence on GOOP, they are likely to experience feelings of positivity and a willingness to use skills gained in the future, suggesting a rehabilitative approach to horticulture.

The range of skills and mini-projects on GOOP – notably the Japanese garden, the rockery, flower displays and woodwork activities – promoted a sense of creativity. Mumford and Gustafson (1988, p.27) define creativity in terms of *"ideas and products that are original and valuable"* which is applicable to GOOP as prisoners create unique items, purpose built for horticultural settings. Both prisoners and staff alluded to the fact that because there were 'no proper rules' regarding what tasks they completed, this allowed a certain amount of freedom and agency to express oneself whilst creating a purposeful and attractive horticultural site. This can also link to feelings of belonging, flourishing and developing oneself in the face of oppressive circumstances. Total institutions attack a person's self, resulting in self-subordination and leave prisoners seeking to rebuild themselves through hegemony (Goffman, 1961). Until relatively recently, it was thought that creative prisoners did not exist (Eisenman, 1992). A further study, however, found that prisoners excel in creativity when there are fewer demands and limited structure (Eisenman, 1999), consistent with prisoners' rejection of order (Jefferson and Gaborit, 2015). On GOOP, although there is a structure to the prison day, there is a relaxed approach to rules and behaviour, a focus on developing autonomy and an openness from the horticulture staff to participants' ideas and plans. This makes it an ideal setting and project within which to develop and display creativity.

Alongside the studies already alluded to, concerning the role of the arts in instilling hope, research on the role of dance (Frigon, 2014), drama (Taylor et al., 2010), music (Daykin et al., 2017) and artwork (Johnson, 2008) has highlighted the impact of such creative self-expression on prisoners, with regards to their feelings of freedom, their articulation of concerns/feelings, and their ability to understand other prisoners' needs, as well as feelings of 'finding their true-self'. Perhaps unsurprisingly, similar characteristics were present on GOOP through horticulture activities such as floral displays, hard landscaping designs and the construction of items from recycled wood.

Increasing levels of creativity in prisoners, however, can assist them in dealing with everyday problems and unpredictable scenarios both inside the prison walls and back in the community (Harvey, 2010). Whilst having mental health problems often weakens the creative spark within individuals (Eisenman, 2007), the creativity displayed by those with mental illnesses on GOOP was high, supporting the view that horticulture can unlock ideas of inspiration for future plans (Clark, 2011), and contribute to succeeding in today's world (Pritts and Eames-Sheavly, 2016). By having the freedom and encouragement to express themselves creatively, GOOP prisoners may further develop their ability to cope with challenging situations in the future, strengthening the argument that GOOP has helped to create a rehabilitative culture. Correspondingly, using personal expression to invent new ideas, strengthens the symbolic meaning that prisoners associate with GOOP itself.

As mentioned at several points throughout this section, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954) resonates with GOOP's role in enabling participants to journey towards self-actualisation and transcendence.

Figure 7. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Adapted from Maslow, 1954).
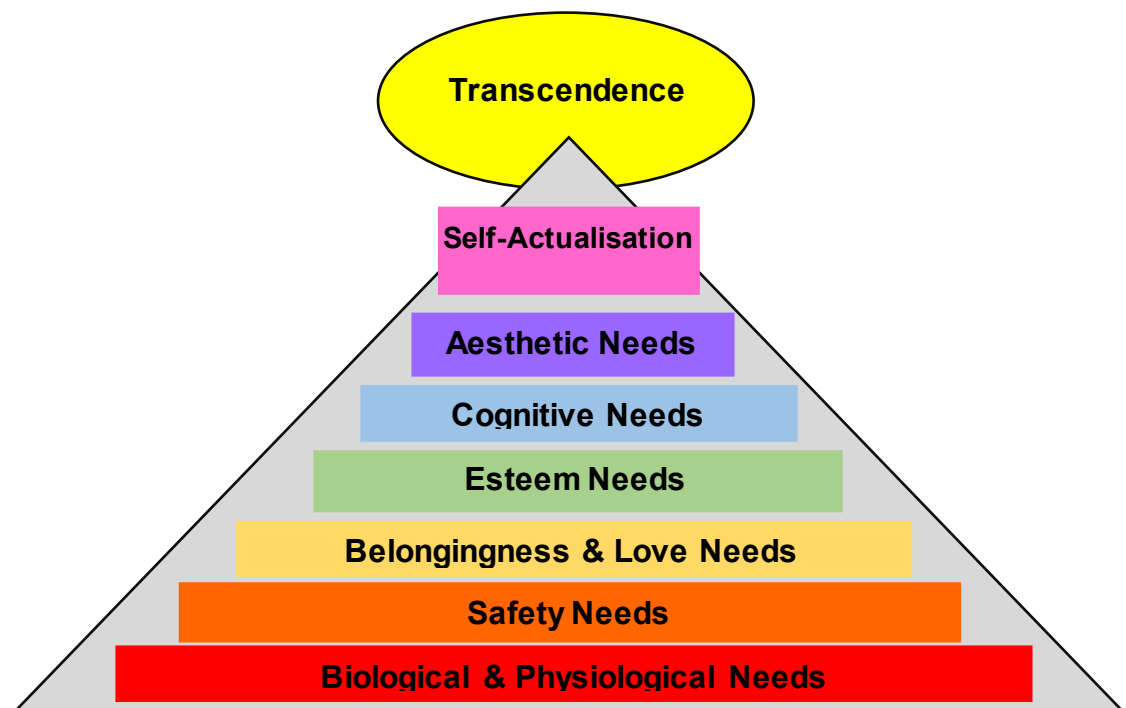
Maslow suggests that, in order to reach a point of self-actualisation and subsequently transcendence, as individuals progress through stages of life, a

number of elements need to be present sequentially. Whilst biological and physiological needs such as food are provided for those in prison, many would argue that the remaining layers of Maslow's model are rarely present; however, elements of safety, feelings of belonging, improvements in self-esteem, increased cognitive processes and aesthetically-pleasing environments are all present on GOOP, suggesting that it has the potential to offer an appropriate setting to facilitate prisoners' journey towards self-actualisation, thus, increasing the chances for successful rehabilitation. Whilst the GOOP model, dynamic and environment, however, seem to work overwhelmingly well in helping to achieve a rehabilitative culture (Vess and Day, 2017), it could be argued that successful rehabilitation – incorporating progress towards self-actualization – can only occur through a joined-up whole prison and whole system approach.

Summary

This chapter has deeply investigated and explored the research findings, contextualised them in relation to other theories and previous research, and provided possible explanations. The chapter was structured in relation to the three thematic findings: The Small GOOP Community; Sub-cultural Masculinities and Changing Lives, although issues discussed under these headings inevitably connected and overlapped.

The Small GOOP Community discussion investigated the role of GOOP in creating a unique community within a prison setting and how this can invoke important feelings of trust, friendships, pro-social behaviours and emotional sharing, all vital in ensuring a therapeutic and rehabilitative culture. The relaxed, 'soft power' approach displayed by horticulture staff also contributed to the unity of GOOP, prompting humane and decent acts experienced by prisoners. The strong sense of community and belonging symbolised culturally and socially normative values, something which may well have been absent in the complex life-stories of individual prisoners. Consequently, transferring these newly gained personal attributes could be extremely positive for successful rehabilitation.

Sub-cultural Masculinities focussed on the impact that horticulture and involvement in GOOP had upon masculine performances. The presence of a female instructor and a female researcher was discussed in terms of influence on masculinity, potentially reducing masculine performances, but prompting a need to respect and share job roles. The stereotypes and perceptions of working within a horticultural job role were explored with reference to different activities being considered masculine or feminine. The notion of caring and nurturing was investigated, and conclusions were offered based on whether this type of work can mediate problematic masculine behaviours such as being a 'care-giver' and replacing the void of fatherhood. Finally, the differentiation between crimes committed was explored, with protection of women and children proving to be significant in influencing hypermasculine behaviours.

Changing Lives discussed the impact that GOOP has upon changing prisoners' outlook on life whilst they are imprisoned, and the potential of successful resettlement upon release. Mental health was investigated in relation to the variety of jobs available on GOOP and how each activity can positively impact upon different illnesses. The challenges of instilling rehabilitative attitudes and removing cynical views were assessed, and the impact that staff can play in transforming intentions as role models was considered. Although rehabilitation is challenging, involvement in GOOP appeared to offer prisoners a sense of hope and a belief that they are capable of changing their lives and achieving more. The use of biophilia and consideration of carceral geography was explored with GOOP representing recent research studies pertinently in the quest for aesthetic prison designs.

The next chapter will outline overall conclusions; present recommendations for future research, policy and practice; consider the theoretical implications; acknowledge the strengths and limitations of the research study and its original contribution to knowledge; and offer some brief personal reflections of my PhD journey.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Structured under the three themes 'The Small GOOP Community', 'Masculinities' and 'Changing Lives', the previous chapter provided an in-depth discussion of the research findings with reference to the work of key theorists and the wider literature.

This chapter outlines the strengths and limitations of the study; discusses the extent to which the research has fulfilled the stated aim and objectives and stayed true to its epistemological and theoretical perspectives; examines its particular and unique contribution to knowledge; and offers recommendations for future research policy and practice – considering implications for the criminal justice system. Further, a summary of each chapter is provided and some final, concluding thoughts are offered.

Limitations of the Study

Within any research it is necessary to acknowledge both the strengths and the potential limitations of the study as this can account for discrepancies, biases and restrictions within the findings (Price and Murnan, 2004).

Firstly, it should be noted that the findings derive from research undertaken at one single GOOP site within the wider prison system. Whilst the study may have generated learning relevant to the wider GOOP programme and other prisons, it should not be assumed that the findings either represent the experiences of, or can be automatically applied to, other establishments. The prison in which the research was conducted has actively supported GOOP's development over a number of years, other prisons may not have had the same experience or opportunities for horticultural development. However, it is also important to note that the prison and staff have been hugely creative in developing GOOP with extremely limited space and resources: therefore, it is likely that many of the research findings relating to the benefits of participation in GOOP are applicable to other prisons.

Secondly, the findings are specific to those prisoners and staff involved in GOOP at the time of data collection, representing a relatively small sample size given the number of people imprisoned and working in prisons. As highlighted by the underlying epistemological and theoretical positions informing the study, social constructionism and interpretivism – which value individuals' personal meanings and truths – should this research have taken place within another time frame, findings may well have varied due to there being different actors involved.

Thirdly, many qualitative research studies utilising interviews follow a process of member checking, whereby participants are contacted after transcriptions to ensure that interpretations of a recorded interview are accurate, thus enhancing validity (Birt et al., 2016). Additionally, member checking has been found to be therapeutically beneficial for participants, as they feel as though their views are being valued and validated (Harper and Cole, 2012) – an experience that could be particularly powerful for marginalised groups such as prisoners. Given the high turnover of prisoners, many research participants were released or transferred to another prison during the data collection period. As a result, it was not possible to return to the prison and discuss the interview transcriptions with participating prisoners, and constraints on staff's time meant that they similarly did not conduct member checking.

Finally, authors have noted that there are some limitations to conducting ethnographic research, particularly in a prison context. Performing the role of an ethnographer involves a significant amount of impression management and thought towards how one presents oneself within the research field (Goffman, 2017). The ethnographic process entails gaining a deep understanding of the actors present in the research field, thereby enhancing the emotional demands and threatening the integrity of the researcher (Liebling, 2014). The depth to which researchers get to know their participants can impact the researcher emotionally, and therefore influence the research findings as they look favourably or sympathetically towards the participants (Drake and Harvey, 2014). In order to counteract potential instances of this, unofficial debriefing and discussions regarding events were communicated with horticulture staff during break times, and more official with a member of the PhD supervision team. Equally, personal perceptions and views of behaviours and attitudes can

negatively influence research findings if the ethnographer fails to establish a strong connection with a particular participant in comparison to others, and valuable data could be missed or misinterpreted due to personal opinions (Fine, 1993). However, it is important to note that ethnographic research offers a unique opportunity to interpret a project and context, rather than being simply a 'research method', allowing imagination to explore what could be, in line with social constructionist values (Crotty, 2009; Rhodes, 2015). By displaying a high level of emotion and integrity, trust can develop organically between researcher and participant (Bosworth et al., 2005), potentially helping to reduce marginalisation (Charles et al., 2016).

Strengths of the Study and Original Contribution to Knowledge

In order for a PhD research study to be highly regarded, the findings should offer ideas and outputs that can influence change, alter perceptions and be applied to broader, cultural and societal domains (Kelly, 2016).

This study has fulfilled its aim of illuminating the connections between horticulture, hypermasculinity and mental wellbeing in a male prison context. Specifically, it has generated rich in-depth data suggesting that there are strong connections between the three areas and that damaging hypermasculine behaviours are often reduced whilst engaging with horticultural activities, subsequently enhancing mental health and wellbeing.

Whilst this study was conducted within one prison on a small GOOP site, the findings present numerous contributions to the existing literature.

Firstly, integrating prisoners into a small group for their work in prison creates the feeling of a community on GOOP thereby enhancing the opportunity for meaningful friendships to thrive, for trust to develop and for prisoners to understand one another on a deeper level than simply for their crimes. Further, staff-prisoner relationships appeared to be positive due to a more relaxed approach to work, therefore enhancing respect between both parties and the notion of pro-social modelling. Establishing a community within prison can reduce feelings of isolation, demonstrate what a settled community can be, and

allow prisoners to value and take pride in the work they are involved in. Consequently, the friendships and trust built on GOOP contributed to the reduction of stigma attached to mental illnesses, and prisoners were able to drop the mask of 'being tough'.

Secondly, complementing the social impact of GOOP, the actual horticultural activities also have clear importance in mediating hypermasculine behaviours and promoting mental wellbeing. The GOOP site was highly valued by the majority of prisoners resulting in the demonstration of autonomy, responsibility and care. Hypermasculine norms often involve seeking dominance and ownership over something in a bid to fulfil the hegemonic gender role. However, engaging prisoners in GOOP and allowing prisoners to take control of aspects of the work appears to negate the damaging aspects of dominance and facilitate the development of individual and shared responsibility. The view of watching a plant grow and witnessing progression also offers the metaphor for changing their lives as well as the need to nurture a living organism. This can go some way to replacing the loss of caregiving as the 'man of the house' or father figure, therefore reducing the negative effects of hypermasculinity.

Thirdly, although there has been an abundance of research highlighting the positive impacts of engagement with horticulture on mental health and wellbeing, this study found that particular horticultural activities addressed specific mental illnesses (tidying tasks to help with OCD) and also served to reduce suicide and self-harm, enabling prisoners to be withdrawn from their ACCT documents.

Fourthly, the study highlighted how the GOOP site displays high levels of creativity with the adoption of green spaces and plants, despite being in an old, urban and restricted environment. This represents a biophilic approach to the design of a prison setting, furthering the argument for integrating nature into institutions, irrespective of architectural design, to enhance health and wellbeing.

Recommendations

Following completion of this research study, I am confident that the findings can be used to encourage further research and influence policy and practice within the health and justice system and wider communities.

Research

The findings generated from this research study have prompted further questions that need answering through the means of research. The main data collection took place on one single GOOP site over four months, due to the time constraints of completing a PhD within a three year timeframe. In terms of enhancing the validity and reliability of research on horticulture in a prison setting, I would suggest that a long-term research study should be conducted, involving a greater number of participants. Further, given the high turnover of prisoners, it was challenging to assess exactly how impactful GOOP was for each prisoner. Some were only enrolled on the project for a matter of weeks whereas others were working on GOOP for over a year, in some cases. An approach that acknowledges and captures both short- and long-term benefits of engaging with a horticulture project could be useful in determining 'what works for whom' within a prison environment.

Additionally, as well as conducting larger-scale single-site research over a longer time-frame, it would be valuable to conduct similar studies across multiple prison sites to enhance the quality of the findings. A comparative study was initially considered for this research: however due to ethical and time considerations this was deemed unfeasible. Should further research be carried out, a comparison between the impacts of horticulture in different types of prisons would be beneficial. This could be between male and female establishments, between different category prisons, or between old and new build sites.

Lastly, it is clear that the power and persuasiveness of a research study would be increased if it could be longitudinal – looking not only at experiences and impacts within prison, but also post-release. Given the way in which the prison and probation system functions, it is challenging to maintain contact with those

held in custody once they are released; whilst some prisoners' sentences require regular interactions with probation, others simply return to their pre-prison lifestyles and communities. If ways could be found to facilitate such a longitudinal study, it would be possible to explore in more detail the longer-term impacts that GOOP has on participants, exploring links to resettlement, employment and reoffending (see below for further discussion).

Policy

As discussed with regards to research, in order to strengthen the validity of future research involving prisoners, I strongly believe a system should be implemented for all prisoners whereby they remain in some form of contact with the prison system post-release. In terms of research, this would allow findings to develop regarding how the time spent on projects like GOOP has influenced prisoners following resettlement in the community. Further, in terms of policies within the prison system, remaining in contact with prisoners would also allow a more tailored approach to a person's time in prison and joined-up approach to rehabilitation. There is an acknowledgement in the current Prison Service Safety and Reform document that prisoners who are locked up will be one day integrated back into their communities (Prison Service, 2018), therefore to have some control and tracking of this integration would be wise.

The findings of this research study have highlighted what changes could be made to policies that are in place within the prison service. Firstly, I would suggest that more work should be done in prisons to ensure that those held in custody are provided with periods of time outside of their cells and immersed in natural environments to some degree. Whilst all prisoners can have access to the outdoors, even if they on the segregation unit, this is usually on exercise yards during allocated association. To enhance the impact of time on association, improving this environment with raised beds or living walls would contribute to providing similar connections to nature as experienced on GOOP itself. The latest government report on Recent Developments on Prison Reform, highlights the importance of creating jobs and qualification opportunities for prisoners (Beard, 2017), therefore if those job roles relating to horticulture could be displayed in the form of planters and raised beds to increase green spaces

could be applied, this would tick two boxes in relation to exposure and skill development. Further, developing democratic therapeutic communities is now a Prison Service Order, strengthening the argument for more time outside of cells to connect with others (Prison Service, 2017).

The freedom and connection to nature that many prisoners partaking in this study reported demonstrated a link to enhanced mental wellbeing alongside feelings of hope and freedom, as if they were in the outside world again. Ensuring that all prisoners, not just those enrolled on GOOP project or similar, are exposed to outdoor settings is likely to result in less demand for mental health services and subsequently a reduction in pressures on staff. The health promoting settings approach, prioritising a whole prison perspective, is now applied to prisons through the PSIs (Prison Service, 2005). Enabling prisoners to have exposure to outdoor settings and engagement with nature-based activities can clearly help to fulfil such service instructions. It could also be argued that having nature-based outdoor settings remains an ideal, with interpretation playing a significant part as different personnel and levels of management view the benefits in different ways. Whilst there have been and will always be opportunities to adopt a healthy settings approach, negative opinions and lifestyle drift have neglected the ideas somewhat and mitigated against the implementation of a whole prison approach (Woodall, 2016).

Additionally, I would suggest that engagement with horticulture and viewing nature, even if not on an official job role in prison, could allow prisoners the opportunity to nurture and view metaphorical change, through for example taking ownership of even just one plant. Being locked away, in solitary confinement in particular, for extended periods with no exposure to other living beings is not compatible with measures related to preparing for life after prison (Beard, 2017).

In recent years, governmental changes to the prison system in England and Wales have seen some prisons close, with older prisons facing the highest threat of closure (Scott, 2018) as new 'super, titan, prisons' (Allen, 2013) emerge, such as HMP Berwyn, Wrexham. The government's documentation for Prison Reform outlines plans to spend £1.3 billion on building new prisons, creating 10,000 new places for prisoners (Beard, 2017). Should such plans for

new prison sites be realised, then the findings from my research study suggest that consideration/attention should be given to engaging policy makers, architects and planners with the increasing evidence base regarding the value of biophilic design for prisoner and staff wellbeing (Jewkes, 2018; Moran and Turner, 2019).

The research findings on GOOP suggest that in a biophilic environment, stereotypical hypermasculine behaviours linked to aggression and violence can be significantly reduced. Having a sustainable horticulture setting becomes a core business approach, within prisons and this can reduce incidences of violence and aggression can reduce pressures on staff and resources, as they would subsequently have less situations to respond to and can spend the time maintaining order on the residential wings and providing attention to those who need it.

Practice

Throughout the whole research period I did not witness any instances of ridicule or ignorance towards mental health problems or displaying emotion, stigma that is powerful in contemporary society. I believe that given the current issues surrounding men's mental health within society, finding a way to encourage open and frank conversation is extremely important. It seems to me that despite all the rhetoric and proposed ideas about how men should open up and talk, the fact that GOOP does not advertise itself as a 'therapy group' or 'self-help group' facilitates its success in doing just that. The prisoners are not officially subscribing to talk about their feelings, it happens completely organically, in their own time due to the informality and tight-knit nature of the GOOP group dynamic. Although specific campaigns have undoubtedly helped people talk about mental health, offering community type settings in prisons may be the way forward in ensuring those more reluctant have an opportunity to talk. This also advocates the need to open up programmes like GOOP for prisoners with more complex issues so they have access to talk rather than being constrained by being deemed 'high risk'.

Furthermore, replicating the community feel achieved by GOOP in other working environments in prisons could serve to harness learning and further

enhance safe and decent settings. Inevitably, with the high number of people in prison currently in England and Wales, this could prove difficult to achieve but perhaps strengthens the argument for a reduction in custodial sentences and an increase in community sentences.

Providing more opportunities to serve sentences in the community also links in to one of the key research findings of trust. Even if more sentences simply involved small periods of time working in the community, this would accentuate the level of trust and responsibility placed upon prisoners during their sentence. It was evident from the prisoners who took part in this research study that they appreciated the trust given to them by the horticulture staff and that this rendered them feeling more human and not 'just another prisoner'.

Theoretical Implications

As highlighted at the start of this chapter, the main theoretical ideas used throughout the construction of this thesis are Bourdieu's (1980) concepts of habitus, field and capital, theories of deprivation (Sykes, 1958) and importation (Irwin and Cressey, 1962), Connell's (1985) theory of types of masculinity, in particular, hegemonic masculinity and theories relating to biophilia (Wilson, 1984) and biophilic design (Kellert et al., 2011).

Bourdieu's (1980) concepts of habitus, field and capital have long been used as a framework for social research and this study demonstrates its continuing relevance. Using habitus, field and capital for this research study enabled multiple levels of social interaction and implications to be assessed, as micro and macro findings were interpreted. Not only was GOOP site as a single, social setting analysed but following the capital element of Bourdieu's work meant that wider conclusions could be drawn within the broader context of the prison system. Further, applying the concept of field to the GOOP site, meant that important meanings derived from the physical and geographical setting, enhancing the pertinence of symbolic interactionism as a theoretical perspective. As someone who has now completed a piece of social research, I would strongly advocate the use of Bourdieu's work as a way of considering multiple levels of a social environment.

Despite being classic texts within prison research, it is still pertinent to reflect on the importance of both the deprivation (Sykes, 1958) and importation theories (Irwin and Cressey, 1962). It is clear that prisoners struggled with the pains of imprisonment with frequent references to missing family, lack of food resources, loss of paternal behaviours and frustration with the criminal justice system. However, many prisoners who detailed their complex backgrounds displayed characteristics and behaviours that were imported from an outside, pre-prison environment. Notably, several prisoners suggested that when they attended work on GOOP they did not feel like they were in prison and, consequently, regained a sense of liberation. It can be concluded that by creating a non-traditional prison setting even behind the prison walls, positive behaviours can develop and then be imported to other locations of the prison. This extends the pains of imprisonment work suggesting prisoners have the ability to alter behaviours and import positive actions within a prison environment, and perhaps even upon release.Turning to Connell's (1985) iconic theory of masculinities, this research has shown that despite being over 30 years since its introduction it is still extremely relevant and resonant in describing and defining masculine behaviours. The hegemonic, complicit or 'ideal' masculine man is very much a key player in prison cultures and is something that, despite the presence of horticulture, prisoners seek to adhere to or become. Prisoners, as hegemonic men, still reject or dissociate themselves from other types of men, for example, subordinate or marginalised others, in a bid to maintain their status. However, the range of prisoners that engaged with GOOP, including those with mental health problems, often considered weak, were accepted and the hegemony shifted somewhat. Specifically to a prison subculture, Connell's description of a marginalised man fits the position of sex offenders, and male prisoners of GOOP became complicit in their masculine actions when disregarding suspected sex offenders. This demonstrates the accuracy in which Connell's work can continued to be used masculinities research, particularly in group settings. Hultman's (2014) recent research, however, exploring the definition of the 'eco-man' and eco-masculinities, was something that was difficult to place within Connell's work. Although hegemony and marginalised masculinities were prevalent on GOOP, the most-common behaviours were associated with a reduction in aggression and violence, displays of acceptance

and a willingness to adapt to a horticultural job role, perhaps even as a future career. In terms of this research, Connell's definitions are still very much pertinent but I would suggest could be updated or combined with new work to remain contemporary to changing sub-cultures.

Finally, the connection to natural, green environments in extremely important in horticulture work and research studies, which justifies the prominence in which the biophilic theory (Wilson,1984) and biophilic design (Kellert et al., 2011) have been referred to. Whilst Wilson's definition of biophilia is over thirty years old, it appears as though it has largely gone under the radar within many industries and is something that not many are aware of, despite it, in reality, always existing. The increased urbanisation and industrialisation of communities over the past 20 years, evidences an ignorance for the benefits of biophilia (Gollin et al., 2016). In contrast, as concerns rise over CO_2 emissions and architects seek to address these issues in line with industrial and urban development, the biophilic idea has gradually become germane.

In relation to this research study, the contrast between the urban prison design and the beauty of a horticulture site, highlights the importance of biophilic design and its position in current research. The number of prisoners who discussed their positive wellbeing in relation to the aesthetics of the GOOP site evidences the need for further use of biophilic theories, particularly in prisons where nature and green spaces are often sparse.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the research, explaining the three key research concepts of hypermasculinity, horticulture and mental wellbeing. An autobiographical explanation of how I reached the point of completing a PhD is provided along with a rationale for why this particular research project is relevant within the current body of research.

Chapter 2 provided a contemporary exploratory literature review of the literature to discuss the current research and debates surrounding each part of this research study. The chapter is divided into three sections: health, masculinities

and horticulture, each offering a contextual picture of the gaps in the research and how this study aimed to address the issues.

Chapter 3 outlined how the research was conducted including accessing prison sites, the security protocols, ethics and training that lead to data collection. Further, the underpinning lenses are discussed, using Crotty's (2009) theoretical framework to provide structure with regards to epistemology, ontology, theoretical perspectives, methodology and data collection and analysis methods. The chapter also introduced the work of Bourdieu (1980), which provided another significant theoretical lens for the research. Personal reflections of the research process are also offered throughout this chapter, considering challenges, obstacles and feelings.

Chapter 4 presented the findings from the research, including the exploratory and main data collection periods. The chapter outlines the methods utilised, the participants recruited and what was learnt from the exploratory study. The chapter is split into three sections: The Small GOOP Community, Subcultural Masculinities and Changing Lives. Descriptions and vignettes of observations are offered to build a picture of what life on GOOP is like and direct quotes from in-depth interviews are utilised to support the findings.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings highlighted in Chapter 4, with reference to the work of Bourdieu and other overarching theoretical lenses. The discussion focussed on the three key themes (Small GOOP Community, Subcultural Masculinities and Changing Lives) and explored sub-themes such as the small nature of GOOP, group dynamics, trust, gender interactions and beliefs within horticulture, rehabilitative culture, biophilic environments and specific mental health conditions. Conclusions are drawn from the discussions to highlight the role GOOP has within a societal prison context and specifically as a sub-culture at the research site.

Key Findings

Over the course of this research project, a number of key findings have arisen which I believe are the most significant messages to be taken from the study. It

is clear that participating in a small, horticulture project allows prisoners to build positive relationships with fellow prisoners and staff, learn to confide in one another and develop trust-based friendships. The prevalence of potential harmful tools and equipment in a horticulture job, means that trust works both ways and it is a given that this is how one will behave whilst on the job.

Further, many prisoners referred to their mental wellbeing improving whilst working on GOOP, with several being removed from ACCT documents over the course of the data collection. Prisoners were also comfortable in talking and opening up about their mental health, including complex issues such as schizophrenia, OCD and bipolar disorder. It is widely acknowledged that horticultural project enhance mental wellbeing and this research has only furthered this evidence.

Finally, the interface between horticulture, hypermasculinities and mental wellbeing, have been thoroughly investigated, to the best of my knowledge, for the first time. Hypermasculine performances in prisons through violence, gangs and aggression are prevalent but involvement in GOOP did not present such behaviours. The environment was relaxed, respectful and quiet in comparison to how prison is normally experienced, meaning it can be confidently concluded that GOOP helps to reduce damaging masculine behaviours, meanwhile men can still healthily maintain some form of masculinity along with experiencing enhancement in mental wellbeing.

Concluding Thoughts

The summer of 2017, on GOOP at the prison site, will always be a memorable and humbling experience. A personal motivation to contribute research to an important and contemporary concern for health inequalities prompted me to complete this research study. As a result, the diligent and hardworking approach that I have applied to this study has shaped who I am, now I have reached the end of the PhD journey. My opinions have changed, my underlying morals have been enhanced and my knowledge of prisons has increased dramatically. I have also picked up a few ideas of how to design a lovely garden one day!

As a result of hearing so many derogatory opinions of prisons, crime and punishment, this has motivated me even more to seek a career within the sector. It has become obvious to me throughout the journey that public opinion of prisons needs to change in order for prisoners to be a priority for future governments. Promotion of prisoner success stories, engagement with local communities and sharing impressive creations with wider populations could be imperative in shifting attitudes. When I have described the designs of innovative gardens or mentioned awards that have been received, people have been shocked that such activities are possible in a prison. By changing public perceptions this could prompt a governmental agenda towards prison legislation to improve and become more economically and culturally viable.

I have been proud that I have remained close to my pre-prison morals and that exposure to such environment has not hardened me or resulted in complete disgust of people because of their crimes. I've learnt that there is definitely no such thing as a stereotypical prisoner; they are all individuals, with families, friends, talents and interests and have as much right to justice and good health as anyone else, whilst they serve their sentence. As a result, I will continue to fly the flag for prisoners' rights post-PhD.

In terms of the future, I hope that this thesis can make even a small contribution towards horticultural projects within prisons and, if so it will feel all the more worthwhile. I hope that others decide to pursue research or careers within the prison service and witness positivity, willingness to change and creativity, but moreover enjoy the experience as much as I have. Overall though I hope prisons gradually creep up the list of priorities for future governments because I believe spending time and resources in this area could, long-term, be rewarding for all in society.

Summary

This chapter has provided overall conclusions from the research study. Firstly, the potential limitations and strengths of the study are acknowledged and discussed, with emphasis on the single site study and ethnographic studies. Secondly, the main research findings are outlined, the contribution to

knowledge within prison research and practice is discussed and future recommendations are provided. This included the impact of small groups, the role of staff, reducing masculinities, rehabilitative opportunities, biophilic design and specific horticultural activities for mental health problems.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. GOOP Site Plan
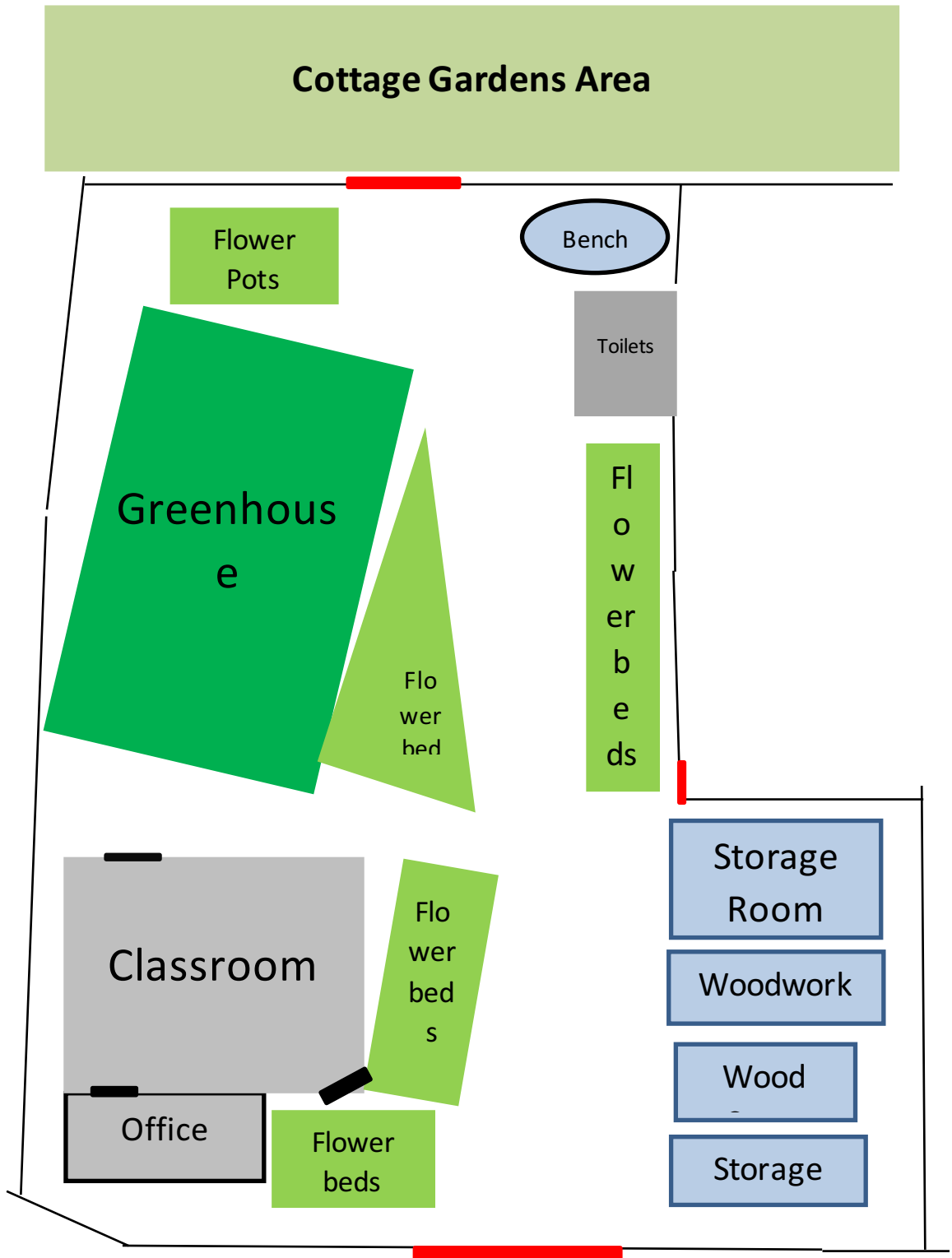
Appendix 2. Letter of Support/Approval – Deputy Director of Custody

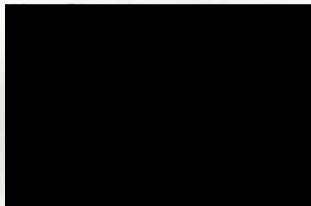**National Offender
Management Service**

National Offender Management Service
Public Sector Prisons – North West
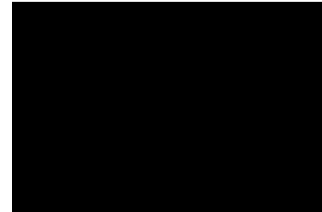
27 April 2016

Dear Whom This May Concern,

I can confirm my support for Florence Seymour's PhD research to take place within the Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP) project at ▮▮▮▮▮▮ GOOP is well established in the North West and having a significant positive impact on rehabilitation and prisoner wellbeing, including marked reduction in self harm amongst prisoners involved with it. I strongly support this research as I am keen to maximise the potential that GOOP offers.

The team at UCLan report will on progress directly to myself as and when required and more formally at quarterly intervals as part of the wider governance procedures for GOOP. Should any issues arise systems are in place to ensure a swift response.

Appendix 3. Letter of Support/Approval – Governing Governor

Ministry of
JUSTICE
National Offender
Management Service

HM PRISON
SERVICE
Public Sector Prisons

Date: 18 April 2016

Ref: 16.038

To Whom This May Concern,

I am writing to confirm my support for Florence Seymour's PhD research taking place within the Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP) project here at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

The wider UCLan team report on progress directly to myself as and when required and more firmly at quarterly intervals as part of the overall governance for GOOP.

Should any issues arise systems are in place to ensure a swift response.

Yours faithfully,
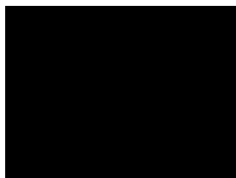
INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Bronze

Appendix 4. Participant Information Sheet – Prisoners

PhD Research Project – College of Health and Wellbeing

Horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing: the connections in a male prison context.

Research Project Information Sheet for Participants - Prisoners

What is this research about?

This research is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) in the North West of England which is investigating how to reduce health inequalities within the area. Specifically, this research project will be exploring the connections between horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing with participants enrolled on the Greener on the Outside: For Prisons (GOOP).

How will this research be carried out?

Prisoners and horticultural staff members will be observed and interviewed in order to collect relevant data about the project title. Observation will involve a researcher being present at GOOP during mornings over a period of 4 months. The researcher will participate in horticultural activities, join in conversations and ask questions for clarification purposes whilst participants are completing daily activities as usual. Any questions asked maybe used in the results and are likely to involve relation to male identity, mental wellbeing and experiences in engaging with horticultural activities.

Individual in-depth interviews will take place with GOOP participants and staff following the observation period. It is estimated that each interview will take between 45-60 minutes and, similarly, questions will be based around male identity, mental wellbeing and experiences in a horticultural setting in prison. Interviews allow a deeper exploration of feelings, emotions and experiences whilst participating in a horticultural setting.

Will my identity protected during the study and can I withdraw?

Ethical approval has been granted by both the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to complete this research project. However, it is imperative that your own, personal consent is provided therefore you will be asked to sign an individual consent form prior to data collection.

Confidentiality and full anonymity is assured for the duration of the research unless any illegal activity is disclosed, participants are suspected of being under threat of personal safety/harm (should such incidence occur, the appropriate prison staff would be notified).

Assuming your consent is provided, the interview will be digitally recorded. It is expected that the interview will last between 45 and 60 minutes.

You have the right to withdraw from this research study at any point, whether that be during observational periods or during the interview stage, up until 30/09/17 (the expected data collection completion date). Any data collected involving you will be destroyed and dismissed from data analysis/results. To withdraw from the study you can inform the researcher during the data collection period or make contact through the horticultural staff member. Transcription of interviews will be completed by an internal transcriber at UCLan who will also follow all confidentiality and data protection agreements. If you would like a copy of your recorded interview transcript, this can be provided on request.

Your name and data will be kept on an electronic register in an encrypted file, on a secure UCLan hard drive which will only be accessible to the researcher. Once the research project is complete, your details will be deleted from this hard drive. Copies of interview transcripts will be kept in a locked in a filing cabinet in a locked office at UCLan. These will be kept on file for up to 5 years and will not be attributable to you personally. After this they will be shredded and disposed of in confidential waste.

If you decide not to participate in the evaluation, this decision will not affect your participation in GOOP as a prison education project and you will still be able to attend your regular session whilst the researcher is present.

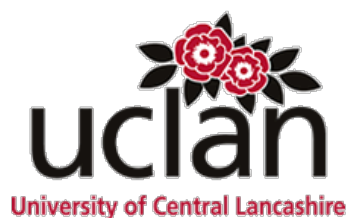**What are the risks and benefits to taking part?**

The researcher has not identified any risks to participation but should any sensitive subjects arise during conversation, the prison service has access to relevant supportive services. Overall, it is expected that exploring experiences related to horticulture can be therapeutic and beneficial to individuals.

What is the long-term impact of the research?

This research is a PhD project which requires the completion of a thesis, which is how the results of the research will be presented. It is expected that this will be available by 31/12/18. Furthermore, any findings may contribute to future research regarding horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing and affect how GOOP delivers the project in future.

Contact for Information and/or Complaints:

For further information, queries or complaints about any aspect of the research project, contact should be made through ████████, ████████ or ████████ within the horticultural department at ████████.

PhD Research Project – College of Health and Wellbeing

Horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing: the connections in a male prison context.

Research Project Information Sheet for Participants - Staff

What is this research about?

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Confidentiality and full anonymity is assured for the duration of the research unless any illegal activity is disclosed, participants are suspected of being under threat of personal safety/harm (should such incidence occur, the appropriate prison staff would be notified).

Assuming your consent is provided, the interview will be digitally recorded. It is expected that the interview will last between 45 and 60 minutes.

You have the right to withdraw from this research study at any point, whether that be during observational periods or during the interview stage, up until 30/09/17 (the expected data collection completion date). Any data collected involving you will be destroyed and dismissed from data analysis/results. To withdraw from the study you can inform the researcher during the data collection period or make contact through the horticultural staff member. Transcription of interviews will be completed by an internal transcriber at UCLan who will also follow all confidentiality and data protection agreements. If you would like a copy of your recorded interview transcript, this can be provided on request.

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If you decide not to participate in the evaluation, this decision will not affect your day-to-day work on GOOP.

What are the risks and benefits to taking part?

The researcher has not identified any risks to participation but should any sensitive subjects arise during conversation, the prison service has access to relevant supportive services. Overall, it is expected that exploring experiences related to horticulture can be therapeutic and beneficial to individuals.

What is the long-term impact of the research?

This research is a PhD project which requires the completion of a thesis, which is how the results of the research will be presented. It is expected that this will be available by 31/12/18. Furthermore, any findings may contribute to future research regarding horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing and affect how GOOP delivers the project in future.

Contact for Information and/or Complaints:

For further information, queries or complaints about any aspect of the research project, contact should be made through:

Mark Dooris (Director of Studies) – MTDooris@uclan.ac.uk - +44(0)1772 893760
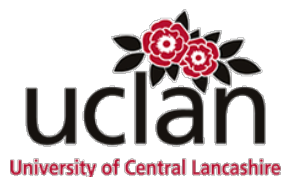
PhD Research Project – College of Health and Wellbeing

Horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing: the connections in a male prison context.

Participant Consent Form – Prisoners

Please mark below with an 'X' if you agree with the statement.

I have read and understood the research project information sheet and have been provided with the opportunity to ask any questions.	
I understand that I am able to withdraw from the research project at any point up until the end of the data collection period (30/09/17) after which date the finding will begin to be analysed and published.	
I understand that if withdrawal takes place any data related to me will be destroyed and removed from the final results and this will not affect my involvement in the GOOP/horticulture project work.	
I understand that any data related to me will be anonymised and any details that may identify me will not be included in any report, results or publications.	
I understand, accept and allow the individual in-depth interview to be digitally recorded with a voice recorder.	
I understand that all data collected by the researcher will be held in confidence and confidentiality will not be breached, unless any illegal activities, threats, disclosure of sensitive information or concerns of self-harm are raised. (At this point a member of custodial staff would be contacted as appropriate and relevant information would be disclosed).	
I confirm that I am taking part in the research project of my own free will.	

Print Name	Sign Name	Date

PhD Research Project – College of Health and Wellbeing

Horticulture, male identity and mental wellbeing: the connections in a male prison context.

Participant Consent Form – Staff

Please mark below with an 'X' if you agree with the statement.

I have read and understood the research project information sheet and have been provided with the opportunity to ask any questions.	
I understand that I am able to withdraw from the research project at any point up until the end of the data collection period (30/09/17) after which date the finding will begin to be analysed and published.	
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I understand, accept and allow the individual in-depth interview to be digitally recorded with a voice recorder.	
I confirm that I am taking part in the research project of my own free will.	

Print Name	Sign Name	Date

Appendix 8. Interview Schedule and Notes

Checklist of topics to cover:

- Horticulture experience

- Mental wellbeing

- Male behaviour/all-male setting

- Participant's involvement on the Japanese garden

- Incident at healthcare garden yesterday

Researcher: Can you tell me about your experience on horticulture since being at HMP…

Participant:

- *Escape from wings*

- *Relaxing*

- *Make friends*

Researcher: You mentioned that you feel being on horticulture is an escape from the wings; can you explain what you mean here?

Participant:

- *Violence*

- *Drugs*

- *Gangs*

Researcher: Why don't those negative behaviours occur on horticulture do you think?

Participant:

- Calm

- Respect for the environment and staff

- Different to being in prison