



*Beth Johnson*  
FOUNDATION  
*looking at ageing in new ways*

---

## **A Partnership of Trust**

**Young Offenders supporting older people in care settings**

**An example of social inclusion through  
intergenerational practice**

**By**

**Gillian Granville and John Laidlaw**

John Laidlaw, who co-authored this report, died unexpectedly on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2000.

This report is dedicated to his work at Onley Young Offender Institution as Prison Community Placement Officer and his enthusiasm and commitment towards the work. He will be greatly missed.

## CONTENTS

Introduction	2
The Context	3
Pre-release community service volunteering	3
The role of the prison and host organisations	4
Research Framework	6
The Main Findings	7
The pivotal role of the host organisations	7
The strengths of the young offenders	8
The strengths of the older people with physical frailty, some of whom have dementia	10
The Connecting Components	12
Trusting Partnerships	12
Inclusive Practice	13
The Presence of Champions	15
Discussion	16
Implications for Research and Practice	17
Conclusion	18
References	19
Acknowledgements	20
Appendix A: Guide to Release on Temporary Licence	21
Appendix B: CSV Rules	22
Appendix C: CSV Contract	24
Appendix D: Job Description - Trainee	25

## INTRODUCTION

This report examines a local community service scheme that places young offenders in care settings in the community with frail elderly people, some of who have dementia. It aims to further our understanding of intergenerational programmes<sup>1</sup> as a means of addressing social exclusion. In particular, it looks at the nature of the relationship between the younger and older people and whether this approach to resettlement work with young offenders has reciprocal benefits for both generations. It also explores whether programmes such as these have the potential to influence the negative stereotypes which society places on these two particular groups and on the institutions or organisations where the work takes place.

Social exclusion has become a fashionable discourse in which to locate a number of social policy issues and has formed the cornerstone of the New Labour Government's approach to tackling inequalities and creating a fairer, just society for all. The Social Exclusion Unit located in the Cabinet Office, has recently produced its consultation document on a National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (2000), with a particular emphasis on poverty and deprived neighbourhoods, social commentators (Atkinson & Hill 1998, Alcock 1998) however are seeking to widen the concept and develop our understanding of the complex processes that cause people to become excluded from main stream society. In this report, our aim is twofold: we hope contribute to an understanding of what is meant by social exclusion, through a closer examination of two groups located within two generations. We also offer strategies that can act as a progressive route to social inclusion and the creation of social cohesion.

This report begins with setting the project in context and presents some of the supporting literature concerning community placements and young offenders, with an explanation of the difference between local schemes and the National Community Service Volunteer programme. The research framework is described, followed by the main findings. These demonstrate the strengths that each age group offer to one another and how this leads to significant gains for both the young offenders and the older people. It also shows the importance role that is taken by the Institution and the host organisations in facilitating the process. We then discuss three connecting components that emerge from this intergenerational initiative, which can contribute to our understanding of the process involved. We link these findings to the contemporary debates on social exclusion, before examining the implications of this work for future policy, research and practice development.

<sup>1</sup> Intergenerational programmes are vehicles for the purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations for individual and social benefits (Hatton-Yeo & Ohsako 2000)

## THE CONTEXT

The study took place at HM Young Offenders Institution and Remand Centre, Onley in the West Midlands, UK, which is a closed Young Offender Institution, the equivalent of a category C prison. It has a capacity for 640 male inmates aged between 15-21 years. This includes 240 places for 15-17 years old, up to 84 of whom are on remand and the remainder are largely subject to a Detention and Training Order. The nature of the offences committed by the inmates includes the widest range of crimes against property and violence. Drug and alcohol related crimes are common, as are crimes involving motor vehicles.

Onley Young Offenders Institution has demonstrated a commitment to working with the local community through a planned programme of voluntary placements over the past 14 to 15 years. The young offenders are released on temporary licence (Appendix A) to volunteer in organisations that are located in the voluntary or non-profit making sector and there are twelve placements currently available. These host organisations include two-day care settings for physically frail elderly people, including those with dementia, a furniture recycling project, a charity shop and an accommodation project for residents with a physical or moderate learning difficulty. The Institution has also had links with the national organisation of Community Service Volunteers (CSV) pre-release schemes (described in more detail on page 4) and the Governor has recently re-established this programme, alongside the locally managed scheme described in this report.

In spite of the support shown by the prison governor towards inmates making a contribution in the local community, changes within the prison system have meant that the number of inmates eligible for community volunteering has declined<sup>1</sup>. One of these changes has included the shorter time that inmates spend in the community, because of the introduction in 1999 of Home Detention Curfew (Crime & Disorder Act 1998). Previously, inmates may have spent between six to twelve months in placement, but more commonly now this has been reduced to two to three months, because the prisoners are released two months early. This has led to a greater turnover of young offenders working in the local community.

### **Pre-release Community Service Volunteering**

A Home Office report (1998) states that:

“An important part of the activities of a Young Offender Institution is to prepare the offender for return to the outside community. A flexible but coherent programme of activities is provided, aimed at assisting the offender to develop personal responsibility, self-discipline, physical fitness and to obtain suitable employment after release” (Home Office 1998:175).

<sup>1</sup> Instructions to Governors 36/1995 sets out the framework of a new system of tighter controls governing the temporary release of prisoners under Prison Rules & Young Offenders Institution Rules. Instructions to Governors 46/1998, amends 36/1995 and gives greater flexibility for release on temporary license for young offenders.

Onley Young Offenders Institution where this study took place has a raft of rehabilitation activities to prepare young inmates for release. These include 'A Groupwork Programme', 'Enhanced Thinking Skills' (accredited), 'Welfare to Work', 'New Directions' (a general offending behaviour programme), 'Anger Management' and 'Drug courses'. There is a YMCA youth worker, extensive courses provided by the gym staff and a comprehensive educational, construction and vocational training course programme. However, the research into the most effective programmes to reduce the re-offending rate, which for most young offenders is 77% within two years of discharge (1995 figures in Home Office Report, 1998) are complex and no one approach guarantees success. A number of programmes draw on psychological theories and techniques to modify patterns of thinking and reduce offending behaviour (Home Office 1997). Interestingly, research (McGuire 1995) into which factors are important in work to reduce re-offending, indicate that programmes are more likely to be effective if they are community based, rather than institution based. Hodges (1996) suggest this is perhaps because working more closely to offenders' home environments allows criminogenic factors to be addressed in a more direct real life way.

The national organisation of Community Service Volunteers (CSV) has since it was founded in 1962, worked with social care organisations to provide volunteer placements for a wide range of young people. Since 1971, this has included working with serving prisoners which they say "is all part of CSV's belief that everyone can make a contribution as a citizen" (CSV undated). CSV provides penal establishments with an additional resource to the pre-release and resettlement options and supports the Prison Service's vision by achieving important outcomes for the prison, the prisoners and the voluntary agencies which offer the placements. The CSV programme consists of full time residential volunteering in social care settings in areas away from the prisoners' local community and usually last a period of one month. It is available to suitable prisoners in the last months of their sentence and the final decision to release the prisoner on temporary licence is taken by the Governor of the institution, with recommendations from his senior staff.

The local community service described in this report is managed by Onley Young Offenders Institution and is separate from the national CSV programme. This research, because of its intergenerational focus, concentrates principally on the community service taking place at the older people's settings, although it is recognised that the young offenders are also volunteering alongside older people in the other placements.

## **The Role of the Prison and Host Organisations**

The Institution plays a key role in ensuring the success of the scheme, through taking a responsible approach towards risk behaviours. There are clear guidelines and procedures to follow and an immediate response from the prison if any known problems are identified by the placements. Onley is well known locally and the presence of inmates making a positive contribution to the community enables bridges to be built between the Institution and the community. The young men are easily identified by their prison tee-shirts or sweat shirts and because they cycle from the prison to their placements covering between 5 to 7 miles, they are visible to a number of the local residents.

The two host organisations in this report are located in the voluntary sector and provide day care services to older people. The Bungalow Day Centre is a service provided by Rugby Mind, affiliated to the National Organisation 'Mind'. It is two thirds funded by Social Services and nearly a third by the Health Authority<sup>1</sup> and has 90 places for older people with moderate to severe dementia. The referrals come from the local Community Mental Health Team for older people. It runs five days a week. The service includes two outreach centres and has one full time manager, one part-time assistant manager and two part-time support staff, with a maximum of twelve volunteers working a few hours a week. It has three places for trainees. The second organisation, 'The Hoskyn Centre for the Disabled', is funded from private donations and fund raising activities and does not presently receive any statutory funding support. It has 75 places for older people with physical disability and accepts referrals from a wide variety of sources, including doctors, health workers, social workers and self-referrers. The Hoskyn Centre is open three days a week with one full time manager, two part time assistants, a part time administrator and eight to nine volunteers, undertaking a variety of roles, including driving transport. It has one place for a trainee, who works 9-4pm each day.

<sup>1</sup> The remaining finance is found through fundraising events

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The fieldwork stage of the research was carried out over seven days between May to July 2000 and took place at Onley Young Offenders Institution, West Midlands, UK and two voluntary organisations in the surrounding community. The methodology consisted of a number of different approaches for collecting the data as described below:

- In order to gather information and set the context for research, meetings were held with prison staff, notably the Governor, the community placement officer and members of the Governor's management team.
- There was an intelligence gathering exercise at three community placements that did not form part of the main data collection, but contributed to setting the context for the research.
- Documents, related procedures and reviews of some of the research findings relating to pre-release community service volunteering were examined.
- There were one-to-one interviews and informal discussions with two managers and six paid staff at two voluntary sector organisations, who acted as hosts for the placements.
- There was a combination of participatory and non-participatory observation at the placements and opportunities were created to talk informally to approximately 40 older members and volunteers.
- One-to-one semi structured taped interviews were conducted at the community placements with seven young offenders, aged between 17-21 years old.

The names of the members and young offenders have been changed to protect their identity. A number of different terms are applied to the age groups, which are not always satisfactory because of their stigmatising nature, but have been necessary for the purpose of clarity. So the young men are sometimes called 'young offenders', 'inmates' or 'prisoners'; in the placements they are known by the host organisations as 'trainees' or 'volunteers'. The older people are called 'members' by the placements; in this report they are also referred to as 'people with physical frailty', 'with dementia', or 'cognitive impairment'. The direct quotes are in *italic*.

## **THE MAIN FINDINGS**

The findings demonstrate the significant role of the host organisations in the facilitation of a well organised and locally planned programme of community service volunteering, which in turn leads to significant advantages for their service. The findings also demonstrate that the older people and the young offenders have strengths to offer each other, which gives reciprocal gains and benefits to both generations.

### **The Pivotal Role of the Host Organisations**

#### **The team mix, or ‘coming on board’**

The host organisation offer the trainees an opportunity to be part of a team alongside other staff and volunteers which enables a range of skills to develop that are useful preparation for employment. The skills include the sharing out of tasks, time management, contributing at staff meetings in the interests of members and taking responsibility for areas of work. The trainees learn that the mixing of a variety of roles and responsibilities can produce a united team that works effectively for the benefit of the organisation. The interdependence of the team on individual contributions is highlighted and enhances a culture of respect for each other. One manager feels that working alongside more mature staff enables the trainees to experience tolerance and a sense of humour whilst engaged in demanding care work. Trainees are offered an alternative environment to the regime of the Institution and an opportunity to experience other ways of working.

However, the young offenders are left in no doubt of the situation if they do not want to become a team member. One manager tells the trainees:

*“It’s up to you what you make of it. Don’t think you are here for a skive. If you want to come on board you become part of the team, if you can’t do that, you go back inside. You are just wasting your time and my time and everyone else’s time”*

This opportunity for team building and the chance to ‘come on board’, has the potential to offer the young offenders a different way forward when they are released. They have the option to ask for references based on their performances as volunteers, which may enhance their employment opportunities in the future. We were told of a few young men who, after their experiences in the placements, had decided to pursue careers within the care sector with older people or people with learning disabilities.

#### **A Reliable Resource of Volunteers**

One of the major advantages to the organisations of the young offenders scheme is the regular source of volunteers. As one of the care managers explains: *“elderly disabled people are not fashionable”*. The organisations find it difficult to attract volunteers to work in the day settings and this can limit the range and breadth of opportunities available to the members. The potential to have interested volunteers who are reliable and available on a full time basis is very attractive to the organisations and helps to keep them viable. One centre manager

came in from her holiday to interview a new trainee because she told us, *“I didn’t want to miss out”*

## **New Dynamics**

The introduction of young men as volunteers into day care settings with elderly people offers new and important dynamics, as described in more detail in the next section. They also bring a range of contemporary skills that have the potential to complement the work of the organisations. An obvious example is Tim, who is very competent at computer technology and is able to work with some new software to set up a database for the organisation. Interestingly, this trainee felt that this was where he could make the most effective contribution to the team, but after two or three weeks he is also engaging with members and exchanging news with individuals.

## **Exchanging Experiences**

The host organisations provide the settings for varied experiences between the generations. The older people, who normally have limited opportunity to mix with young people outside their family networks because of their restricted mobility or cognitive impairment, have the chance to mix with the younger generation in a managed environment. Similarly, the trainees have rarely met with older people to whom they are unrelated and they are even more unlikely to have met a person with dementia who is outside their family. They now have the opportunity to understand more about old age and to recognise the individual person behind the illnesses. Mark tells us that one of his grandparents has dementia, but through working at the centre, he now feels he understands the illness much better. One manager reports that it is not unusual for the trainees to remain in contact with the host organisation after release and to enquire about an individual members progress.

We now look in more detail at the strengths that the two generations offer to each other.

## **The Strengths of the Young Offenders**

### **Vitality and Enthusiasm**

The young men bring an enthusiasm and vitality to the placements as a characteristic of their youth. This is combined with an uninhibited and non-patronising approach towards the members, which is refreshing and stimulating. It is true to say that for some of the trainees there is an initial uncertainty and reticence but through the support and example of the team, they soon learn to approach and engage with members, including those with cognitive impairment, in a way that relates to the person as an individual.

The researcher observed an exchange between trainee Mark and Albert, who has a moderate degree of dementia. Mark is telling him about a film he has watched the previous day, which, involves aliens and the use of computer visualisation techniques, and Albert is listening intently to Mark’s detailed account. Albert may be unable to fully comprehend the story that Mark is telling but he is able to engage with Mark’s excitement and enthusiasm. It is clear that he thoroughly

enjoys the experience and Mark has in return enjoyed explaining the film to such an interested audience.

### **Companionship**

The older people enjoy the company of trainees because they bring different areas of interest and values to the lives of people whose social networks are severely reduced. The members report that being with young people keeps them “in touch with life”, raises their morale and enables them to communicate more effectively with their grandchildren. This supports evidence from other intergenerational programmes that show how older people feel more engaged with life when they are alongside the younger generation (Newman et. al. 1997, Granville 1999, 2000).

The young men engage in arrange of activities with the members including darts, snooker and crosswords which, as Mark acknowledges, helps to bring some normality into the member’s lives. They demonstrate a sensitivity and concern towards the older people, which challenges the stereotypical image of this young age group. This is illustrated in the following example: Jason is helping one of the members, Ken, to get his coat on to go outside. Ken becomes very agitated and swings his arm out, striking Jason on the face. Jason, although surprised by the blow, is able to understand that this was Ken’s frustration from the illness and continues to help him, with support from other team staff.

### **Physical Strength**

On a practical level, the trainees bring physical strength and agility to settings where these assets are especially beneficial. It widens the opportunities for members to engage in a range of activities that would not be possible without that physical support, such as outings and coach trips. An example of this was observed at ‘The Centre’ where members have considerable mobility difficulties. Jane has been unable to go into town to do her own shopping for sometime and Sam is asked if he can take her in a wheelchair to do some personal shopping. Jane also has a list of shopping from other members, which included birthday cards and tee-shirts. Sam, in spite of having little experience of wheelchairs, pushes hers skilfully around the shopping precinct and in and out of a number of shops. He also, because of her arthritic fingers, helps Jane with her purse and the change.

The trainees appear acutely aware of the physical frailty of the older people and according to one manager, the trainees display protective behaviour towards the members and a genuine concern for their welfare. Although it was not directly observed there are times, when, if trainee and members are comfortable with the situation, the young men are able to assist with personal care. This ranges from assisting to the toilet, helping with meals and dressing with outer clothing.

## **'Man to Man'**

One particular area of interest for this work relates to the significance of gender. The trainees are all men and traditionally in care settings, whether within the statutory, private or voluntary sectors, the majority of the carers or volunteers are women. Care giving in old age is a world mainly populated by women. An advantage of the pre-release community placement scheme is that older men have the opportunity to develop a relationship, which is 'man to man', rather than age specific. So the men can talk and share what would popularly be defined as 'male topics'.

A clear example of this is the contact between Sam from prison and Gerald an older man with a degree of learning difficulty, who has been attending 'The Centre' for sometime. Gerald appears to miss the company of other men and often tries to relate to the trainees. Sam plays pool with Gerald on a regular basis and although according to the manager, the relationship between Gerald and other staff and members is sometimes tense, he forms a friendship with Sam that appears important to them both. Gerald sees Sam as a confidant, seeking him out to talk to him and on the days Gerald is not at 'The Centre', he frequently telephones 'The Centre' to speak to Sam. The manager praises the "quiet patience" of Sam and the skilful way he handles the relationship with Gerald. During the research the placement changes and on a briefing from Sam, the new trainee, Carl is developing the 'man to man' friendship with Gerald.

The young men from the prison display a range of strengths that enhance the lives of older members and potentially begin to challenge damaging stereotypes of both age groups. In return, the older people have strengths that they offer to the young men and which potentially may help them after release.

### **The strengths of the older people with physical frailty, some of whom have dementia**

#### **Concern for the Younger Generation**

The members do not openly discuss the fact that the young men are from Onley Young Offender Institution or the nature of their offences. However, the older people demonstrate a concern towards the trainees as young people who have made a mistake and for which they are now being punished. The older people are non-judgemental in their attitude towards the trainees and talk about the pressures on the young generation today (Granville 2000). The members particularly mention the availability of drugs and the difficulties associated with unemployment and use their own life experiences in helping to understand the context for young people today.

This is particularly interesting finding because of society's portrayal of the young and old in the community as at odds with each other. The young are perceived as responsible for the anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhoods and older residents feel resentful and intimidated by the younger generation (Power & Tunstall 1997). In this study, there were a small number of older members or their families who had been victims of crime, but there is no evidence that the members associated those experiences with the individual trainees. We return to this issue later in the report.

Instead, the older people take the trouble to ensure that the young men are not placed in compromising situations that would jeopardise their position at the prison. Jane is observed checking that Sam, when they went out on the town, has the fleece jacket that is provided by the host organisation zipped up to cover the prison sweatshirt. The members are aware of the strict prison rules and for example do not give the trainees gifts or money to take back with them. This is a means of supporting the trainees to avoid temptation and stay out of trouble with the prison authorities.

### **An Acceptance of the Individual**

Through engaging with and getting to know the young men, the older members recognise the young offenders as individuals and offer the time and patient listening. Sam is surprised as he thought they would be biased against him because of the prison, but finds that “it’s not like that or they don’t show it”. There was no clear evidence to show the older person offering direct advice to a young man, although potentially the environment is conducive for such a relationship.

The significance of this acceptance of the individual is recognising the uniqueness of a person and in defying the stereotypes. So, Paul is known for being good at darts, instead of a ‘young offender’; Tim is accepted as being an ‘expert’ with computer technology. In return the trainees get to know that Louisa has a good sense of humour and Jim enjoys a walk, rather than adopting a group label of dementia.

### **Valuing the Young People’s Contribution**

There is a clear indication that the members value the contribution that the young men make to their lives. The older people’s appreciation is unexpected by the trainees, who come to the placements without an expectation that they can make a positive difference to other people’s lives. They learn that they can offer something to people whom they recognise as outside the attention of mainstream activities and whose social worlds have diminished. Sam remarks: “I really enjoy it here because they appreciate me, and I have been surprised at how much”. This leads to feelings of self worth and self esteem, which, for some of the trainees may be a new experience.

The degree to which the older people value the young persons contribution is tangibly shown when, at the end of the placements and the young men are released, gifts are given and parties arranged. One organisation collects money for the trainees, which in the light of the fund raising required to maintain the host organisations, is a generous and genuine expression of their appreciation. It is also not unusual for trainees after release, to bring friends and families to meet the members.

## THE CONNECTING COMPONENTS

The findings from this study show positive gains for older people, the young offenders and the host organisations. However, there appear to be some essential components that cut across the work and may hold the key to its success. They provide the important 'glue' that allows complex and divergent interests to form a cohesive whole. These three elements are: trusting partnerships, inclusive practice and the presence of champions.

### **Trusting Partnerships**

There is a culture of trust throughout the scheme that connects a number of partnerships and relationships and creates a cohesive and successful structure to support the work. These relationships were far reaching but like a jigsaw, all are interdependent on each other.

The most obvious is the trust placed in the young offender by the Prison Service. The young men are cycling between 5 to 7 miles from Onley to volunteer in the community and the nature of the placements is with older people who are perceived as vulnerable by society, including older people with physical or mental frailty. The Prison Governor takes the ultimate responsibility for recommending community service volunteering and trusts his staff and in particular the community placement officers to guide him in the decision-making.

The young inmates in return trust that the Prison Service will not place them in situations that exploit them as volunteers or that will compromise the conditions of their temporary licences (appendix D).

The study found very high levels of integrity in the host organisations and this provides the best environment for the trainees to grow and develop as individuals during their community experience. There is also careful consideration from the hosts that the trainees are not compromised and find themselves in situations that will put them in conflict with the prison regulations. So for example, as we have already seen, any gifts for the trainees are kept by the hosts until the young men are released.

The balance that is required by the host organisations to trust and also protect the young offenders from temptation is a fine one. The trainees are given a range of responsibilities as part of their work in the team, such as handling money or going out on errands to the local shops, but these are within the guidelines of the organisation and apply equally to all team members. In return, the organisations trust the Prison Service to remove an inmate immediately if they have any concerns. Removals for such reasons are a very rare occurrence and could only be recalled twice in 14 years of community placements, but when it has been necessary Onley acted swiftly. The organisations did comment that the prison regulations for community service had been tightened in the mid-1990's, which restricted some of the activities that the young offenders could be involved in. More recently and subject to individual risk assessment and case-by-case discretion, some of these activities such as being away with the groups over night have begun to occur again (see footnote: page 4).

The older people have trust in The Bungalow and The Hoskyn Centre to create a safe environment for themselves. The members are unconcerned that the young men are from the local Young Offender Institution and are very accepting of the scheme. This may in part be due to the secure place that the activities are conducted in and trust the older people in the staff team. This trust is extended to the relatives and friends who express no disquiet at prisoners being alongside their relatives, because they report that they are confident the organisation will ensure a safe place for the older person. Trust is also seen at an individual level, which is illustrated in the example of Sam taking Jane out in a wheelchair on their own into town, to do some shopping.

Finally there is trust from all the above parties in the process of conducting this research and producing the report. This trust had to be built and confidence won, but it still required a leap of faith from Onley Young Offender Institution and the host organisations to allow it to happen.

### **Inclusive Practice**

A key characteristic of The Bungalow and The Hoskyn Centre that the research reveals is the practice of inclusion. In this context, inclusion means equality of access and opportunity to all individuals and an acceptance of uniqueness and diversity. Discrimination or negative stereotyping is not tolerated by the organisation, which enables those people, who in other circumstances feel exposed to discriminatory behaviour, to feel safe.

The examples of inclusive practice are many. There is an expectation by the organisations that older people who have physical disabilities or dementia are to be treated with respect and dignity. They are all known as 'members' and everyone involved in the work responds to the members as individuals with their own unique personality. Any members of staff or volunteer, including the young offenders, who patronises or ridicules a member is unwelcome in the team any may be asked to leave. This ethos of respect and individual rights is illustrated in the following example from the day centre manager. We were discussing whether the members are aware that the young men are from the Institution at Onley, which was opened in 19698 and has thus been part of the local community for 32 years. She feels it is not the right of the day centre to conceal this fact from the members if they ask, even though their level of cognitive impairment may lead other people to believe that it is unnecessary to tell them. As we have already seen, this acceptance of individual rights and keeping people informed does not do harm to anyone.

This promotion of an inclusive workplace extends to the young offenders. If a staff member or volunteer is unhappy at working alongside the trainees, which has only occurred with a small minority, they are asked to leave. The young men are not asked about their convictions, because from the placement's point of view this is not relevant. If the trainees wish to talk about it that is their responsibility, but it is not the concern of the staff team or the members. Conversely, any trainee displaying discriminatory behaviour has the placement terminated. This is unusual, but we were told of one young 'women's work'. He lost his opportunity to continue on community placement.

In this environment of inclusion, racial prejudice is particularly not tolerated. We heard of occasional examples where members have made racist comments towards other members or trainees; these members are taken to one side and told their behaviour is unacceptable and if the placements recommended to him by the previous trainee Sam, is told that: “you’ll be all right there. They will like you”. The manager is sure that, in view of the fact that the both of the trainees are black, Sam is referring to the absence of racism at the placement. In the facility for people with dementia, The Bungalow, we were told that if a member because of the progression of their illness, displays racist behaviour, then an explanation is given and support offered to the receiver of the remarks.

The host organisations create a place where attitudes can change and stereotypical behaviours challenged. The young offenders persistently tell us that in spite of rarely, or never, having contact with people with dementia, they now understand more about the illness and the person behind it. They also, through forming friendships, recognise that even if the physical appearance is frail, the older people are individuals with a wealth of experience and interesting conversations and talents. The trainees appear convinced that through the opportunity to volunteer in community organisations with older people, their perception of old age has permanently changed. Jason, if he hears his peers insulting older people with dementia replies: “you haven’t got a clue. Come and work here – it isn’t like that!” Mark’s grandmother had dies last year with dementia and he felt he had not understood it at all at the time, but feels much better informed now.

In return, the attitude of older people towards young offenders is challenged in this safe, inclusive environment. The older members get to know the individual young person and they demonstrate a tolerant and supportive approach towards them. We were told “he’s such a nice lad”. The same is true of the attitude of the staff and volunteers, who outside of the organisations share their positive experiences of working alongside young offenders with their family and friends in the community.

Inclusive environments allow individuals and groups to flourish and clearly the host organisations are role models of inclusive practice. However, in the process of undervalued groups coming together and offering support to each other, do they then become ‘communities of exclusion’ and remain outside the mainstream of activity? Is there a danger that the synergy created between groups who are marginalized and discriminated against by society, mean they are likely to remain in closed communities and become further excluded from broader social networks?

## **The Presence of Champions**

The third connecting component of this scheme of community placements is the presence of champions. A 'Champion' is defined as "a person who argues on behalf of or defends a person or a cause; to support..." (The Cassell Concise Dictionary 1997). In order for the scheme to have all the strengths and benefits described, it necessitates the presence of individuals who believe strongly in its value and with the determination to argue the case, even when the odds appear against them. The characteristics of champions identified in this work are an ability to have vision, of what is possible and certainly worth being tried and the determination to promote the cause. They are experienced workers in the field, very committed to the task, but without strong personal gains or ambition. Also, it is clear that for 'champions' to be organisations that have strong support is received from the Governor and at The Bungalow and The Hoskyn Centre, the managers are supported by their Board of Trustees. This enables the talents of the 'champions' to flourish and a realisation of their vision, which can really make a difference.

The research identified three champions, one with Onley and the others in the host organisations. The prison officer with responsibility for the whole community service volunteers, has a strong belief that the experience in the community enables the young offenders to readjust to life outside the prison. He also sees the benefits to the young offenders of working in a supportive team, which helps to raise their self-esteem and self worth. However, this is not necessarily a view shared by other colleagues and as a 'champion' he has to at times convince others of its value. Likewise, the two managers from the host organisations have to defend the need for their service with Health and Social Service Departments in order to continue to receive statutory funding. They also strenuously support the rights of physically frail older people and those with dementia to receive a high quality of care and one that appropriately meets their needs. The interesting observation is that in a tolerant and trusting environment where champions are working, there is the potential for other champions to develop. This research indicates that the young men may in the future 'champion' for older people and those with dementia through their life experiences in placements. Also, older people as we know from other research (Granville 1999, 2000) are willing to champion for the younger generation and to challenge the negative stereotyping that society imposes on young people.

## DISCUSSION

One of the aims of this report is to make a contribution to our understanding of social exclusion, and to identify pathways to inclusion through the creation of “unlikely alliances” (O’Brien 1996).

We argue that social exclusion moves beyond the government notion of poverty, unemployment and poor neighbourhoods as described in the latest report for the Social Exclusion Unit (2000), towards people being excluded because they are separated out from the mainstream activities of society. This recognises that social structures can exclude individuals and groups (Atkinson and Hill 1998), which prevent them from forming relationships with others. Social barriers are formed which prevent particular groups from participating fully in the economic, political and cultural life of the society within which they live (Scharf et. al. 2000). This results in a reduction of power and influence that can occur over a period of time and be transmitted across generations.

Older people often find themselves excluded from powerful networks when they are no longer considered to be contributing to the economy through paid work. The practice of ageism that discriminates against people purely because of their age is not illegal in the UK, because there is no legislation available to prevent it, as there is for discriminatory issues concerning race, gender and disability. People find themselves excluded from many activities purely because of their age. This is compounded considerably when there is loss of mobility or dementia-type illnesses; people with dementia lose their friends and social networks, resulting in limited social contact.

Young people also experience age discrimination and receive negative stereotyping because of their age, which are perpetuated by the media and our own prejudices, and therefore obscure the individuality of the person. Young offenders are stereotyped and further discriminated against both during their sentence and after their release. Parallels can be drawn between the experience of older people with physical disability or dementia and the young offenders, because both groups find themselves excluded from a number of social networks. This case study demonstrates that when these individual groups come together, they get to know each other as individuals and these damaging attitudes can change to positive ones.

So what can we learn about social exclusion from this particular example of young offenders volunteering with older people with physical frailty and dementia? At a generational level, do both groups recognise they suffer from age discrimination, which leaves them outside many of the structures of power that exist in society? In this example, do these particular groups within the generation feel more powerful, and less excluded, when they come together to support each other? Are they safer within organisational structures that are undervalued and marginalised from mainstream services? The danger with this approach is that ‘communities of exclusion’ are created which do not build pathways into the wider community and facilitate inclusion. In order to enable groups that have become excluded to fully participate, the strengths of these “unlikely alliances” (O’Brien 1996) need to be more visible to those outside the organisations. This report also has also indicated that if social exclusion is to be overcome, it requires a culture of trusting partnerships, an inclusive environment that is tolerant of diversity, and ‘champions’ who have the vision to make it happen.

## IMPLICATION FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

- Community service volunteering for young prisoners near the end of their sentence, that is 'championed' and well supported and facilitated by the Institution and the host organisations, appears to act as a bridge for young offenders between prison and community. They have the opportunity to work alongside others in a team who demonstrate the importance of trust and the need for tolerance towards diversity. There is also an opportunity to show their strengths, and as a result, develop positive feelings of self-esteem and self-worth. Organised community placements for a period of time *after* release, could offer a further bridge to the young men whilst they are re-establishing themselves in society.
- Providers and funders of services for older people can recognise the value of the younger generation volunteering in settings where, due to growing older, people have become physically frail, or have some cognitive impairment. The young people bring a new dimension of interest, enthusiasm and companionship that is specific to their age and generation. It enables the strengths of the older people to show in their support and concern towards the young people, and an acceptance and tolerance towards them. Finally, because the young offenders are men, they bring a dimension to care organisation which is seriously lacking in service to older people, because it is an area mainly populated by women.
- This study has sought to contribute to the dialogue of social exclusion by identifying the components of intergenerational practice, which arguably create pathways towards social inclusion. The two generations develop and increased understanding towards each other that can potentially lead to a sustainable change in attitudes and perception. It allows the strengths of each generation to be clearly demonstrated and encourages the development of social capital<sup>1</sup>. However, these strengths need to be recognised and developed by other groups outside the host organisation, in order to avoid the growth of 'communities of exclusion' who remain outside the mainstream networks of society.

---

<sup>1</sup> Putnam (1993) describes 'social capital' as features of social organisation, which work to improve the health, wealth and industry of a community.

## CONCLUSION

This report has presented an in-depth case study of a local pre-release community service volunteer scheme operating at Onley Young Offender Institution in the West Midlands Region, UK. It has demonstrated a number of outcomes:

- Community volunteer placements facilitate the integration of young inmates back into the community, which reduces the risk of re-offending.
- The intergenerational model, which enables the strengths of each generation to support each other, enhances the ability of young offenders to raise their self-esteem and self worth, and can in turn make them less vulnerable to re-conviction.
- It is possible to reduce the exclusion of older people, with physical frailty and those with dementia, from mainstream social networks through creative links with the younger generation.
- Intergenerational programmes are able to reduce negative stereotyping and discrimination, and develop sustainable pathways towards more social cohesiveness.

## REFERENCES

Alcock, P (1998) "Bringing Britain Together", *Community Care*, 26<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> December:18-24.

Atkinson, A.B. and Hills, J. (eds) (1998) *Exclusion, Employment and Opportunity*, CASE paper 4, The London School of Economics.

CVS (undated) *Pre-release volunteering: The Facts*, London: CVS & HM Prison Service.

Granville, G. (1999) *Evaluation of Intergenerational Community Action*, Staffordshire: Beth Johnson Foundation.

Granville, G. (2000) *Understanding the Experience of Older Volunteers in Intergenerational School-based Projects*, Staffordshire: The Beth Johnson Foundation.

Hatton-Yeo, A and Ohsako, T. (2000) (eds) *Intergenerational Programmes: Public Policy and Research Implications an intergenerational perspective*, Staffordshire: The Beth Johnson Foundation and UNESCO.

Hodges, F. (1996) *Rehabilitation – What Works?*, Unpublished paper :HMYOI Onley

Home Office (1997) *Prison Statistics England and Wales*, A publication of the Government Statistical Service: The Stationary Office Ltd.

McGuire, J. (1995) (ed) *What Works: Reducing Re-offending, Guidelines for Research and Practice*, Chichester: Wiley.

Newman, S., Ward, R., Smith, T., Wilson, J., and McCrea, J. (1997) *Intergenerational Programmes: Past, Present and Future*, USA: Taylor and Frances.

O'Brien, J (1996) *Members of each Other: building community in company with people with learning disabilities*, Canada: Inclusion Press.

Power, A and Tunstall, R. (1997) *Dangerous Disorder*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Putnam, R. (1993) *Making Democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy*, New Jersey: Princetown University Press.

Scarf, T., Phillipson, C., Kingston, P. and smith, A (2000) *social Exclusion and Older People: a conceptual framework*, Unpublished paper, presented at the British Society Gerontology 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Oxford.

Social Exclusion Unit. (2000) *National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal: a framework for consultation*, London: Cabinet Office.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank the members, volunteers and staff at The bungalow, Rugby Mind, and the Hoskyn Centre for the Disabled, Rugby, for their patience and tolerance towards all our questions, and for the trust they placed in us for this research.

The authors also wish to thank Peter Bates from the National Development Team, (Albion Wharf, Albion Street, Manchester, M1 5LN) for his invaluable contribution in developing our understanding of issues surrounding the social exclusion/inclusion debate. Also for his constructive comments on the draft copy of this report.

## **Guide to Release on Temporary Licence**

Resettlement licence, (Home leave)

Community Visit, (town visit)

Facility licence, (work outside the prison, CVS, special needs horse riding).

### **Who can apply?**

All in-mates serving any length of sentence can apply.

### **What happens next?**

It is the personal officer's job to check whether an inmate is eligible to apply.

This information can be found in the warrants and/or the pre cons.

They will not be eligible to apply if any of the following are on their record:

1. Escape from lawful custody, including police, prison and courts.
2. Abscond –from previous release on temporary licence. (does not include children's homes.)
3. Breach of: community service orders  
attendance centre orders  
supervision orders  
probation order

**NB** Resulting in a custodial sentence.

The breach should appear on pre cons or warrants, (if the court took no action they can still apply.)

4. Failed bail conditions, resulting in a custodial sentence. (The failed bail should appear on warrants or in the pre cons.

If the court took no action they can still apply.

5. Offences committed whilst on bail, and given a custodial sentence for this. (Again, if the court took no action they can apply.)

### **When can the inmate apply?**

#### **Facility Licence and Community visits**

They have to have served a quarter of their whole sentence to apply.

#### **Resettlement licence**

They have to have served one third of their whole sentence.

#### **Does the inmate need to be on the enhanced level?**

They only need to be on enhanced in order to apply for a community visit.

There needs to be at least 14 days left to serve after returning from home leave.

This does not apply for facility licence or town visits.

#### **How often can they apply?**

They can apply for one community visit per month and one resettlement licence every two months.

**CSV Rules**

1. All rules of HMYOI Onley apply whilst you are on CSV Placement.
2. You must, at all times, comply with the requirements of your licence.
3. You must travel to and from your placement by the approved route only and without delay in the time allocated. No deviation from this route will be tolerated for any reason.
4. You are allowed to take with you enough tobacco/cigarettes to last you the day, also your watch, comb and lighter.
5. You must not bring back to the establishment any items you do not leave the establishment with. All items must be on your property card.
6. You are not allowed to post letters or use the telephone except to contact the establishment.
7. You are only allowed to have your visits at HMYOI Onley
8. You must not receive cash or any gifts from any other person outside the establishment.
9. You must not offend against good order and discipline whilst on CSV Placement.
10. You must not leave your CSV Placement unless instructed to do so by your supervisor.

1. You must not enter any private dwelling area.
2. You must not consume alcohol or enter any licensed premises.
3. You may only enter any building, other than that of your placement, with the approval of your immediate supervisor.
4. You must wear your protective helmet and reflective flashes, at all times, whilst riding your cycle.
5. You are responsible for the upkeep and general maintenance of your allocated cycle to ensure good working order at all times
6. You must inform the establishment immediately if you are delayed going to or from your placement.
7. You are liable to be searched on an ad hoc basis leaving or returning to the establishment.
8. If you fail to comply with the above rules you are liable to be removed from CSV Placement with immediate effect and a disciplinary charge may be invoked.

I have read and full understand the above rules regarding CSV Placement.

SIGNED: .....(Inmate)

OFFICER:.....(Officer)

**CSV Contract**

- 1. To ensure that Health and Safety at Work regulations are adhered to at all times.
- 2. To immediately inform the establishment if the trainee in your charge does not arrive in the allocated time agreed.
- 3. To treat fairly and impartially any trainee in your charge.
- 4. To ensure that meals are provided for any trainee in your charge.
- 5. To ensure that trainees in your charge strictly adhere to the rules regarding CSV Placement.
- 6. To report any misdemeanour to the establishment as soon as possible.
- 7. To keep in regular contact with co-ordinators in the establishment.
- 8. To strictly adhere to the designated job description for trainees in your charge.
- 9. To apply in writing prior to any changes required to existing licence.

I agreed to adhere to the above rules regarding CSV Placement trainees.

SIGNED:.....

OFFICER: .....

**Job Description – Trainee****Name:**

.....

**Day Centre:** Services for Elderly People-The Bungalow Day Centre +  
Outreaches

Daily Rota

9.30-10.00am	To help staff in the organisation of the different rooms for the planned activities.
10.00-10.30am	To be responsible for welcoming members on arrival and to see that they are taken into the lounge for an informal chat.
10.40-11.00am	To organise tea/coffee and biscuits for the members.
10.00-11.45pm	To assist Members to the different rooms for their session work. To participate and assist in the session work.
12.00 noon	To organise mid-morning tea break.
12.45pm	To assist Members in setting the tables for lunch. To collect the lunches from Dewar HEP.
1.00-1.30pm	Lunch break.
1.30-1.45pm	To supervise Members whilst they wash the lunch dishes.
1.45-2.00pm	To organise afternoon tea/coffee for Members.
2.45-3.00pm	To help Members to their transport.
3.00-3.15pm	To join staff evaluating the day and to discuss the session activities for the following day.
3.15-3.55pm	Simple office/craft tasks.
3.55pm	Check and lock all windows and doors.
4.00pm	Return to Onley

**Other Duties.**

- To help with shopping for the day centre, under supervision.
- To assist in pushing wheelchairs when Members go out with staff and volunteers.
- To supervise Members watering the indoor plants (weekly) and the garden (when necessary).
- To attend reviews and meetings at the Bungalow day centre when deemed necessary by SEP staff.
- To befriend one Member per day, on a one to one basis.
- To attend courses and lectures, under supervision, as agreed by staff of SEP, Rugby Mind and the CSV Project Officer from HMYOI Onley.
- To learn the procedures of the Bungalow day centre – i.e. Fire/Health & Safety.
- To report verbally to staff any concerns regarding Members.
- In addition, you will be required to carry out any other duties as may be reasonably required by the staff of SEP, Rugby Mind.
- To be aware that you are part of a team providing day care to Elderly Mentally Infirm People. You are therefore expected to uphold Rugby Mind’s aims in providing a quality of service and to show RESPECT and maintain our Elderly Members’ DIGNITY at all times.

Between 10am and 3.15pm trainees who smoke have can have 3 x 5 min smoking breaks. This applies to all venues.

Signed:..... Date:.....

CSV Trainee, HMYOI

Signed: ..... Date:.....

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intend any employment relationships to be created either now or at any time in the future.