



Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot evaluation

Learning and Skills Council

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Contents

1 Summary	1
2 Introduction	4
3 Background and progress of the pilot	6
4 Regional partnership engagement	11
5 Learner eligibility and selection	16
6 Employer engagement	20
7 Apprenticeship support and delivery	25
8 Conclusions and a model for expansion	34

1 | Summary

This report presents the findings from an evaluation of the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot. The evaluation was commissioned by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and undertaken by CFE and our associate Simon Bysshe between February and May 2010, utilising a qualitative approach.

The overall aim of the project was to evaluate the Apprenticeship pilot to date, using the information collected to highlight good practice and lessons learned to inform an initial model which could be developed and piloted further in the Yorkshire and Humber region. This evaluation was formative due to the Apprenticeship pilot being in the early stages of operation and is based upon the work undertaken at HMP Moorland to date. This report considers the success of the set-up and partnership work in the pilot so far, sets out identified good practice and lessons learned and also sought to:

- > Map key processes, such as: learner eligibility and selection criteria; assessment processes; and support and delivery processes which feature in the pilot and existing literature;
- > Evaluate employer feedback on the pilot initiative to inform improvements to engage future employers;
- > Evaluate regional partnership engagement and support from NAS, HM Prison Service, the National Probation Services and training providers; evaluate regional NOMS (National Offender Management Service) engagement and links with the wider Reducing Re-offending through Learning and Skills Pathway;
- > Evaluate the roles of partners and individuals, such as the level of employer engagement and commitment to staff development, provider responsiveness, and learner's personal commitment; and
- > Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot to date, areas for improvement and any barriers identified.

The key purpose of the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot was to test how such a scheme might work and to develop a model for the Yorkshire and Humber region to enable rollout. This evaluation will therefore inform the further development of the Apprenticeship pilot in the Yorkshire and Humber region and beyond. As part of the evaluation a workshop was held with key partners to discuss the development and expansion of the Apprenticeship pilot and the model presented in Chapter 8 is informed by these discussions.

Context

The new coalition Government is committed to significantly expanding Apprenticeships and has pledged to create an additional 100,000 Apprenticeships every year and a £2,000 bonus for each Apprenticeship at a small or medium-sized enterprise. This ongoing commitment to Apprenticeships is re-affirmed by their recent decision to allocate a further £150m to support up to 50,000 additional Apprenticeships at a time when tough decisions and cutbacks are being made elsewhere.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was established in April 2009 with end-to-end responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships within England, and has responsibility for the targets outlined above. The importance of providing offenders with relevant skills and qualifications was reflected in *The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act*, which received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009. The Act highlighted the Labour Government's aim to closely align the education that young offenders receive whilst in custody with that available in the mainstream sector¹.

Following on from the Labour Government's commitment to Apprenticeships and its recommendation to involve offenders and ex-offenders within these schemes, the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot was launched in Yorkshire and Humber in October 2009. The pilot has enabled adults² in HMP Moorland to start their Apprenticeship in Horticulture whilst still in custody. The apprentices are supported by Bishop Burton College and a local employer takes on the apprentice (and the apprentice is then classified as employed) once released from custody.

The funding for this pilot was provided for adult offenders aged between 18 and 24. While Apprenticeships are normally only fully funded up to the age of 18, offenders and ex-offenders come under what used to be termed the 'extended guarantee' enabling funding to be provided to all those under the age of 25 who have been unable to start an Apprenticeship whilst aged 16-18 due to '*a reason beyond their control*'³, this includes a custodial sentence and remand in custody. The recent Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 granted a similar extension in the provision of funding for training offenders and ex-offenders.

Conclusions

The success of this pilot is currently unknown as only one apprentice has been through the scheme so far. Once more offenders have been through the pilot further work should be undertaken to understand the success of the pilot with final amendments made to the model building on further good practice and lessons learned. It is however clear that the high levels of motivation, and indeed passion, of the key individuals involved in this pilot have been vital to its set-up and delivery and has contributed to it being deemed successful by key partners. This commitment has included considerable flexibility, with individuals 'going the extra mile', and working beyond their contractual obligations, to ensure the success of the pilot. The following points summarise the conclusions from this evaluation:

- > The Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot officially began in October 2009. The establishment of the pilot took longer than some stakeholders intended and the delays have been attributed to the change in the sector focus for the scheme from creative industries to Horticulture.
- > The delivery partners have now put all the necessary elements in place to enable the Apprenticeship pilot to take place. However, to date only one offender has been matched with an employer and released from prison and a further five have been identified within the prison as potential apprentices.
- > The low numbers of apprentices that have taken part in the Apprenticeship pilot so far have been attributed to three main reasons: low number of Horticulture employers recruiting in the winter, fewer prisoners working in the Horticulture department in the winter and increased security in the prison.

¹ DCSF 2009 'The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act'
www.dcsf.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsskillschildrenandlearningact/ date accessed 12th February 2010

² Aged 18 - 24

³ LSC Funding Guidance Update 09/10 v4.1

- > The employer event held in September at HMP Moorland was a successful way of engaging employers in the pilot, alongside the training provider and NAS using their existing contacts to inform employers of the opportunity to participate in the initiative. The employers interviewed were generally positive about the scheme and would all consider taking on an apprentice in custody, although they identified a need for enhancements to the support available to the offender on release from prison.
- > The offenders that take part in the pilot have to undergo the same assessment and recruitment procedures as any apprentice wanting to undertake an Apprenticeship. They have to be Apprenticeship ready, have to be assessed by the training provider and have to undergo an interview with a potential employer. The only extra support the offender receives is in relation to any personal problems or difficulties they face on release.
- > The coordination of OLASS provision (within prison) and the Apprenticeship training by the prison should continue as this provides apprentices with extra training which is relevant to the employer they will be working with on release. NOMS should also be engaged strategically to inform the ongoing development of the pilot and as a contributor to any advisory group.
- > A range of support has been provided to the offender in the pilot that embarked on the Apprenticeship. However, this is unlikely to be available to all and a need was identified for a 'through the gate' support worker, who is located within the prison, and has an existing relationship with the offender. In addition to this a case conference should be held between all the key partners prior to the release of an offender.
- > The pilot so far has operated without the provision of additional funding. However, it has largely done so because of the commitment of certain individuals and it is clear that the additional support needs identified for the apprentice would have to be costed into any enhanced piloting/operational model.
- > The pilot also involved initial delivery of the Apprenticeship in prison, so it is currently funded through programme-led Apprenticeship funding. This funding will not be available from 2011, so for delivery to continue within the prison an exception would need to be granted under the new Act or an alternative model would need to be adopted.

These conclusions were reviewed and validated at a stakeholder workshop during the evaluation. This workshop was used to consider and inform the development of the model for the future rollout of the pilot which is outlined in the final chapter of this report. When assessing the success of any subsequent roll-out of the scheme, measures other than traditional Apprenticeship framework completions should be considered, such as reductions in re-offending rates and 'distance travelled' by apprentices. For instance, an approach which considers Social Return on Investment could be used to measure and account for a broader concept of value for money by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits.

2 | Introduction

This section outlines the purpose of the research and the methods used.

CFE were commissioned by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to undertake the evaluation of the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot. This evaluation was undertaken between February 2010 and May 2010, utilising a qualitative approach.

Evaluation aims and objectives

The overall aim of the project was to evaluate the Apprenticeship pilot to date, using the information collected to highlight good practice and lessons learned to inform an initial model which could be developed and piloted further in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Due to the Apprenticeship pilot being in the early stages of operation, this evaluation was formative and based on the work undertaken at HMP Moorland to date. This report considers the success of the set-up of, and partnership working in, the pilot so far and sets out identified good practice and lessons learned. The evaluation also sought to address the following objectives:

- > Map key processes, such as: learner eligibility and selection criteria; assessment processes; and support and delivery processes which feature in the pilot and existing literature;
- > Evaluate employer feedback on the pilot initiative to inform improvements to engage future employers;
- > Evaluate Regional partnership engagement and support from NAS, the prison services, the Probation Services and Training Providers; Evaluate Regional NOMS (National Offender Management Service) engagement and links with the wider Reducing Re-offending through Learning and Skills Pathway;
- > Evaluate the roles of partners and individuals, such as the level of employer engagement and commitment to staff development, provider responsiveness, and learner's personal commitment; and
- > Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot to date, areas for improvement and any barriers identified.

Methodology

This evaluation was undertaken in three main stages and was informed by both secondary desk-based research and primary research including: consultations with employers, stakeholders and learners on the pilot and a workshop with key partners.

Stage one: Desk research and a policy review

Desk based research was undertaken which involved: a review of all relevant documentation surrounding the pilot scheme; and a wider review of relevant research reports and policy literature regarding the training and rehabilitation of offenders and, more specifically, the implementation of an Apprenticeship scheme in this context. It also considered the training and support available to offenders in custody and on their release.

Stage two: Depth interviews with stakeholders, employers and apprentices

Depth interviews were undertaken with key stakeholders who had been involved in the Apprenticeship pilot. Further interviews were also undertaken with stakeholders who had had limited involvement in the pilot. A full list of stakeholders is listed below:

Job role	Organisation
Learner Services Director	National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in Yorkshire and the Humber
Head of Learning and Skills	HMP Moorland
Estates and Biodiversity Manager	HMP Moorland
Education Manager	HMP Moorland
Services to Business Manager	Bishop Burton College
Inclusion Manager, Vulnerable Groups	Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)
Senior Probation Officer	Humberside Probation Trust
Estates and Health and Safety Manager	Apprentice's employer
Regional Partnership Manager	Lantra, Yorkshire and Humber
Business Development Director for Learner Services	National Apprenticeship Service
Team Leader for Offender Skills and Employment	Social Mobility Unit, (BIS)
The Regional Offender Learning Manager	Skills Funding Agency, for Yorkshire and Humber
Performance Manager	Careers Information and Advice Service, Working Links

Table 1: Stakeholder consultees

Interviews were also conducted with two offenders in HMP Moorland who had been accepted onto the Apprenticeship pilot and with five employers in the Horticulture sector, including: one sole trader, one medium sized employer, one large employer and two public sector employers.

The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes and were used to identify: the key processes in the set-up of the pilot including the apprentice eligibility and selection criteria; the assessment, delivery and support processes; employer feedback; areas of strength and weaknesses of the pilot model and lessons which could inform the future development.

Stage three: Workshop to review and validate the evaluation findings

A workshop was held with key partners involved in the Apprenticeship pilot. The aim of the workshop was to discuss and validate the findings from the evaluation and to identify good practice and lessons learned so far. The workshop was also used to design and develop a model for the rollout of an Apprenticeship scheme in prisons in the Yorkshire and Humber region, which is set out in Chapter 8 of this report.

This Report

After this introduction the rest of the report is structured as follows: **Chapter 3:** sets out the background and progress of the pilot, **Chapter 4:** considers the establishment of the partnership, **Chapter 5:** maps the key processes involved in learner eligibility, selection criteria and assessment processes, **Chapter 6:** describes the process of engaging employers within the pilot and employer feedback, **Chapter 7:** sets out the delivery and support processes involved in Apprenticeship pilot and **Chapter 8:** summaries the key messages and offers some conclusions and a proposed model for the future expansion of the Apprenticeship pilot.

3 | Background and progress of the pilot

An outline of the background to the pilot including: key national policy and related research on offender learning; the pilot's aims; its funding and progress to date.

The national policy context

Apprenticeships

The former Labour Government recognised Apprenticeships as a critical way of achieving the aim for the UK to be a world leader in skills by 2020 and their ambition was to expand Apprenticeships. They had anticipated around 360,000 starts by 2020, with an aspiration that one in five young people will be undertaking an Apprenticeship by 2020. The Labour Government's strategy for achieving this was set out in *World Class Apprenticeships: Unlocking Talent, Building Skills for All* (2008) which outlined Apprenticeships in particular as one of the principal training routes for young people.

The new coalition Government considers Apprenticeships to be a vital part of their wider programme to get Britain working and they are committed to significantly expanding Apprenticeships; having pledged to create an additional 100,000 Apprenticeships every year. This ongoing commitment to Apprenticeships is re-affirmed by their recent announcement to allocate a further £150m to support up to 50,000 additional Apprenticeships at a time when tough decisions and cutbacks are being made elsewhere.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was established in April 2009 with end-to-end responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships within England, and has responsibility for the targets outlined above. The importance of providing offenders with relevant skills and qualifications was also reflected in *The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act*, which received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009. The Act highlighted the Labour Government's aim to closely align the education that young offenders receive whilst in custody with that available in the mainstream sector⁴.

Reducing re-offending

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice. It brings together the HM Prison Service and the National Probation Service to ensure services for offenders are effectively delivered. They are responsible: *'for commissioning and delivering adult offender management services, in custody and in the community, in England and Wales'*⁵. The responsibility to reduce re-offending and the management of offenders is undertaken at a regional level.

NOMS released their five-year strategy in 2006: *'A Five Year Strategy for Protecting the Public and Reducing Re-offending'*⁶. A main component of this was to reduce re-offending

⁴ DCSF 2009 'The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act'
www.dcsf.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsskillschildrenandlearningact/ date accessed 12th February 2010

⁵ Ministry of Justice 'National Offender Management Service' 2009 www.justice.gov.uk/about/noms.htm date accessed 16th February 2010

⁶ HM Government 2006 'A Five Year Strategy for Protecting the Public and Reducing Re-offending'

through better management. One element of this was to ensure offenders had the skills needed to gain employment. They highlight the importance of engaging with employers to design and deliver programmes for offenders to ensure they have real job opportunities. This includes increasing the number of schemes that work with offenders whilst in prison and include potential employers (as with the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot).

NOMS, working alongside other departments, have made a commitment to reducing re-offending through skills and employment. Following a consultation phase, the Government published their plans to help offenders integrate into the community in the report: *'Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment: Next Steps'*⁷. Reducing re-offending was set out in the document as being important to *'protect citizens from crime'*⁸ through ensuring offenders become *'productive members of society'*⁹ and to reduce the cost of re-offending.

Barriers to providing education in prison

The National Skills Forum has recently released their findings from a six-month inquiry which investigated how disadvantaged groups are excluded from vocational learning and training opportunities¹⁰. The National Skills Forum found that not enough is currently being done to help tackle a lack of skills amongst offenders.

They identified a range of barriers to offenders undertaking education and training in prison including: courses being longer than sentences, a lack of incentives to undertake training instead of work, the transfer of prisoners preventing course completion, prison regimes clashing with training times and a lack of access to IT equipment. To increase education opportunities in prison the Forum made a number of recommendations which include:¹¹

- > making participation in education and training part of the daily prison regime and part of the sentencing process;
- > ensuring careers advisors are fully aware of all opportunities available and fully promote these;
- > exploring the expansion of release on temporary licence for work experience and work trials; and
- > setting-up an employer network where employers can share best practice in recruiting and employing ex-offenders.

Background to the Apprenticeship pilot

Following on from the Labour Government's commitment to Apprenticeships and its recommendation to involve offenders and ex-offenders within these schemes, an Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot was launched in Yorkshire and Humber in October 2009. The pilot has enabled adults¹² in HMP Moorland to start their Apprenticeship training in Horticulture whilst still in custody. The apprentices are supported by Bishop Burton College and a local employer takes on the apprentice (and the apprentice is then classified as employed) once released from custody.

⁷ HM Government 2006 'Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment: Next Steps'

⁸ Ibid, p.5.

⁹ Ibid, p.5.

¹⁰ National Skills Forum 'Background to the inquiry' 2010 www.skillsandinclusion.org.uk/background-to-the-inquiry.php date accessed 3rd February 2010

¹¹ National Skills Forum 'Background to the inquiry' 2010 www.skillsandinclusion.org.uk/background-to-the-inquiry.php date accessed 19th May 2010

¹² Aged 18 - 24

The Apprenticeship pilot specifically for offenders was established in response to a number of key drivers and local circumstances. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in the Yorkshire and Humber region was involved in the 'Engage'¹³ Development Partnership during 2007, which involved piloting and testing a number of projects supporting offenders to increase their skills and improve their employability. This programme was funded through the EQUAL European Community Initiative, with match funding from the LSC and Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS).¹⁴ HMP Moorland Open prison was involved in this pilot, building upon their prior experience of activities aimed at enhancing and promoting the employability of offenders.

Following their involvement in this programme, HMP Moorland made contact with Higher Rhythm – a not-for-profit company based in Doncaster that provides professional industry-level recording services for clients.¹⁵ Through their contract with Higher Rhythm, the prison was able to engage offenders in the Creative Sector, which resulted in them producing their own music. The aim was to encourage offender's to pursue an interest that could enhance their employability on release from prison. This particular project was reported to be popular, with demand resulting in waiting lists for those in custody seeking to get involved.

As a result of both the success of the Engage programme and the prison's work with Higher Rhythm, representatives from both HMP Moorland and the LSC initiated discussions around the development of an Apprenticeship pilot. Discussions first considered an Apprenticeship within the creative sector, with Rotherham College involved in the delivery of the framework. However, this idea was not pursued because of difficulties engaging employers; due to the prevalence of small employers within this sector that were not recruiting as a result of the recession.

It was subsequently recommended that an Apprenticeship could be provided within Horticulture. This sector was chosen not only because of the Horticulture training facilities within the prison but also because there were a range of jobs available within this sector in the region. HMP Moorland also had an established relationship with Bishop Burton College¹⁶, which has a range of employer contacts within the Horticulture industry and this enabled them to offer the vocational work-based element of the Apprenticeship scheme.

Stakeholders felt that, so long as resources are available, most Apprenticeship frameworks are flexible enough to be delivered within such a prison setting, although consideration would need to be given to the suitability of some frameworks for reformed offenders. Whilst all prisons have training facilities, these differ between individual prisons and the facilities that are available do somewhat dictate the Apprenticeship frameworks that can be delivered. This was highlighted by stakeholders; especially in the case of high-skilled Apprenticeships due to the equipment required:

I think you'd find it a little bit difficult to deliver an Apprenticeship in land-based engineering, for example, because you wouldn't have the high tech equipment [in the prison] to deliver that'

(Stakeholder)

The change in sector focus has led to some time delays in starting the Apprenticeship pilot; however, the selection of a sector is important and should be given ample consideration if the pilot were to be extended or expanded to other locations in the future.

¹³ http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/Lsc/National/281527_Equal_ENG_proof6A.pdf

¹⁴ <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-engageevaluationreport-sep08.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://www.higherrhythm.co.uk/>

¹⁶ <http://www.bishopburton.ac.uk/>

Aim of the pilot

The overall aim of the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot was to test delivery approaches and inform the development of a model for the rest of the Yorkshire and Humber region. The Apprenticeship pilot sought to provide relevant training and employment opportunities to offenders nearing the end of their sentences who have been identified as having the ability and interest to successfully retain employment in Horticulture on release from prison. As a result of providing offenders with both training and employment upon release, it was hoped that this would have a long-term impact on their offending and would help to break the vicious cycle ex-offenders often find themselves in when they are unable to find employment following their release from prison.

Funding for Apprenticeships

From April 2010, the LSC's role in funding adult learners is now managed by the new Skills Funding Agency. NAS sits within the Skills Funding Agency and is responsible for ensuring that this funding process is smooth and consistent, with minimum complexity for those involved in delivering Apprenticeships. NAS has a national team and nine regional teams, focusing on Employer Services, Learner Services and its web-based Apprenticeship vacancies system.

Apprenticeship training is fully funded by the government for apprentices aged 16-18 and part funded for apprentices aged 19 and over, with employers asked to contribute around 50 per cent of the training costs. However there are some exceptions, with full funding being provided in instances where the apprentice is under the age of 25 and has been unable to start an Apprenticeship before this time due to '*a reason beyond their control*'¹⁷. This includes a custodial sentence or remand in custody. In all circumstances employers are responsible for paying the apprentice's wage. The recent Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 grants a similar extension in the provision of funding for training offenders and ex-offenders.

While the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 states that "*a person (the apprentice) undertakes to work for another (the "employer")*" under an Apprenticeship agreement.¹⁸ This has not always been a core stipulation in government-funding. Programme-Led Apprenticeships (PLAs) were introduced in 2003 and were fully funded by the Learning and Skills Council. PLAs were designed for learners unable to find employment opportunities. It allowed them to undertake some initial apprenticeship training before progressing into an employer-led Apprenticeship.¹⁹ At present the Apprenticeship pilot utilises Programme-Led Apprenticeship funding as the Apprenticeship begins whilst the offenders is still in custody.

Funding the pilot

Following their establishment in April 2009, the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) took an active interest in the development of the pilot; ensuring necessary funding was available for the pilot to take place. The Apprenticeship pilot has therefore been funded in the same way as any other NAS Apprenticeship scheme. It has not required any exceptional funding, which key partners initially anticipated could be a barrier to the establishment of the pilot. The funding for this pilot is provided for adult offenders aged between 18 and 24 through the 'extended guarantee'.

¹⁷ LSC Funding Guidance Update 09/10 v4.1

¹⁸ Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) (c.22) Part 1/Chapter 1/Section 32

¹⁹ Skills Commission (2009) Progression through apprenticeships: The final report of the Skills Commission's Inquiry into apprenticeships. P27

Whilst no additional funding was required to cover the costs of delivering the pilot, it was initially felt that there would be a requirement to access funding to cover the additional support requirements of offenders on the pilot after leaving prison. Additional funding was secured by NAS. However, when some of the key partners were consulted support mechanisms that were already in place (as for all offenders) were deemed appropriate to provide ex-offenders with the support they needed after they leave prison. Therefore the extra funding was not used for this pilot and the work that has been undertaken to date has not resulted in any direct costs. Although some partners have invested a significant amount of their organisations time into the pilot; those consulted as part of this evaluation feel that in the future this time could be reduced as many of the issues have now been *'bottomed out'*.

Progress to date

The delivery partners have put all the necessary elements in place to enable the Apprenticeship pilot to take place. However, to date only one offender has been matched with an employer and released from prison. This individual has faced a range of personal barriers and is currently not taking part in the Apprenticeship. He did take part for six months and it has been stated that there is still the opportunity for him to return to the Apprenticeship at a later date. A further five offenders within the prison have been identified as suitable to take part in the Apprenticeship pilot. However, they have not been assessed yet by the training provider to identify whether, or not, they are 'Apprenticeship ready'.

The low numbers that have taken part in the Apprenticeship pilot so far have been due to three main reasons. The first is that, over the winter, Horticulture employers are less likely to take on apprentices as there is insufficient work to undertake; stakeholders suggested that in the spring/summer this would increase and that more apprentices would be able to undertake the Apprenticeship pilot. Secondly, also due largely to seasonal issues, the number of individuals working within Horticulture in the prison was said to be lower in winter than in the summer, and the number of offenders working in the Horticulture Department should now increase enabling more offenders to be assessed for the Apprenticeship. Thirdly, it was also noted that security changes within the prison (in possible anticipation of a change in the category of offenders they can accommodate) has led to a reduction in the number of inmates working within the department.

Summary

The Apprenticeship pilot has been developed in HMP Moorland due to their previous involvement in programmes that have enhanced the employability of offenders in custody. Although the pilot has experienced a time delay in starting the pilot has now selected the correct sector for HMP Moorland and the region, which is important for the success of any Apprenticeship scheme.

So far the set-up for the Apprenticeship pilot is complete with all the necessary mechanisms in place which has been undertaken with no additional funding; however additional support needs have been identified which could require extra funding in the future. Up to now one apprentice has been released from custody and a further five have been identified within the prison as potential apprentices.

4 | Regional partnership engagement

This section outlines the roles of the key partners involved in establishing and delivering the Apprenticeship pilot and evaluates their commitment and responsiveness.

This section provides an overview of the partnership that established the pilot and summarises their key roles and responsibilities during its delivery. It discusses how the partnership has worked and its effectiveness to date.

Key partners involved

There have been a number of key partners involved in the set-up, development and delivery of the Offenders in Custody Apprenticeship pilot (as outlined in Figure 1 below). Alongside these key partners other organisations have been engaged in the pilot at various stages.

While all Apprenticeships involve an apprentice, employer, work-based training provider and NAS, this pilot provides the offenders with an extended partnership, which also includes the prison and the National Probation Service. As a consequence, offenders are able to start their Apprenticeship while they are still in prison and partners work together to ensure that the apprentice is matched with an appropriate employer while they are still in prison and receive the support they require when they are released.

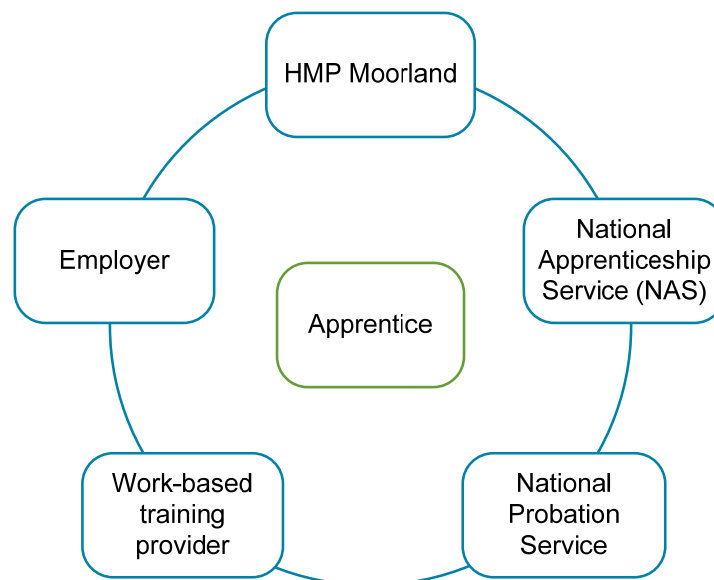


Figure 1: Key stakeholders involved in the set-up, development and delivery of the Apprenticeship pilot

A number of organisations have been involved in the set-up and delivery of the Apprenticeship pilot and within some of these a number of individuals have been involved. The next section outlines the role that the key partners have played in the pilot starting with a summary of the roles and responsibilities of each (outlined in Table 2 overleaf).

Key partner's roles and responsibilities

Organisation	Role	Key responsibilities
National Apprenticeship Service	Leads on both strategic and operational elements of the pilot as well as providing the necessary funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Initiation and set-up of regular meetings. > Ensuring action points are delivered to specified timescales. > Ensuring the Apprenticeship pilot meets the necessary funding criteria. > Employer engagement.
HMP Moorland	Select offenders to take part in the Apprenticeship scheme and to provide additional training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Selection of apprentices. > Delivery of key/functional skills as well as useful 'bolt-on' qualifications. > Monitoring of apprentices' progress while in prison. > Provides apprentice with relevant support and guidance while in prison (and in some instances once they have left prison).
Work-based training provider	Delivery of Apprenticeship framework and engagement with employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Matches apprentice to appropriate employer. > Assessor meets with apprentice one day a week to deliver and assess the knowledge and competency-based elements of the qualification.
National Probation Service	Oversees the welfare of offenders upon release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Helps to secure accommodation for the apprentice. > Provides support and guidance with employment and training. > Provides support and guidance with any personal issues which arise following the apprentices release.
Employer	Provides employment and work-based training to the apprentice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pays the apprentice's wage. > Provides the necessary work-based training. > Provides the apprentice with a day off work each week to attend college.

Table 2: Summary of the roles and responsibilities of key partnership members

Learning and Skills Council (LSC)/National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

Representatives from the LSC were involved from the onset of the project, mainly taking a strategic role. One representative in particular took a proactive role in leading the project, ensuring all partners were engaged, attending regular meetings and ensuring action points were agreed and taken forward. Following the introduction of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and the dissolution of the LSC from April 2010, NAS have now taken over in leading both

the strategic and operational elements of the pilot. The LSC were involved in engaging wider partners in the Apprenticeship pilot and NAS have been involved in employer engagement.

HMP Moorland Closed Prison

HMP Moorland is a complex split-site prison located on the outskirts of Doncaster. HMP Moorland comprises Moorland Closed, which is a Category C Training Establishment and Moorland Open prison; the two sites are located approximately four miles apart. The Closed prison holds approximately 457 adults and 325 young offenders. The 2009 annual report²⁰ for the Moorland Closed prison highlighted the success of the prison due to prisoners' achievements in qualifications and accreditations. The prison has recently introduced new qualifications and diplomas including literacy and numeracy skills and it offers courses in waste management, brickwork, joinery and music. Moorland's closed prison has been responsible for co-ordinating the Apprenticeship pilot. Within the prison itself a number of key individuals have been involved:

- > **The Head of Learning and Skills** plays an important role in ensuring that individuals within the prison work together for the benefit of the apprentice. Part of this role is aided through also having responsibility for resettlement within the prison. This has facilitated communication between the various departments resulting in effective team work. In many instances, individuals have voluntarily been involved in undertaking tasks above and beyond their contractual job descriptions.
- > **The Education Manager (employed by The Manchester College)** has the role of managing the provision of education and skills to offenders as part of the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS). This has involved ensuring that prisoners have the level of education required for them to be eligible to take part in the Apprenticeship pilot as well as providing useful 'bolt-on' qualifications which are undertaken alongside Apprenticeship delivery. Trainers from The Manchester College also provide the functional/key skills elements of the Horticulture Apprenticeship i.e. numeracy and literacy training.
- > **The Estates and Biodiversity Manager** has responsibility for all Horticulture activities within the closed and open prison and has been responsible for selecting apprentices to take part in the pilot. However, the role taken by this particular manager has gone well beyond this remit. He has been involved in the strategic aspects of the pilot and is involved in the day-to-day operations such as: selecting apprentices and monitoring their progress, which can involve intervening where issues arise. This manager has also been in contact with the apprentice that has been released and has been assisting other key partners where issues have arisen following the prisoner's release.

Work-based training provider – Bishop Burton College

The Services to Business Manager at Bishop Burton College was approached by the Estates and Biodiversity Manager at HMP Moorland to become involved in the delivery of the Apprenticeship pilot. The college was ideally placed to fulfil this role as it is: local to the prison; can deliver Apprenticeships anywhere in the Yorkshire and Humber region; and is a specialist land-based college, delivering Apprenticeships across a range of subject areas including Horticulture, Agriculture, Equine and Animal Care. The Services to Business Manager at the college was involved in strategic discussions around the set-up and delivery of the Apprenticeship pilot as well as being an integral role in engaging employers and matching them with potential apprentices. In terms of delivering the work-based training to the apprentices, this role is taken by an assessor employed by Bishop Burton College.

For providers who are delivering the Apprenticeship training it was stated by stakeholders that there were risks involved in them taking part in such as scheme. It was felt that success rates may be lower for this group of people and that this could affect their success rates and

²⁰ IMB Annual Report HMP/YOI Moorland Open and Closed 1st March 2008 – 28th February 2009

Minimum Level of Performance. It was felt that Ofsted should take into consideration this group of learners when assessing providers.

National Probation Service

The National Probation Service is responsible for the supervision of offenders in the community and is able to provide offenders with support on their release, which includes seeking to help them secure appropriate accommodation, employment and training outside of prison. All prisoners who are given a custodial sentence of 12 months or more will serve part of their sentence in prison. They are then released on licence and supervised by probation; those who have committed serious or dangerous offences will have to go to a parole board hearing where it will be decided if they can be released early on licence or not²¹. On release, offenders are given a set of conditions which they must meet or they could risk being recalled to prison. Licence conditions are designed to reduce the risk to the public and can include²²: counselling, drug treatment, restrictions on where they can live or restrictions on who they contact.

The Senior Probation Officer for the Humberside Probation Trust was invited to attend meetings regarding the pilot, prior to the release of the first prisoner involved in the scheme. At this point, the set-up phase had been completed and this involvement was to establish what additional help and support would be required when the offender was released.

Employer

The employer is responsible for providing the apprentice with employment following their release from prison. This employment enables them to complete their Apprenticeship through gaining relevant work-based experience. As part of their training, the employer either provides the apprentice with day-release to attend the college or a trainer will deliver the Apprenticeship training on the employer's premises.

How the partnership has worked

Due to the number of partners involved, there was a need to have one 'lead' partner to drive the Apprenticeship pilot forward. As outlined above, a representative from the LSC and subsequently a representative from NAS initially fulfilled this lead partner role. The key partners involved in the set-up of the pilot were the: LSC/NAS, HMP Moorland, Bishop Burton College and National Probation Service.

Partners have draw on their own resources and wider contacts in order to drive the Apprenticeship forward. As indicated, wider stakeholders have also been consulted including: Lantra (Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land-based sector), UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). These wider partners have been engaged for different reasons; for example Lantra was engaged concerning the suitability of using the Apprenticeship framework in this setting. One stakeholder did state that they felt they had not been kept informed of the pilot's development following their initial involvement, which is important for any wider stakeholders consulted. What is important is that it is clear who has this responsibility and what it should entail (e.g. through the partner they have a direct link with or alternatively through the 'lead' partner).

Following the set-up of the Apprenticeship pilot the employer became a key partner in the delivery once they had been matched with an apprentice. To ensure all the key partners worked effectively together a data-sharing agreement was drawn up between the partners (and

²¹ Probation statistics quarterly brief October to December 2009 England and Wales - 30 April 2010

Ministry of Justice Statistics bulletin

²² <http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk/managing-offenders/sentences/parole/>

the apprentice) to ensure personal information about the apprentice could be shared to ensure the success of the apprentice.

Once the offender was released, some of the key partners were able to draw on assistance from other organisations/departments to provide further support to the apprentice. For example the National Probation Service was able to organise a mentor to attend the college with the offender for the first time. Some of the key partners also carried on the joint working to ensure the apprentice was fully supported. Key partners involved felt that the close partnership working between the employer and the apprentice's probation officer worked effectively. The employer stated that they may have lost contact with the apprentice earlier than they did if the apprentice's probation officer had not contacted the apprentice for him. Some meetings were also held between the employer, apprentice and probation officer to try and ensure the apprentice was fully supported.

Effectiveness of the partnership arrangement

The consensus among the stakeholders interviewed was that partnership working is essential to the success of the Apprenticeship pilot. To date stakeholders have felt that the partnership work has been successful and that it has worked effectively with all the necessary individuals and organisations involved in the set-up and delivery of the pilot.

The high levels of motivation, and indeed passion, of the key individuals in this pilot have been reported as an important reason as to why the Apprenticeship set-up and delivery (so far) has been deemed successful by key partners. The flexibility of individuals in their job roles, going well beyond contractual duties, was also seen to have increased the success of partnership working. For example, within the prison whilst those involved have specific job roles, they have been willing to extend their role to ensure the success of the pilot:

I'm doing the education bit, why can't I talk resettlement as well?

(Stakeholder)

This has been assisted by the Head of Learning and Skills also having responsibility for resettlement within the prison ensuring individuals are working together. If this was replicated in another prison the management structure may be different therefore joint working between learning and resettlement departments would be needed.

Summary

All of the key partners have been involved in the set-up and delivery of the Apprenticeship pilot so far. Stakeholders all stated that the partnership work had been successful, and to ensure partnership work could be carried out effectively data sharing agreements were signed to enable the sharing of personal information about the apprentice. The coordination of the pilot was seen to be successful with a lead partner driving forward the Apprenticeship pilot; also within HMP Moorland the partnership work has been seen to be successful with individuals working outside of their remit to enable the pilot to take place. The joint working between the employer and the National Probation Service was seen to be particularly effective when the offender was released from custody.

For providers who are delivering the Apprenticeship training it was stated that there were risks involved in them taking part in such a scheme as it could affect their Minimum Levels of Performance.

5 | Learner eligibility and selection

This section maps the key processes that featured in the pilot, including learner eligibility and selection criteria and assessment processes.

This section outlines how the Apprenticeship is currently advertised within the prison and outlines the processes involved in offenders joining the Horticulture department, which is a key requirement to being eligible for the Apprenticeship pilot. This section then goes on to consider the current selection criteria used for selecting offenders to join the Apprenticeship pilot and the assessment processes involved prior to an offender being accepted onto an Apprenticeship.

Advertising the Apprenticeship

In order to increase the awareness of the opportunity for offenders to take part in the Horticulture Apprenticeship pilot, advertising is placed throughout the prison through the use of posters and in-cell adverts. The purpose of the advertising is not only to encourage inmates to enquire further about the pilot but it is also strategically placed where friends and relatives can see it when visiting offenders. They can then take a role in encouraging offenders to consider pursuing an Apprenticeship. IAG workers within the prison are also kept informed of the Apprenticeship pilot so they are able to explain the options that are available to offenders if asked about the scheme and to refer someone to the Horticulture department if this seems appropriate.

Working in the Horticulture department

Before an individual can be considered for the Apprenticeship they must be working within the Horticulture department. To gain work in this department an offender has to go through a number of security checks. On arrival at the prison all offenders have to go through initial security screening to assess their work, education and training placement suitability. After this initial screening they can apply to work in the Horticulture department. However, not all offenders are able to work in this department due to the range of security risks this involves, due to the work taking place outside and with a range of tools and machinery. Additional security checks are therefore carried out by the Horticulture department who review offenders for:

- > History of violence
- > Ability to work with tools
- > Drug issues
- > Arson
- > Sex offenders

Selection criteria and learner eligibility

Following this screening, individuals are accepted into the Horticulture department where they will begin to work and can undertake a wide range of qualifications available from The Manchester College. During this time the trainer and, in particular, the Estates and Biodiversity Manager have the opportunity to assess the attitude, behaviour and character of the individual and are able to see if the offender portrays the relevant attitude and ability to make a success of

an Apprenticeship. The offenders then have to meet a set of criteria to be given the opportunity to take part in the Apprenticeship pilot. Both stakeholders and employers thought that it was crucially important that this review was done well, because they felt that: *'if the right selection is made, then I think it could be very successful, but if the wrong selection is made, it could be very damaging'* (Medium sized Employer).

To be selected for the Apprenticeship pilot, the key criteria that an offender has to meet are:

- > Risk assessed to work in Horticulture – to be assessed as being suitable to work in Horticulture on grounds of both aptitude and in respect to security (i.e. will not take advantage of the situation)
- > Aged between 18-24 years – to enable full funding to be accessed for the apprentice
- > Release date in six months – to allow the training to start in custody and to limit the time for employers to withdraw their employment offer
- > Released in the Yorkshire and Humber area – to enable the Apprenticeship to be delivered by the training provider
- > Have the necessary numeracy and literacy skills – to ensure the offender is Apprenticeship ready
- > Portray a suitable attitude to work and learning – to increase the chance that the offender will complete their Apprenticeship
- > Attendance and behaviour must be good – to try to prevent employers from having bad experiences with apprentices

The current selection criteria have been chosen specifically for this pilot; some of the criteria could be amended (if needed) if this was to be rolled out across the region. Some of the criteria are explained in further detail below, alongside any key issues which have been identified with the criteria so far.

Risk assessed to work in Horticulture

Stakeholders and employers felt that rigorous security checks were needed to ensure only those who were suitable to work in a Horticulture environment were able to be selected for the Apprenticeship; as stated by one employer:

'So, you know, you have to be pretty certain that you're not taking on somebody and putting them in a public park where they're going to be a danger to themselves, to our staff and to the public as well'

(Public sector Employer)

Another employer commented upon the need for risk assessments to be carried out correctly and by the appropriate people. They emphasised their reliance upon those arranging the Apprenticeship scheme and the trust that they were required to place in the partnership to ensure the risks associated with each apprentice were adequately reviewed.

Aged between 18-24

Currently individuals have to be aged under-25 to take part in the Apprenticeship pilot. This is to ensure that the Apprenticeship places are fully-funded for the employers involved in the pilot but does not restrict expanding the age group if rolled out. Some of the stakeholders we interviewed felt this was a barrier to the Apprenticeship pilot running as effectively as it could as there were currently prisoners for whom the Apprenticeship would have been ideal, but given that they were 25 or over they could not access the funding: *'We are losing young lads just slightly over the age'* (Stakeholder).

Concerns were also raised about ineligible prisoners' expectations, as stakeholders were conscious that some prisoners may realise they were not able to do an Apprenticeship due to age restrictions, which has the potential to cause problems within the prison.

It was felt that if the age group was not restricted then the number of apprentices on the pilot would increase, which would in turn make matching employers to apprentices easier. The training provider currently has an employer who is willing to take on an apprentice, but due to the low number of eligible offenders there are currently no offenders due to relocate in the appropriate area. It was felt that increasing the number of apprentices would make this easier: *'Had we have had twenty people that we were trying to match it would have been easier than matching two'* (Stakeholder).

Extending the age group to make the Apprenticeship available to more offenders would need to be carefully considered as full funding would not be available to employers/providers; as it currently stands, an employer has to contribute to the costs of training individuals over 25 who are taking part in an Apprenticeship.

Release date in six months

The current selection criteria works on the basis of the offender having no more than six months left of their sentence to serve. This timescale meets two purposes. Firstly, it means that the employers do not have to commit to taking on an apprentice too far in advance of their release date as the longer the period allowed, the increased chances there are for employers to pull out of the agreement due to a change in their circumstances.

It also enables the Apprenticeship training to be partially delivered whilst the offender is in prison. This starts as a Programme-Led Apprenticeship as they cannot formally be employed until they are released (although they undertake a range of work within the prison).

Relocation in the Yorkshire and Humber area

Currently only those who are leaving prison and are relocating in the Yorkshire and Humber region are eligible to take part in the pilot. This restriction has been in order to trial the Apprenticeship pilot within one area and with one training provider. It is recognised that some prisoners will not relocate in the same region as their prison, especially as offenders are not necessarily sent to a prison near to their home town. The stakeholders consulted within the evaluation did not see any barriers to an Apprenticeship taking place in a different region from the prison as all regions have the necessary support networks available (e.g. National Probation Service). What would be important is for appropriate systems and processes to be set-up in order for the key partners within the two regions to liaise accordingly.

Portray a suitable attitude to work and learning (including good attendance and behaviour)

To ensure that only apprentices that want to undertake a career in Horticulture and have the right attitude to work and learning are chosen, the staff in the Horticulture department monitor this, alongside their attendance and behaviour. Only those who show commitment and behave as expected are selected to undertake an Apprenticeship. It was stated that they have to try and assess which offenders want to work in the Horticulture department only in the summer (as it is warm outside) and which genuinely want a career in Horticulture. This is to try and prevent employers from having a bad experience with an offender on release. To further ensure apprentice's commitment whilst in the prison it was stated that it was important that offenders understand the relevance of the qualifications they undertake in prison. Stakeholders outlined how often offenders do not understand that the qualifications they achieve in prison are applicable and relevant to the outside world and that they can be used on their release.

Assessment processes

If an offender meets the criteria and is deemed to be appropriate for the Apprenticeship, they are then approached by the Estates and Biodiversity Manager to see if they want to take-part in an Apprenticeship. It is at this stage that if the offender does want to apply that the process is fully explained and that nothing is promised which can't be delivered. No offenders are guaranteed an Apprenticeship place as the application has to be passed by the National Probation Service, they need to pass their assessment by the training provider and then successfully undertake an interview with an employer who will decide whether or not to take the apprentice; this process is fully explained below.

The next stage in the process is for the application to be passed by the National Probation Service. The offender's probation officer will be contacted to ensure there are no specific reasons as to why the Apprenticeship would not be suitable for this individual on release due to their in-depth knowledge of the offenders past. Once this is accepted a meeting will be held with the probation officer and the offender to discuss what will happen next.

Following this, the training provider will be contacted and the offender will apply to join the Horticulture Apprenticeship pilot. Bishop Burton College review applications from the prison to ensure candidates have the appropriate qualifications to take up an Apprenticeship and to identify any further support they may need; they then undertake an assessment to identify if they are Apprenticeship ready (as with all potential apprentices). The training provider and NAS will then use this information to try and find an appropriate employer for them to work with upon their release (as detailed in Chapter 6).

The staff within the prison will work with the offender to ensure they are ready to undertake an interview with an employer once a match has been made. Interview training is given to ensure they know how to respond and behave in an interview setting as many have not been in an interview before.

Summary

Offenders currently have to go through rigorous security checks to be able to work in the Horticulture department, and subsequently join the Apprenticeship pilot. A range of selection criteria have been designed to select apprentices not only based on whether they are Apprenticeship ready or are able to receive funding due to their age, but also in relation to their attitude and behaviour within the prison. If apprentices are selected to take part in the Apprenticeship it is important that they receive adequate information on the value of this qualification. It is vital that the offender is not promised anything which cannot be delivered and that they are fully briefed on the application process as their application needs to be passed by the National Probation Service, they need to pass their assessment with the training provider and then successfully undertake an interview with an employer.

6 | Employer engagement

This section details the level of employer engagement in the pilot to date and outlines employers' feedback to inform the future engagement of employers.

This section will begin by exploring employer's perceptions of the Apprenticeship pilot who have not employed an offender from the scheme. It will then go on to discuss how employers have been engaged so far in the pilot and any barriers that have been faced. This section will then explore employers and stakeholder suggestions for engaging employers in the future and will finally outline what happens when an apprentice is matched with an employer.

Employer perceptions

During the evaluation a range of employers were consulted that were not currently employing an apprentice through the pilot. Five employers from the Horticulture sector were interviewed which included: one sole-trader, one medium sized business, one large business and two public sector employers.

Overall the employers²³ who were interviewed were generally positive about the Apprenticeship pilot and thought that the scheme would provide ex-offenders with a range of skills and a chance to turn their life around. Employers felt that it was beneficial not only for the apprentice, but also for employers:

'It appears on the surface of it to be a very suitable, beneficial programme for both the individual and for companies and society. If it could work, then I am sure that it could help enormously in the reform of prisoners and in giving people hope and opportunity'

(Medium sized Employer)

Employers felt that employing someone from this scheme could be beneficial due to the training and skills they would have gained within a Horticultural environment in prison, which puts them at an advantage over an apprentice that has just left school. Some employers felt that those who had been on this type of scheme may also be more motivated to work as they had made a commitment to change their life by joining the scheme:

'There is a good chance that the individual wants to start a new life and really wants to have a job. Quite often we take people off the dole here into work but they don't all want a job. We might find that they are more determined to want a job and therefore more open minded and become better new employees because they are determined to make a success of it'

(Medium sized Employer)

Some of the employers we spoke to thought that Horticulture in particular was a suitable sector for offenders to undertake training in and subsequently find employment. It was seen by some as being 'therapeutic', which fits with a wider acknowledgment of the social and therapeutic

²³ The employers we spoke to all currently had apprentices within their organisation or were considering employing an apprentice in the future.

benefits of Horticulture²⁴. There is existing recognition of the potential of Horticulture to contribute to the rehabilitation of offenders by enabling them to re-engage with their community and to form bonds with others²⁵. As one employer stated:

‘It’s got a magic way of turning people around. Somebody who has had problems, who gets outside and actually starts, you know, cutting grass and working with plants and whatever, fantastic. It can really work miracles’

(Public sector Employer)

For employers, the health and safety of their employees (and the public) was seen to be important and if that could be guaranteed (through knowing what past offences had been committed and if this could affect the safety of individuals) and appropriate support was offered to the offender on release then the employers we spoke to stated that they would consider taking on an apprentice on this type of scheme – although due to the recession and financial constraints not all were currently able to do so.

Although the employers we spoke to would consider employing an offender, some stakeholders we consulted suggested that public perceptions regarding Apprenticeships for offenders are not always favourable, and this may include some employers. Some stakeholder’s perceptions suggest that some members of the public may not support the pilot, as they think employment support should be reserved for those who have not been in prison, especially those currently unemployed. This means the benefits of the pilot need to be promoted to ensure it’s recognised for its potential to reduce re-offending rates and the costs of re-offending overall:

‘I think the main challenge is convincing people that it’s possible and this group is worth investing time in... If people feel like special provision is being made for people who’ve been in trouble with the police, been in prison, it’s a bit like, “Why should they get extra help and some law abiding person who maybe comes from a tough background isn’t getting that help?” It depends whether you want to take that on, and launch the scheme in a big way, or do the work quietly’

(Stakeholder)

Engaging employers for the pilot

Initially for this pilot, local employers were invited to attend an employer event at HMP Moorland in September 2009. NAS and the training provider invited employers who they were in contact with and seven local authorities and one private employer attended the event. The event was held to inform employers about the Apprenticeship pilot and to give them a tour of the prison so they could see what facilities they had, meet some of the potential apprentices and to try and dispel any negative assumptions regarding offenders and prisons.

The event was informal in nature and allowed discussion to take place alongside providing employers with information about how the Apprenticeship would work. Employers were then taken on a tour of the prison’s training facilities to showcase the training the prison was delivering and to ensure that employers could see the value of the training being offered. The employers also were able to speak to the offenders who were working in the prison. One employer who attended the event stated that meeting the offenders had changed their

²⁴ Cultivations – is a national charity which works to promote and advertise the benefits of individuals working with nature. They also undertake a number of projects in conjunction with Probation and other Criminal Justice Agencies. www.cultivations.co.uk

²⁵ Loughborough University (2002) ‘Social and Therapeutic Horticulture: evidence and messages from research’

perception of offenders *'a bit'* as they recognised that they really wanted to work in Horticulture when they were released. This employer was impressed by the enthusiasm of the offenders that they spoke to and their commitment to finding employment after their release.

Many of the stakeholders felt that the employer event had been successful in engaging employers and providing employers with information about the pilot. The successful elements of the event were identified by stakeholders as:

- > Using the college and NAS employer contacts
- > Having NAS support
- > The prison hosting it to showcase their facilities
- > Ensure the event is informal and discussions are able to happen
- > Show employers around the prison facilities and the work that offenders are undertaking

Further employers have also been engaged by NAS and the training provider to take on an apprentice; initially public sector employers were targeted as it was believed that they would be more likely to take on an ex-offender due to their commitment to corporate social responsibility and them being large organisations (although some private sector employers were also contacted and it was always planned to target them once the pilot had started to progress). A decision has now been made by NAS to target private sector employers as well as the public sector to expand the Apprenticeship pilot to any employers in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Barriers to engaging employers

Overall it was reported that there had been few barriers to engaging employers in the Apprenticeship pilot to date. However one problem which has been encountered with some large employers agreeing to take part has been strict HR processes around CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks. It was stated by stakeholders (and some employers) that some employers cannot take on an offender because of having to carry out a CRB check which their HR department would not allow. In these cases the employer instantly discounted anyone who had a criminal record. Therefore anyone who had been in prison would be instantly discounted from employment no matter what their criminal record is for and whether it would actually prohibit them from doing their job or not. This misunderstanding about the use of CRB checks is something which needs to be addressed, not only in relation to this scheme, but in relation to any employers not currently employing offenders or ex-offenders on release from prison or in the community.

Employer engagement strategies

A range of different methods were suggested by employers and stakeholders which could be used to engage employers in the future; these focused on different engagement methods (including incentives) and marketing the benefits.

Increasing employer engagement

A variety of different methods were suggested to increase employer participation in an Apprenticeship scheme which included:

- > Using employer champions – employers may be reluctant to take on an ex-offender due to having pre-conceived ideas and perceptions of what working with an ex-offender would be like. Therefore, the use of employer champions who had successfully recruited an ex-offender could help to convince employers of the benefits to recruiting ex-offenders based on their own experience.
- > Be able to take the offender on through a work trial or volunteering initially to reduce the risks for employers.

- > Ensure there is a central person the employer could ring if they had any difficulties with an offender on release.
- > Use the Sector Skills Council and their employer contacts to engage employers and to promote the scheme with the employers they already work with.
- > Subsidised wages or financial incentives for employers.

Marketing the benefits to employers

Marketing the benefits of the Apprenticeship scheme was seen to be important. A range of benefits were identified by stakeholders and employers:

- > The apprentice will be partially trained in the Apprenticeship on release from prison.
- > They may have undertaken a wide range of qualifications in prison.
- > Extra qualifications are delivered (tailored to the employer and apprentice) which an employer would normally have to pay for.
- > High quality training is delivered within the prison.
- > The prison is able to give the employer a detailed description of the individual's behaviour and suitability for the job which you would not get with most job applicants.
- > Information about the offender's history and past offences which you would not get with most job applicants. Opinions from employers on this however was split – some employers wanted to know all the details about an offenders past offences whereas others felt they should have a clean start as it may affect their own opinions of the offender.
- > An older apprentice not straight out of school:
 - > More mature.
 - > Some machinery and equipment requires a driving licence which they may be more likely to have.
 - > Some insurance companies will only insure the use of machinery for those who are 21 and over.
- > If the offender had a support worker on release this would be a selling point.²⁶

Apprentice interview

Once an appropriate employer is found for the offender, they then take part in a formal interview with the apprentice they have been matched with. The employer can then accept or reject the offender as they deem appropriate. Employers stated that it is important to meet the apprentice before agreeing to take them on to assess whether or not they thought they would be suitable.

'We would also like to have some decision making over who we employ to make sure they are best matched with our company'

(Large Employer)

The offenders are hence treated in the same way as any other apprentice, by having to demonstrate to the employer that they have the right skills and attitude for the job and being Apprenticeship ready. It was highlighted that it was important that the quality of Apprenticeships overall was upheld; not dropping standards merely due to working with offenders:

²⁶ This will be explored further in the next chapter

'The one thing about an Apprenticeship is they have to be Level 2 ready, so this isn't about reducing the quality of the Apprenticeship in order to let other people in. It's not about making exceptions to the rules'

(Stakeholder)

Summary

Overall the employers we engaged were generally positive about the Apprenticeship pilot. Although they would have to take into consideration an offender's past convictions and the support available on release, they would still consider taking on an apprentice from this type of scheme.

The employer event that was held at HMP Moorland was seen to be a successful way of engaging employers in the pilot, alongside the training provider and NAS using their existing employer contacts. The main barrier which has been faced when engaging large employers is strict HR policies around CRB checks and individuals being instantly discounted due to them being an offender instead of the offence being considered and assessed as to whether or not it could affect their role. To increase employer engagement a wide range of strategies were identified by employers and stakeholders. Once an employer has been engaged and an offender has been matched from the prison the employer will interview the apprentice as with any other Apprenticeship not undertaken in prison.

7 | Apprenticeship support and delivery

This section maps the key delivery and support processes which featured in the Apprenticeship pilot both within HMP Moorland and after the offenders' release.

This section will outline how the Apprenticeship framework is tailored to employers' needs and how OLASS provision is coordinated in the prison to allow apprentices to study 'bolt-on' qualifications. It will then go on to describe how the Apprenticeship is delivered both from within the prison and when the offender is subsequently released. It also summarises the support the offender receives on release from prison and any additional support that may be needed.

Choosing appropriate qualifications to be delivered

Once the apprentice has passed their interview with the employer and subsequently is formally accepted onto the Apprenticeship pilot, a meeting is set up between the employer, training provider and offender. This meeting is used to discuss the Apprenticeship framework, agreeing what units are necessary for the offender to undertake. Due to the Horticulture Apprenticeship having a wide range of credits which are optional, the qualification is flexible and can be tailored to employer's needs. This meeting is also used to ensure the offender is aware of the expectations for them on release and to discuss what will happen on release. This was seen to not only have benefits for the apprentice, but stakeholders outlined that it showed to the other offenders within the prison that this was a real opportunity, building the aspirations of some of the offenders within the prison.

Tackling re-offending in prison

Re-offending is not only tackled on the offender's release; a range of support is available within custody. Within prison, training and education is provided to ensure offenders have a range of skills and qualifications on release, which is hoped to increase their likelihood of being able to secure employment to reduce the risk of re-offending. The Skills Funding Agency is responsible for ensuring funding is provided to organisations that provide further education and skills training in England, which includes the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS). The vision of OLASS is to ensure that:

'Offenders, in prisons and supervised in the community, according to need, should have access to learning and skills, which enables them to gain the skills and qualifications they need to hold down a job and have a positive role in society'²⁷

A wide range of courses are delivered under OLASS provision including: literacy, numeracy, ICT, specific sector training and social and life skills programmes. Within prisons a range of other courses are also often delivered by other training providers and support organisations (including on a voluntary basis by the Third Sector).

Alongside the delivery of the Apprenticeship, the prison is also able to provide 'bolt-on' qualifications which will provide the offender with extra skills when leaving custody. This is

²⁷ <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/funding/olass/>

provided by coordinating the Apprenticeship delivery with OLASS provision within the prison. This training adds to the offender's skills repertoire and is beneficial to the employer. For example the first apprentice to go through the pilot was given a range of other 'bolt-on' training such as:

- > Health and safety
- > First aid
- > Tractor driving
- > 'Spraying' (pesticides)

Alongside the offender gaining qualifications relevant to his employment, the prison also offer a range of other training to ensure the offender is prepared to leave prison. A range of these courses are linked to the offender's behaviour such as anger management and enhanced thinking skills. The offender also may have already undertaken a range of different qualifications which are linked to Horticulture such as a NPTC in Horticulture.

Delivery inside prison

Within the prison, training outside of the Apprenticeship framework is delivered by The Manchester College, the prison's OLASS provider. As a result, The Manchester College is responsible for delivering any 'bolt-on' qualifications which are offered to the apprentice. They also deliver any qualifications that are required by the apprentice prior to taking part in the Apprenticeship pilot such as basic numeracy and literacy skills. This is in addition to providing numeracy and literacy units that are required as part of the Horticulture Apprenticeship framework.

Whilst the offender is in prison they are encouraged to try and complete the numeracy and literacy elements of the framework in order to reduce the number of qualifications they need to pass once released from custody. Numeracy and literacy can be taught in the prison either in a classroom or alternatively incorporated into work-related tasks which are taught while the individual is working.

Bishop Burton College currently deliver the mandatory elements of the Apprenticeship within HMP Moorland. The remaining part of the Apprenticeship framework (excluding numeracy and literacy – key skills) is delivered on release, when the apprentice is placed with an employer. A trainer from Bishop Burton College visits the offender in prison to teach them the necessary skills and to assess the work they carry out within the prison.

The recent ASCL Act puts into question whether it will be feasible to continue to deliver parts of the Apprenticeship while the offender is still in prison due to Programme-Led Apprenticeships no longer being funded from April 2011. If this is the case then the focus of training within the prison will have to be on getting the apprentice prepared for the Apprenticeship, with this being funded by the Prison. However starting the delivery of the Apprenticeship in prison was seen to be important by stakeholders to ensure that the offender was partially trained on release which was also seen as important by employers:

'If someone has got some experience of working and experience of what we do, then obviously they will always be ahead of somebody that knows nothing'

(Medium sized Employer)

It was also seen as important as it brings part of the 'outside world' into the prison and begins to prepare the offender for release and the work they are doing, alongside showing other prisoners that this is a real opportunity they are being offered. To be able to fund the Apprenticeship in this way an exception will need to be granted under the new Act.

Whilst the offender is in custody the prison staff monitor the individual's behaviour and try to instil in the offender a sense of what life will be like on the outside in order to try and prepare them for release. If offenders are misbehaving they will receive warnings and could be removed from the Apprenticeship pilot altogether.

To ensure the apprentice is fully prepared for their release it was suggested that during the delivery in the prison it may be beneficial for the workplace supervisor to visit the offender in prison. Not only to observe the work they are doing and start to form a relationship but to provide the offender with a profile of the organisation they will be working for so that on leaving prison they know what to expect. This profile should contain information about the organisation including pictures where possible so the offender knows what to expect.

Delivery outside prison

Once the offender is released from prison they then start working full time with their employer. Within the current model they complete any mandatory units from the framework which are outstanding as well as starting (and completing) their training on the optional units they have agreed to undertake as part of the framework, all of this training is delivered by Bishop Burton College. The delivery of the course is dependent on whether or not the ex-offender is able to attend college or not due to their distance away from the college.

Those that are able to travel to the college will attend the college one day a week and will work with the employer for the remaining time. For those who are too far away to travel to the college, a trainer from the college will visit them in their workplace in order to teach them the necessary skills. If the training is delivered in the workplace the apprentice is still able to access the full support available from the college. It was stated by stakeholders that delivery in the workplace could be preferable for apprentices as some may not want to go to college or lack the confidence to do so.

Once the offender is released only those directly working with the apprentice are informed that they used to be in prison. Therefore those such as the apprentice's workplace supervisor or college tutor were informed but no one else. This decision is then up to the offender as to whether or not they wish to tell colleagues or people they associate with, which stakeholders felt was important.

Support featured in the pilot

Within prison a range of other support is also available to try and reduce the risks of re-offending of prisoners on release. This includes providing support on: drug and alcohol problems through CARAT²⁸ workers and treatment programmes, health care (including for self-harm) and re-settlement support²⁹.

Also a range of support and resources were available to the apprentice on his release from prison. These support services are delivered by a range of the partners involved in the Apprenticeship pilot as part of their role. The apprentice which has been released has also been provided with additional support which would not be available to all apprentices. Support is seen as vital to those we spoke to including one of the apprentices awaiting to be matched to an employer who although was worried about his release recognised that a range of support was available to him on release: *'I'm worried about everything...these are gonna stay in contact with me [prison], my probation officer, I have all the support [I need]'* (Apprentice).

²⁸ Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare.

²⁹ www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk

Detailed below is the support which was available to the first apprentice following his release this includes the support provided by the National Probation Service and the training provider. It also covers additional support which was provided by other key partners which was outside of their job role. The support required from each apprentice may differ, depending on their circumstances and experiences.

National Probation Service

On release the offender will be monitored by the National Probation Service and will be supported to continue their Apprenticeship. Those who go through the Apprenticeship pilot will receive the same support as any individual who leaves prison. Offenders are allocated to an Offender Manager who is responsible for the offender throughout their sentence, and on release, to ensure there is consistency and continuity for the offender. Depending on what risk the offender poses, different approaches are used with a focus on: control, change, help or punishment for the individual, which will be detailed in a sentence plan, drawn-up with the offender.³⁰

The *'reform and rehabilitation of individual offenders remains NOMS's most important objective'*³¹ therefore the Offender Manager will help and support the individual to change their behaviour through supervision and intervention programmes. The Offender Manager will offer advice and support to ex-offenders to try and reduce the risk of them re-offending such as: finding accommodation, debt advice and lifestyle support.

Following the release of the first offender, he was allocated to an Offender Manager who is responsible for liaising with the apprentice on a regular basis providing him with support and guidance. He was also able to access support from the National Probation Service such as financial support to ensure he had enough money to last him until he got paid his first wage.

The apprentice who was released was not confident about going to college and it was identified that he would need additional support to do so. His Probation officer arranged for a mentor from Humbercare³² to go with him to college initially. This is a service that is available for any offender on release with this local Probation Service. However, not all local Probation Services may have access to this type of support which should be considered if this scheme is rolled out.

Training provider

A range of support is also available to any apprentice who is undertaking a course at Bishop Burton College. There are a range of support services which can be accessed by students including: counselling, study support, health and welfare. In this instance the college also provided the apprentice with some travel tokens which could be used to subsidise the apprentice's bus fare to and from the college.

Out of custody: additional support available

There are also a wide range of support organisations, outside of the National Probation Service, that can support offenders on their release from prison. Reducing re-offending cannot be tackled by NOMS only:

'Other organisations need to be involved in alliance with National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in reducing re-offending, especially at a regional and local level. In particular, local government

³⁰ Offender Management A Brief Guide for Probation Staff

³¹ The NOMS Offender Management Model

³² Humbercare is a charity which was set up to work with Humberside Probation Service to: *'Educate, rehabilitate and promote the mental and moral improvement of offenders or any other persons in need, and the rehabilitation of persons discharged from penal institutions'* <http://www.humbercare.org.uk/>

*has a crucial role to play, working in partnership with NOMS, local probation boards (trusts) and youth offending teams, in reducing re-offending'*³³

There are also many national charities that work in partnership, or closely, with NOMS and other agencies that have a direct impact in reducing re-offending rates. NAVCA, for example, provide grants of up to £1,000 to 'Local Infrastructure Organisations' to support networking and training activities with a view that it will help enable partnership working to create better plans to reduce the re-offending rate at a local level.³⁴

Other support services available

Effective and appropriate re-settlement helps reduce the risk of re-offending, providing permanent accommodation helps ex-offenders secure jobs feel more stable and secure, making them less likely to re-offend. The Third Sector is increasingly important in this context as they provide a wide range of support to ex-offenders, some of this work is undertaken on a voluntary basis; but increasingly they provide support under contract to NOMS, HM Prison and the National Probation Service.

There are various charities and support agencies that help offenders to secure housing and one organisation that provides a range of support directly to offenders is NACRO³⁵. They help to support people at risk of re-offending; they work with other services and through partner agencies to tackle the social causes of crime. They work with ex-offenders to provide a range of services including: accommodation, education and support to enter employment and mentoring. More broadly there are also a wide range of organisations that provide ex-offenders with education and employment support including: Jobcentre Plus; Connexions; SOVA; Apex Trust; BEAT and LiveWIRE who provide support for ex-offenders aged 16-30 wanting to start a business.

Although there is a wide variety of support available to offenders on their release, not all of this support is coordinated. Therefore ex-offenders may not know where to access this support or realise that it is available.

Additional support featured in the pilot

The apprentice who left prison has received a wide range of support from their employer. On starting work the employer ensured that the apprentice had suitable clothing for the role. During the time the apprentice was with the employer a range of personal issues and problems emerged which the apprentice was not receiving support for through other support services. Due to the employer also being a training provider they were able to provide the apprentice with a support worker from their employment and support team. This worker has provided a range of support to the apprentice to help him through a range of difficult problems.

However, not all employers would be able/or prepared to provide this level support to apprentices they are employing, as stated by one employer:

'I can't give social support, I can only give a job'

(Medium sized Employer)

The apprentice has also received support from the Prison. The current contribution of the Estates and Biodiversity Manager is outside of his job role. However, due to his role involving regular contact with the offender while he is in custody, a trusting relationship had been built

³³ <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8790076> [date accessed 24th May 2010]

³⁴ <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/supportingoffenders/news/networkinggrants.htm> [date accessed: 24th May 2010]

³⁵ <http://www.nacro.org.uk/>

between himself and the offender. As a result, the offender has confided in this particular manager when problems have occurred following his release. This manager has been involved in visiting the apprentice in the workplace, contacting the apprentice when any particular problems have occurred and has also been involved in a number of telephone conversations with key people such as the National Probation Service, the employer and the college to try help the apprentice with a range of unforeseen problems he has had. However it is a role which this manager will find impossible to continue to fulfil in addition to his existing obligations, particularly once more offenders are released from custody and the Apprenticeship pilot grows.

Out of custody: Further support needs identified

Stakeholders felt that further support was needed for the apprentice on release from prison, especially as much of the support which has been provided in this case is not support which will be available to all apprentices on release. Stakeholders outlined the importance of stable accommodation for the apprentice on release and felt that this could be one of the areas where extra support was focused. A further difficulty the offender had that was released had was that his release day was earlier than planned due to having 'police days' owed to him. A difficulty with this was that during this time he was not allowed to be employed or claim benefits therefore the start of the Apprenticeship on release was delayed and the apprentice had limited funds to last him over this period.

'Through the gate' support worker

A number of stakeholders we spoke to suggested that a support worker was needed to work with the apprentice on release from custody and that this should be a role which is undertaken by someone within the prison. Although the apprentice has a probation officer, this is a new relationship which only begins once an offender is released from prison. As a result, one interviewee felt that ex-offenders:

'Tell probation what they want to know'

(Stakeholder)

If a support worker was available within the prison the apprentice would be able to build a relationship with them whilst in prison. Stakeholders also felt that prison staff have a better understanding of offenders and that they *'talk their language'* which was important in building a relationship.

This role should also involve visiting the offender in the workplace as this could help to motivate the individual:

'Having something where the person in the prison, say from the workshops or wherever, comes out in the early stages of release and starts on the scheme to see how they're going. Just to show a bit of interest really and motivates'

(Stakeholder)

It was suggested that a 'through the gate' support worker should be allocated to the apprentice once they were accepted onto an Apprenticeship who could work with the offender following their release.

Case conference

Alongside having this support worker it was felt that information needed to be shared between the key partners to ensure full support can be offered to the offender on release. It was felt that a case conference should be held once the individual is accepted onto an Apprenticeship.

It was felt that all the key individuals involved with the apprentice within the prison and on release should be involved in a case conference meeting, therefore this would include:

employer, prison staff (including support worker if established), training provider, and the apprentice's probation officer. This meeting should be used to share information about the apprentice which will be important for all partners to be aware of on release, this could include identifying any personal issues they may face on release and identifying what support networks the apprentice may have. It was also felt by stakeholders that this meeting should be used to identify any additional support the apprentice may need on release from other organisations. If any specific support needs were identified before the meeting, additional organisations could attend the case conference meeting. If support needs are identified a list of contacts should be drawn up to ensure that all key partners know who to contact for support for the apprentice.

Central point of contact

Also suggested was the need for employers to have a central point of contact if they were having problems with an apprentice on release as stated by one employer:

I suppose in these circumstances, to have somebody that you can say, 'Look, perhaps somebody should come and have a word with Fred because he is a bit off the track'

(Medium sized Employer)

Apprentice's progression and measuring success

If the apprentice completes their Apprenticeship there are a number of options which are available to the apprentice in terms of progression. Depending on whether or not they were employed using a fixed-term contract or not, the individual may continue to work with their current employer, apply for a new position with their current employer or seek employment elsewhere. Ensuring that the apprentice is able to secure employment is vital, as research has found that the risk of re-offending can be reduced by between a half and a third if someone is employed³⁶.

Despite this three-quarters of prisoners leave custody with no job to move into. A lack of employment is also seen to affect whether or not an individual can sustain themselves in stable accommodation. If the individual needs to apply for a new job there are support services at Bishop Burton College which can help individuals find a job. Stakeholders also identified other options available to the apprentice that include undertaking further training or becoming self-employed.

A lack of qualifications and basic skills is one of the major barriers which prevent offenders entering employment on release and accessing support services. This could be a concern for the scheme as not all the apprentices may complete the Apprenticeship, as with the current offender who has been released. Stakeholders however suggested that although the apprentice is not currently continuing with the Apprenticeship it was felt that there had been some success for the apprentice and that he had progressed. They outlined that this success included: the offender had undertaken six months of Apprenticeship training, he had taken part in work experience which could be used when applying for other jobs and that he hadn't re-offended (although it is not known if he would have done if not taken part in the Apprenticeship).

Therefore one of the main issues that was considered in the workshop was how do we measure the success of the pilot and the scheme if expanded in the future? Apprenticeship success is currently considered to be when someone achieves their framework; however for this type of scheme this measure of success may not be appropriate. Discussions were held around measuring success in a variety of ways which were not limited to success rates and it was suggested that success should be based not only on numbers going through and completing the

³⁶ Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners, Social Exclusion Unit, 2002

pilot, but by examining re-offending rates alongside where possible seeing what added benefits the Apprenticeship pilot may have had for the individual.

Challenges of re-offending

Repeat offenders cost the Criminal Justice System approximately £11 billion a year, with each re-offending ex-prisoner costing on average £65,000 per return to custody. The average cost of a prison sentence imposed at Crown Court is £30,050 and the costs of keeping an offender in custody is approximately £37,500. These are only the costs directly incurred to the Criminal Justice System and the HM Prison Service; there are also high financial costs to the police, victims of crimes, local communities, as well as the financial cost to the re-offender (and their family) and the national economy if they were in employment before their return to custody.³⁷

The Social Exclusion Unit³⁸ broadly identifies the main factors (in no particular order) that appear to be the main causes contributing to re-offending as: lack of education; lack of employment; poor housing or homelessness; drug and alcohol misuse problems; mental and physical health; attitudes and self-control; institutionalisation and life-skills; lack of financial support and debt; and family problems or lack of family networks. This would suggest those individuals who experience one, or more, of the above issues are more likely to re-offend on leaving prison. Stable accommodation is seen to be a crucial factor in offenders sustaining employment when they are released. Research has also shown that there is an association between homelessness and offending behaviour, with them contributing to each other.³⁹

Frameworks such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) could be used to measure and account for reductions in re-offending and a broader concept of value for money (from such a scheme) by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits. SROI's can be conducted retrospectively at the end of a project or can be used to predict how much social value will be created if the activities meet their intended outcomes.

Summary

To ensure that the Apprenticeship is tailored to the needs of the employer and the apprentice a meeting is held with the employer, apprentice and training provider to decide which units of the framework will be studied; this meeting is also used to set out the expectations for the apprentice and what will be required on release. To enhance the skills the offender is receiving, OLASS provision is coordinated with the Apprenticeship pilot to allow the offender to study 'bolt-on' courses which will be applicable to the work they will carry out on release.

The Apprenticeship training is delivered in prison which stakeholders felt was important to ensure they are partially trained on release and to introduce the offender to the outside world before release. This is currently funded through Programme-Led Apprenticeship funding which will not be available from 2011, for delivery to continue within the prison an exception would need to be granted under the new Act; however, if this is not possible an alternative model may need to be adopted.

On release the offender's training is delivered either at college or at the employer's premises. Only those individuals who directly supervise the apprentice are informed of their previous convictions, allowing the apprentice to decide whether or not they tell colleagues and other students that they were in custody.

³⁷ Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners, Social Exclusion Unit, 2002, p.10

³⁸ Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners, Social Exclusion Unit, 2002 p.4.

³⁹ NACRO 'Youth Crime Briefing' December 2005 p.1

A range of support has been provided to the apprentice that was released, however not all of this would be available to all offenders who are released from prison such as from the employer and the prison; therefore a need has been identified for additional support. Stakeholders stated that a 'through the gate' support worker is needed who is located within the prison and has an existing relationship with the offender. Further to this support it was stated that a case conference should be held between all the key partners prior to the release of an offender.

One difficulty the offender that was released had was his release day was earlier than planned due to having 'police days' owed to him which did not allow him to start his Apprenticeship until this period was over.

8 | Conclusions and a model for expansion

What the findings of the evaluation mean and the outline of a model for the pilot to be taken forward effectively in the future.

Certainly, it is not possible on the basis of the progress to date and this evaluation to comment on the potential benefits of the pilot scheme with increased throughput and further employer engagement needed. However, stakeholders expressed the view that it is an initiative that deserves to be given a further opportunity to prove its full worth and the contribution it can make.

Therefore the experience to date has been sufficient to generate a potential model to identify the roles and responsibilities of key agencies involved. However, it is yet to deliver apprentice outcomes and key agencies will need to consider if building on the investment made to date whether they wish to fund further development work at this time.

Key messages

Progress to date

The establishment of the pilot took longer than some stakeholders intended and the delays have been attributed to the change in the sector focus for the scheme from creative industries to Horticulture. If the pilot scheme were to be rolled out there would need to be careful consideration of the appropriate employment sector. This decision would be best informed by information on skills shortages and employment sectors with vacancies as well as a consideration of the training facilities available at the participating prison.

The delivery partners have put all the necessary elements in place to enable the Apprenticeship pilot to take place. However, to date only one offender has been matched with an employer and released from prison and a further five have been identified within the prison as potential apprentices. The low numbers of apprentices that have taken part in the Apprenticeship pilot so far have been attributed to three main reasons: low number of Horticulture employers recruiting in the winter, fewer prisoners working in the Horticulture department in the winter and increased security in the prison.

The partnership arrangements

The evaluation found that the Apprenticeship pilot is still in the early stages of development and that partners have drawn on their own resources and wider contacts in order to drive the pilot forward. This report demonstrates that the pilot has generated considerable enthusiasm amongst partner agencies and there is a real desire to see it progress. However, progress has been slow and hard won to date and has been heavily reliant on the personal commitment of those involved.

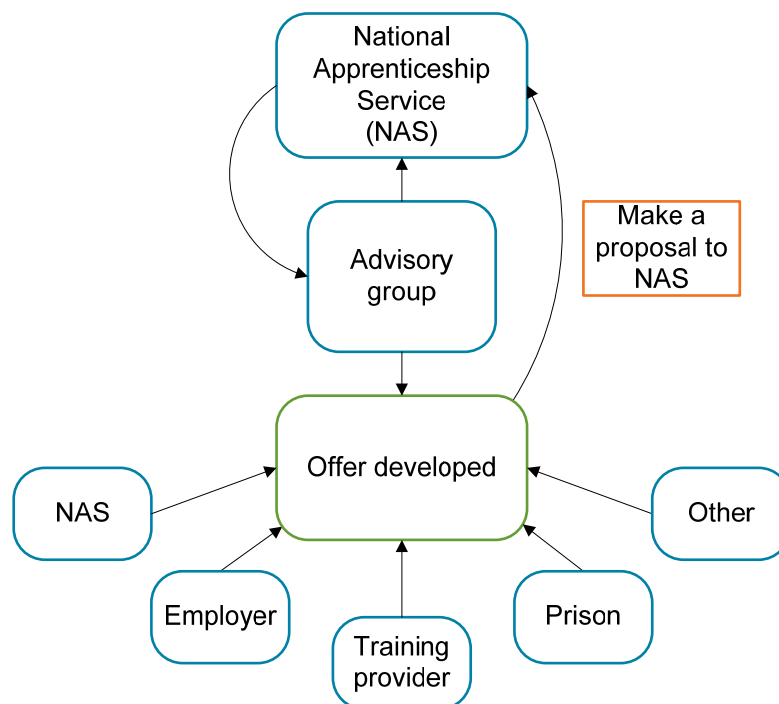
Partnership working has been essential to the development of the Apprenticeship pilot and to date stakeholders feel that this has been successful and has worked effectively. The high levels of motivation, and indeed passion, of the key individuals involved in this pilot has been vital to the establishment of the pilot set-up and delivery and has contributed to it being deemed successful by key partners. This commitment has included flexibility of individuals in their job roles, who have gone well beyond their contractual obligations, to increase the success of partnership working. For example, within the prison whilst those involved have specific job roles have been willing to extend their role to ensure the success of the pilot.

A workshop was held with key partners to discuss the development of an Apprenticeship model to enable the roll out of the Apprenticeship pilot within the Yorkshire and Humber region. The workshop considered the infrastructure/model necessary to both further develop, and to subsequently deliver, Apprenticeship schemes in this region and beyond.

Developing an Apprenticeship scheme for offenders

Representatives at the stakeholder workshop were first asked about the infrastructure and procedures would be required to ‘scale-up’ the current pilot. The delivery partners present felt that all the necessary procedures were in place and there would be no need for a specific group which would run the Apprenticeship scheme in prisons. They stated that NAS already had a process in place for funding Apprenticeship schemes and this should be used in the future. However it was recognised that it may be useful to have a ‘time-limited’ advisory group which could provide advice to NAS on the Apprenticeship scheme using the expertise of those currently involved in the pilot. It was also suggested that this group could help NAS monitor the initial progress of the Apprenticeship scheme within prisons.

Stakeholders stated that individual organisations in the region (as indicated below) should be able to initiate discussions around developing an Apprenticeship scheme within prison. From this ‘an offer’ should be developed which outlines the scheme, the prison/s within which it would run in and which framework/s would be used. Once this offer was developed (in consultation with all relevant parties) a proposal should be made to NAS to draw down the Apprenticeship funding. If NAS accept the proposals, the Apprenticeship scheme can be set-up and the advisory group could help monitor the performance of the scheme.



Funding the expansion of the scheme

The pilot so far has operated without the provision of additional funding. However, it has largely done so because of the commitment of certain individuals and it is clear that the additional support needs identified for the apprentice would have to be costed into any enhanced piloting/operational model.

The pilot also involved initial delivery of the Apprenticeship in prison, so it is currently funded through Programme-Led Apprenticeship funding. This funding will not be available from 2011, so for delivery to continue within the prison an exception would need to be granted under the

new Act. The Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills (IUSS) Select Committee having called for PLAs to be re-labelled 'pre-apprenticeship training'. The rationale behind this proposed title change is to add clarity to the purpose and meaning of PLAs. PLAs are not 'Apprenticeships' as defined by the Act, but they do have a useful function in preparing some candidates for moving onto employer-led Apprenticeship training.⁴⁰

NAS has also announced that they will not fund any new PLAs after 6 April 2011⁴¹. From August 2010, NAS will only fund new PLAs where the programme-led element is for a period of six months or less. If a learner secures employment within this six month period, the Apprenticeship can then be converted into an employer-led Apprenticeship as defined by the Act. If the learner is not successful in finding employment, then funding will cease at six months. So given the anticipated changes in funding for PLAs any expansion of the Apprenticeship pilot may be dependent upon an alternative model if an exception cannot be granted under the new Act.

Delivering the Apprenticeship scheme within prison

The process of delivering Apprenticeship schemes in prisons was discussed in detail and is set out in the model that follows. Key features of the model include:

1. Employer engagement

To increase employer engagement a wide range of strategies were identified by employers and stakeholders. The group felt that an event should be held to engage employers and invite them to visit the prison/s involved. This event could be complemented by other methods, such as the training provider and NAS contacting employers to encourage them to take on an apprentice. Alongside this the prison should identify offenders who would be suitable to take part in the Apprenticeship using an appropriate set of criteria.

The main barrier faced when engaging large employers has been strict HR policies around CRB checks which has led individuals to be instantly discounted due to them being an offender instead of the offence being considered and assessed as to whether or not it could affect their role. Addressing such issues could increase employer engagement; particularly if it were pursued alongside a broader engagement strategy informed by the employers and stakeholders engaged to date. Once an employer has been engaged and an offender has been matched from the prison the employer should be encouraged to interview the apprentice as with any other Apprenticeship scheme.

2. Apprentice recruitment and selection

The offenders that take part in the pilot have to undergo the same assessment and recruitment procedures as any apprentice undertaking an Apprenticeship. They have to be Apprenticeship ready, have to be assessed by the training provider and have to undergo an interview with a potential employer. The only extra support the offender receives is in relation to any personal problems or difficulties they face on release.

Building on work through the pilot, a range of ways to recruit and select potential apprentices should be used. This would need to focus on key issues such as interest and aptitude for the Apprenticeship framework. A full assessment should be made by relevant prison/probation staff regarding the needs of the offender and the support networks they may have on release. Six months prior to their release date was felt to be a good time for potential apprentices to be matched with an employer through the training provider.

⁴⁰ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmdius/1062/1062i.pdf> p15

⁴¹ <http://staging.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Other-Questions/FAQDetails40.aspx>

At present only those individuals who directly supervise the apprentice are informed of their previous convictions, allowing the apprentice to decide what they tell others, including co-workers, about their background. Some employers would like the opportunity to take into consideration an offender's past convictions where possible, although some do not expect full details of offenders' prior convictions to be disclosed. This could be factored into a future model of delivery.

3. Case conference and resettlement plan

A range of support has been provided to the apprentice who was released from prison and embarked on the Apprenticeship. However, this is unlikely to be available to all offenders that are released. This raised questions about the additional support needs required by ex-offenders and specifically who is best placed to provide this support. During this evaluation a need was identified for a 'through the gate' support worker to meet the future support needs of ex-offenders embarking on an Apprenticeship. In a future model once a match has been made and the formal interviews are complete a case conference should be held with the various partners. It was felt that a case conference should include the following:

- > Employer – This should be the individual's workplace supervisor who would be working with the apprentice
- > Apprentice – The apprentice may need to join the meeting after initial discussions have taken place around performance management and target setting
- > National Probation Service – The offender's probation officer
- > Prison – A representative from the prison who has worked closely with the offender and the 'through the gate' support worker
- > Training provider – The assessor/trainer who will be working closely with the offender

The meeting should be used to discuss the expectations of the apprentice as well as to share information and discuss their potential support needs upon release from prison. Other individuals/organisations could be invited to attend the case conference as needed/appropriate. For example: if an offender has a strong support network at home then a member of this network (e.g. parent or guardian) could attend this meeting. Or if a particular support need is identified (e.g. housing) someone from a relevant organisation could also attend.

Following this case conference a support and resettlement plan should be produced that outlines what was discussed, and what arrangements needed to be organised for the apprentices release. This should include a list of relevant organisations (which would need to be researched) and the contact numbers/details of those organisations which could provide support to on release.

4. Delivery of the Apprenticeship in prison

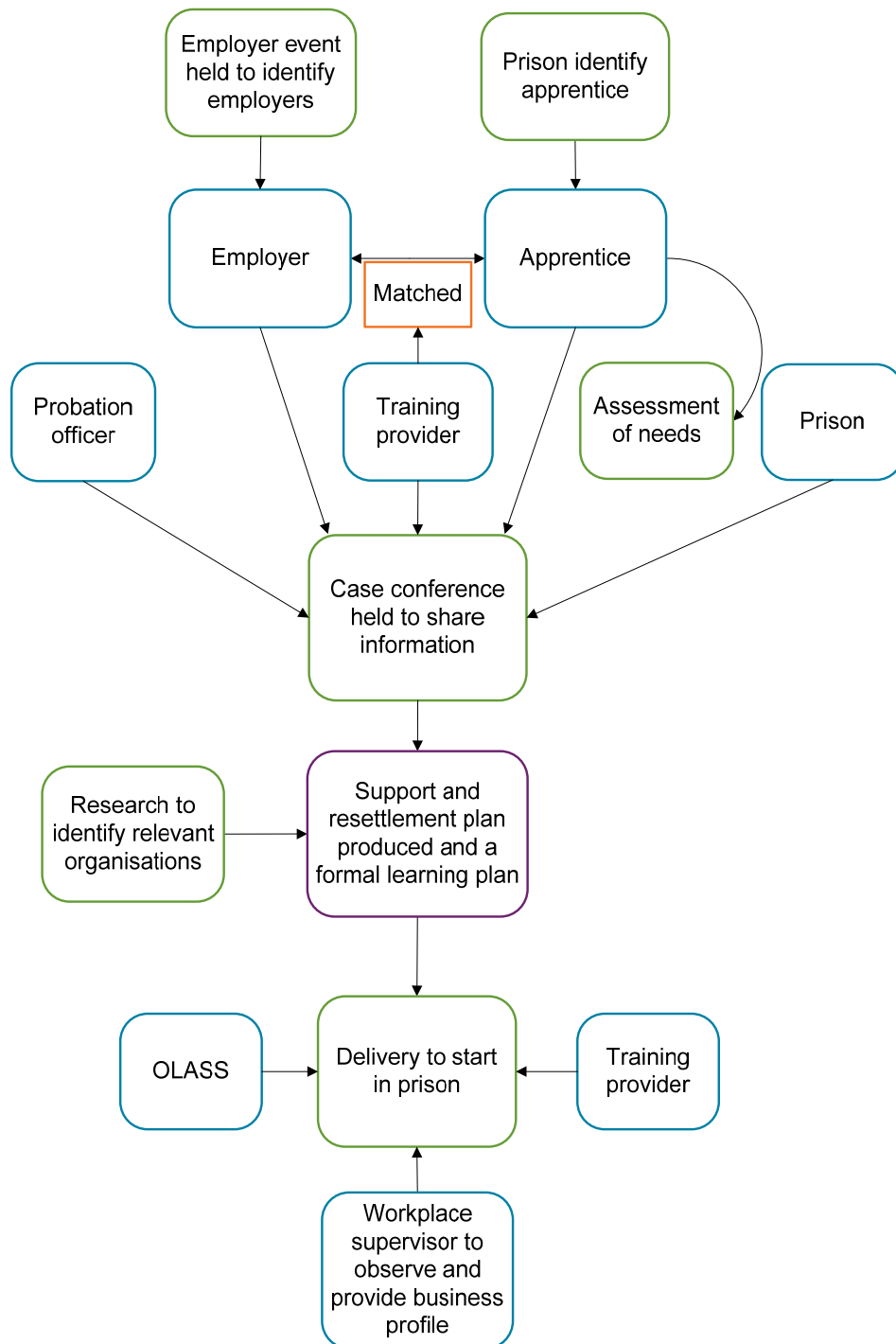
At present the Apprenticeship training is delivered in prison, which stakeholders felt was important to ensure they are partially trained on release and to introduce the offender to the outside world before release. The coordination of OLASS provision (within prison) and the Apprenticeship training by the prison should continue as this provides apprentices with extra training which is relevant to the employer they will be working with on release.

It is therefore recommended that the delivery of the Apprenticeship should begin in prison and that the training should be delivered by the training provider, with the agreed assessor/s coming into the prison. The OLASS provider would work to support the apprentice, in particular by addressing key/functional skills needed for the Apprenticeship and could deliver any additional 'bolt-on' qualifications which are agreed.

The workplace supervisor should also try to be involved in the delivery of the Apprenticeship in prison by visiting the offender to observe the work they are doing. During this time it would be beneficial for the employer to provide the apprentice with a business profile of the organisation (including photos where possible) to ensure the offender knows what to expect when released.

5. Delivery of the Apprenticeship after release

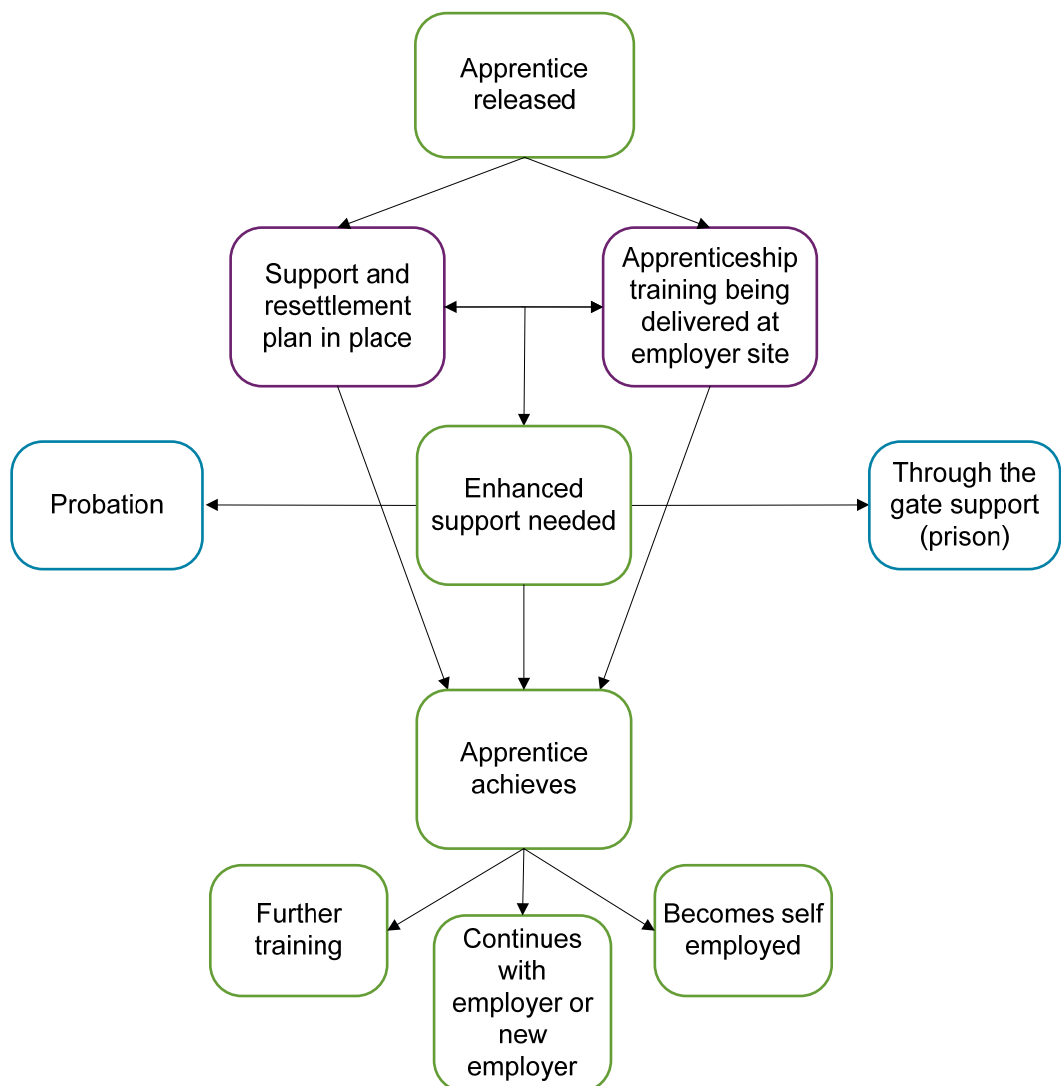
The employers interviewed were generally positive about the scheme and would all consider taking on an apprentice in custody, although they identified a need for enhancements to the support available to the offender on release from prison. In response to the need for additional support, stakeholders at the workshop concluded that a ‘through the gate’ support worker is needed who is located within the prison and has an existing relationship with the offender. In addition to this a case conference should be held between all the key partners prior to the release of an offender.



Delivering the Apprenticeship scheme on an offender's release

On release from prison the aim is that the apprentice will move into full-time employment with the employer. If there are concerns about the offender's attendance at college, the delivery of the Apprenticeship by the training provider could be on the employer's premises to reduce the likelihood of non-attendance. Whilst the delivery is ongoing, the apprentice may need additional support (as outlined in the support and resettlement plan) to meet identified needs and to address problems as they arise. This support should be led by the National Probation Service, with necessary back up from the individual's 'through the gate' support worker as/when required.

Once/if the apprentice achieves their Apprenticeship they will have a number of options which they can explore. Where possible, the apprentice will be able to continue with the employer they have been employed by. If this is not possible, it was noted that they will at least have the qualifications, work experience and reference/s needed to help find employment. Other options open to the apprentice may include further training or becoming self-employed.



Measuring the future success of the model and the pilot

The success of this pilot is currently unknown as only one apprentice has been through the scheme so far. Once more offenders have been through the pilot further work should be undertaken to understand the success of the pilot with final amendments made to the model building on further good practice and lessons learned. When measuring the success of the pilot, and any subsequent roll-out of the scheme, wider measures of success should be considered than traditional measures of Apprenticeship framework completions, such as reducing re-offending rates and 'distance travelled' by apprentices through measuring 'softer outcomes' on apprentices lives. Methods such as an assessment of Social Return on Investment could be used to measure and account for a broader concept of value for money (from such a scheme) by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits.