Voluntary sector actors in community justice: A case study of St Giles Trust and ex-offender peer mentoring.

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Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.'

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Abstract

Successive governments have envisaged an increasingly central role for the penal voluntary sector in a community justice marketplace in England and Wales. The recent Coalition government’s (2013) Transforming Rehabilitation reform agenda served to mainstream the diverse charities of the penal voluntary sector in the reconfiguration of work formerly the preserve of a statutory Probation Service and more latterly independent, Probation Service Trusts. In addition a less well remarked theme in the government reforms was the incorporation of ex-offender peer mentor volunteer roles into the penal sphere.

By an analysis of government strategic documents and empirical research into a single case study of a penal voluntary sector charity, this thesis analyses two new voluntary sector actors in community justice. It offers a thematic analysis of a case study of St Giles Trust, an important and high profile charity in the penal voluntary sector and secondly, it offers a critically analysis of empirical research into individual volunteers by a specific focus upon the subjective understandings, experiences and practices of ex-offender peer mentor volunteers.

The research questions relate to the relationship between neoliberal penal reforms and marketization strategies and the penal voluntary sector’s institutionalisation and independence from government noting the extent to which a penal voluntary sector charity can expand penal power and concomitantly be able to deliver real benefits for service users. The thesis also sheds light on the multiplicity of subjective understandings of peer mentoring including consideration of the extent to which such roles reflect government agendas to reduce recidivism and manage risk and to what extent is the peer mentoring role is imbued with acts of kindness and care.

Whilst recent academic attention of the penal voluntary sector has identified significant heterogeneity amongst the sector, the thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge by a detailed analysis of the internal hybridity and diversity inherent within a single penal voluntary sector organisation. The thesis notes how the involvement in marketization and contractual relations with government impact unevenly within St Giles Trust and the peer mentor led delivery. It presents research findings which detail an array of ways in which the charity has been influenced by government penal agendas. However, St Giles Trust’s contractual relations with government to deliver key interventions in the penal sector do not preclude an independence of voice and action and a freedom to follow their charitable mission through multiple sources of funding and an innovative peer mentor delivery model.
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Voluntary sector actors in community justice: A case study of St Giles Trust and ex-offender peer mentoring

Introduction

The transformations in the penal system have long been central interests for criminology. Indeed the transformations in the conceptualisation and delivery of punishment seems to be a key feature of the discipline of criminology in contemporary times. Whether we are witnessing a post-modern penalty (Pratt 2000), a new penology (Feeley and Simon 1992), a culture of control (Garland 2001) or an eclectic mix of volatile and contradictory arrangements (OMalley 1997), theorists all agree that penal arrangements are undergoing significant transformation away from universal welfarist rehabilitative practice. Indeed in summarising the extent of change, Daems (2008) notes that whilst the analytical labels capturing penal change are many, one agreement is indeed that transformation is an inherent feature within the field. Central to these analyses of transformation are both the radical changes in punitive mentalities, that is the values and ethics underpinning new modes or technologies of punishment.

This thesis takes as its central concern the governmental mainstreaming of the penal voluntary sector actors in community justice earmarking a radical shake up with respect to who delivers punishment in England and Wales. It traces the development of the penal voluntary sector in community justice as a result of a Neoliberal restructuring of the field to incorporate a diverse array of voluntary and private providers and individual volunteer actors in a community justice and rehabilitation marketplace. It is worth noting that much more has been written and understood about earlier Neoliberal transformations in social care, health and education than the penal sphere. As Salamon (1989, 2015:2149) has noted despite the mainstreaming of the voluntary sector in a plethora of policy fields including punishment and rehabilitation services, the relationship between government and charity have "largely escaped close scrutiny and serious public and policy attention". Similarly, Corcoran (2011) has noted that the voluntary sector organisations in punishment and rehabilitation is under researched and despite the pioneering empirical research of Tomczak (2016) on the penal voluntary sector in England and Wales, the academic research agenda can only be described as embryonic at present. In addition, the edited collection on the Voluntary Sector Institutions and Individuals in Prisons by Abrams, Hughes, Meek and Inderbitzin (2016) is heralded by Shadd Maruna as a “first of its kind collection”. In this collection the need to contribute to knowledge in this particular field is noted by Abrams et al (2016:4) when they state, “while the voluntary [or Third] sector is largely responsible for a diverse
range of service provision, there is limited scholarly conversation about the nature or limits of the voluntary sector as it operates in penal settings”. As a result although to date little has been written about the penal voluntary sector and peer mentor volunteers in community justice, the subject has great topicality.

With respect to individual new actors and the foregrounding of ex-offender peer mentor volunteers to community justice, Abrams et al (2016) make an even starker point as to the limits of knowledge in the field. To address this they contribute four chapters to the analysis of prisoners as leaders, volunteers, mentors, and teachers within correctional facilities in the United States of America and England and Wales. Abrams et al (2016:12) note that “although prisoners have historically supported one another behind bars in many informal ways, little to no scholarship has examined the meanings and experiences of those who become leaders and volunteers in this capacity”. They issue a challenge to the academia to address Tewkesbury’s and Dabney’s (2004) call for a substantial need for further research on the effectiveness of volunteer programming in prisons and the experiences and perspectives of the volunteers themselves. Even their landmark study only involved a specific cohort of volunteer prisoners of whom 91% were motivated by religion or spirituality. Abrams (etal 2016:9) add that over 10 years later, with few notable exceptions this call has gone largely unheeded. Corcoran (2011:40) makes a similar observation regarding the idea of ‘proximate actors’ such as charities and volunteers in the penal sphere noting that “more research is needed of the impact ...on the kinds of private actor (specifically voluntary sector organisations and volunteers) which the literature has hardly breached”. Finally, Armstrong (2002) talks similarly of a lately unnoticed form of privatised punishment in prisons being the involvement of the non-profit sector in offender treatment and punishment, which is incongruous compared with the significant role of the penal voluntary sector and number of individuals it touches in the criminal justice system.

The central concerns of this study are to address these observations regarding the scarcity of knowledge in this emerging area of academic interest. In doing so it intends to challenge criminology’s traditional disciplinary boundaries and central gaze at the statutory pillars of the criminal justice system. The core research questions relate to a thematic analysis of a single penal voluntary sector charity in St Giles Trust and to shed light on and find meaning in the charity’s complex “innards” (Crewe 2009). It highlights the core components of ex-offender peer mentor volunteers, who have been trained in prison and undertake their peer mentor activities in the comparative freedom of life after prison. The empirical research presented here is perhaps the first time that peer mentors in community corrections have received such extensive academic attention outside the controls, restraints and challenges of the prison experience. The significant challenges of charities and volunteers operating within the prison has long been established and
are best expressed by Inderbitzin et al. (2016:80) when they state “perhaps out most important piece of advice for volunteers and agencies working within prisons is that you must learn and practice patience. Anyone hoping to do work within prisons must abide by the rules and idiosyncrasies of the prison staff and administration, which can fluctuate wildly from visit to visit. Volunteers…may be denied access or have ideas rejected with no explanation.” As such the volunteer and paid peer mentors acting within voluntary sector organisations in the community justice field offers up new possibilities of what can be achieved in such organisations and with such individuals after life in the prison. The empirical research presented here on St Giles Trust was situated against a backdrop of considerable flux and fluidity in criminal justice in England and Wales. Rather in 2012 and 2013, Probation Services were in a considerable flux, subject to a new transformations in England and Wales with much of the past remaining but the future of rehabilitation yet to take shape. As the Coalition government’s Transforming rehabilitation (2013) strategies at the time encouraged change and innovation, the research undertaken here also reflects the amount of freedom the charity had to shape both its future and that of the penal system it operated in. The study centred around four key research questions which were key to contemporary concerns around independence and distinctiveness in the penal voluntary sector and criminological research agendas surrounding the key conditions necessary to leave crime behind.

- How can we understand the nature and impact of government's penal reform particularly in relation to governance of the penal voluntary sector and the governing of the peer mentor?
- To what extent does the involvement of the penal voluntary sector and ex-offenders as peer mentors reflect new criminal justice professional cultures and knowledges?
- What are the effects of Neoliberal penal reforms on St Giles Trust’s ability to maintain agency and control over its mission and values?
- To what extent does St Giles Trust peer mentor delivery model encourage the cessation of criminal behaviour?

Whilst the voluntary sector and all it brings has been foregrounded by successive governments much of what has been written in the discipline of criminology thus far relates to either normative welcomes or warnings for the voluntary sector organisations who contract with the State to provide punishment and rehabilitation. The tone of the debate has been set either by those who wish to see a greater pluralism in delivery for punishment and rehabilitation or by those who foresee great dangers to the commodification and marketization of what was previously the work of the state. For example, questions about ethics, values, independence and effectiveness have all been raised as key problematizing areas for academic consideration. However, very little research has underpinned such pronouncements and as such we know very little of the practices
of the penal voluntary sector organisations, how they are able to continue to work effectively and independently with offenders or alternatively how they are dramatically transformed from charities into penal organisations and “crime controlled” by the State. Similarly, the use of voluntary sector implies a distinct and separate groups of intermediate organisations between the state and the private sector. The research here on St Giles trust suggests the need to rethink such basic categorisations in order to more accurately reflect nuanced relationships between the sectors and the creation of hybridised organisations. Similarly, the intertwining of voluntary organisations with volunteering has often been made and the research here also attempts to more accurately reflect how a key voluntary sector organisation engaged in the penal sector delivers its work by the use of activated ex offender peer mentors.

To conclude, thus far academic research on the penal voluntary sector and the ex offender peer mentor has only just begun and the terms serve as descriptive terms or with little analysis or empirical research undertaken to shed light on them. Tomczak (2017) has made the greatest strides to highlight the complexities of the penal voluntary field, the various and nuanced relationships between the State and the sector. In her work she highlights via a multi-level analytical approach charities engaged in the penal field who contract fully with the state, those who are partly state funded and those who do not receive any state level funding (Tomczak 2017:2). Whilst Tomczak (2016:94) is undoubtedly correct to shine light upon small scale and informal penal voluntary sector beneath the ‘corporate style’ voluntary organisations who are able to take part in contractual relations with the State, this work argues that we know just as little about how larger scale and more visible charities such as St Giles Trust organise, innovate and deliver. We know little as to whether when contracting with the state St Giles Trust have the power to negotiate to protect their traditional values and draw protective ‘lines in the sand’ whilst meeting the demands of the contract. Indeed empirical research into one of the ‘big players’ can shed new light on how a large, powerful and high profile charity can resist, adapt or succumb to pressures inherent in responsibilising governmental agendas seeking to co-opt charities into a network of expansive social control (Garland 1996).

The structure and contents of the work is as follows.

Chapter One considers the increased pluralism in penality as a result of the mainstreaming of both voluntary sector organisations and individuals volunteers and its broader challenges to mainstream criminology. Charities and volunteers serve to move criminological attention beyond the institutions of the state and open up a traditionally limited vision of “codes, courts and cops” (Rose 2000). The chapter highlights how a focus on new actors such as charities and peer mentors serves to broaden and widen the analytical vision to a much broader understanding of community justice which increasingly re-establishes links to civil society and
involves lay practitioners somewhat distanced from a traditional understanding of a unified and monolithic notion of the State. Furthermore, this research attempts to consider a new penal architecture which places the State function to punish and rehabilitate via a range of providers and delivery agents which involve organisations aiming to both maximise profit and serve service users to the best of their ability. As such this research aims to understand and position charitable organisations, hybridised social innovation organisations and ex-offenders or peer mentors as key members of any late modern conceptualisation of the penal system.

Chapter 2 highlights how successive government’s strategic thinking has attempted the ‘hyperactive’ mainstreaming of the penal voluntary sector in community justice and by the creation of a new quasi-market in rehabilitation. The chapter charts the scope and nature of the penal voluntary sector highlighting its diversity and heterogeneity. It then traces the long and circuitous path of successive government strategies to mainstream the penal voluntary sector as a bastion of innovation and efficiency culminating in the Transforming Rehabilitation strategy and the creation of private Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC).

Chapter 3 introduces the governmental construction of the ex-offender as ‘peer mentor’ as a key innovation under the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda and as an emblem of the pluralisation of individuals in the field traditionally the preserve of the statutory probation officer. It addresses the research evidence behind peer mentoring approaches and how peer mentoring is indicative of a Neoliberal view of the active citizen.

Chapter 4 introduces the empirical research methodology to the study and provides information regarding the individual research case study of St Giles Trust. It documents the particular approach and methodologies to researching a single case study and highlights the analytical framework.

Chapter 5 forms the first part of the research findings from the empirical research undertaken with St Giles Trust. This chapter focuses on the role, position and nature of the voluntary sector in community corrections. It offers an empirical approach to how governing rehabilitation through the voluntary organisation is achieved and highlights the impact this has on voluntary sector independence and agency, innovation and distinctiveness.

Chapter 6 focuses upon shedding new light on both the governmental and individual subjective understandings of peer mentoring. It analyses the rationale of volunteer peer mentors in community corrections highlighting important values and attributes to peer mentoring. It charts a number of ways peer mentors make sense of the work they do and relates this to the notion of a Neoliberal call to govern oneself. Finally the research offers up a ‘governmentality from below’
charting how peer mentors construct and operate in such roles and how they broadly relate to and resist government agendas.

Chapter 7 takes the construction of peer mentoring further and addresses the most significant way in which they are created and "made up" (Hacking 1985) by government, St Giles Trust and individual peer mentors themselves as the embodiment of new expertise and knowledge in community corrections. As a result the chapter highlights how such constructions of expertise and knowledge of the professional-ex underpinned the peer mentoring rather than any sense of a moral obligation to pay back to society.
Chapter One: New voluntary actors and the architecture of community justice in late modernity

An analysis of the relationship between penal reform and the new mainstreaming of voluntary sector organisations and individual volunteer peer mentors needs to be situated against the political, economic and social changes which have challenged and reshaped the boundaries of criminology in the period described as late modernity (Garland 2001, Loader and Sparks 2007, Taylor 1999, Reiner 2007). Only by outlining and analysing the sheer variety of social, political and economic challenges since the late 1970s, can the involvement of voluntary organisations and volunteers in the fields of community justice and rehabilitation be fully understood and articulated. Successive government's mainstreaming of non-state actors in community justice requires a broader focus and criminological imagination than has been afforded thus far in mainstream criminology (Stenson and Sullivan 2001, Garland and Sparks 2000:14-18). A broader imagination would incorporate and reflect a variety of governmental ways of thinking about community punishment and rehabilitation and the programmes to punish and shape criminal behaviour. This work will utilise the insights and perspectives around the multiplicity of ways by which governments’ seek to control and shape citizens’ conduct afforded through the lens of Foucault’s notion of governmentality (Burchill, Gordon and Miller (ed) 1991, Dean 2014, Borch 2015). This chapter firstly, details the backdrop to recent societal, economic and political changes which challenge established and modernist criminological thought. Secondly, the chapter discusses a range of new and emergent theoretical perspectives in criminology, centring around governmentality which attempts to shed light on the mainstreaming of traditionally non-penal and non-state actors in the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders.

Late modernity and challenges to crime control

Contemporary criminology is emerging out of the new political, economic and social world of the 1970s and presents a set of significant challenges to the discipline. The rapid and profound changes to our society have been of significant interest to a number of sociologists and criminologists (Garland and Sparks 2000, Stenson 2001. Taylor 1999). Indeed, Taylor (1999:10) notes how “the analysis of crime itself (the object of analysis of any serious ‘criminological ’project) must be located in relation to the fundamental transformation of social formation that is currently in progress(resulting from a deep crisis in the pre-existing configurations of social and economic organization).” Criminology has witnessed a profound set of cultural, political and social...
undertaken changes in Western capitalist democracies brought about by firstly, the changing nature of capitalist production, such as mass consumerism, globalisation, the restructuring of the labour market and the growth of unemployment. The cumulative impact of such profound transformations are something which Lea and Hallsworth (2013: 19) have termed ‘rewriting the scripts governing social structure, class relations and politics in the advanced capitalist countries of the industrial North’. Similarly, Garland (2000,2001) notes the economic and ideological force of capitalist production to be the most basic transformative force in the modern times. For Garland (2001) many of the profound economic and social changes during the latter part of the twentieth century can be ascribed to the process of capital accumulation, the unerring search for new markets for capitalist growth including previously sacralised public sector work. As such, the rise in the development and use of technology and its affordability in Capitalist economies ensured that the world became linked in ways never before possible. The increase in wealth from the exploitation of new markets and mass ownership of consumer goods enabled the skilled working classes to have access to commodities and enjoy lives in a way which were out of reach for their parents and grandparents. In addition, the rise in living standards after the Second World War was accompanied by new professional groups in society in sectors such as finance and banking, marketing and sales, and a rage of service industries. Similarly, the public sector expanded post war to include middle class professionals in social work, medicine and healthcare, housing and the education sectors. In short, during the post war period, government was conceptualised to be ‘big’ in that it assumed both an active and central role in managing economic and social life, guaranteeing opportunities to create markets and profit, whilst ensuring that the population were guaranteed health, wellbeing and prosperity (Garland 2001:81). Since 1945 in Western Europe and USA, the interventionist welfare state was central to the delivery of what had previously been private actions and behaviour. Whether one considers the fields of policing, punishment, education or health, the post war state can be conceptualised as incorporating a variety of national, regulatory agencies assuming a degree of expertise and control of formally unregulated activity. Thus the Keynesian state is best exemplified by the creation of a welfare state, an expanded ‘public sector’ and an accelerated notion of a state sponsored, professionalised middle class in society (Perkin 1990:405).

However, this post war settlement of remarkable growth in both capital accumulation and living standards in western capitalist economies was abruptly ended in the early 1970s. This crisis in economic growth arose as a result of the cumulative effects of the rise in the price of oil, economic recession and negative growth and finally the competition from newly competitive economies of developing countries in a globalised economy. As Hobsbawn (1994:15) noted global capitalism undermined national institutions and interests and "for many purposes, notably in economic affairs, the globe is now the primary operational unit an and older units, such as the national
economies defined by the politics of territorial states, are reduced to complications of transnational activities". Whole industries which had been the mainstay of the industrialised economy had all but disappeared. Importantly during the fiscal crisis in the 1970s, public expenditure outran income from taxation and led to a radical and accelerated restructuring of the labour market with the shedding of millions of predominantly male, heavy manufacturing jobs and created a labour market which was characterised not by stable, high paid careers with significant employment protections but by jobs characterised by precarious, low paid and part time positions (Taylor 1999: 14).

The UK had become a much more equal nation during the post-war years and this remained unchanged until 1979\(^2\). However since time the trend towards equality has dramatically reversed. Rising inequality rates reflect a dramatic increase in the share of income going to the rich, a decline in the share of those at the bottom income brackets and, more recently, a stagnation of incomes among those in the middle classes\(^3\). Since the 1970’s crisis in capitalism Western nations have borne witness to great transformations in class relations. Increasingly, the skilled working class have shifted their interests away from a sense of collectivism in favour of “asocial individualism” (Hobsbawm 1994:15, Stenson 2001) and free market economics. Subsequently, we are used to the favouring of individualistic rather than collective tendencies in how we live our lives or solve societal problems (Garland 2001). Indeed, whilst such freeing up of old collectivism could be seen by many as liberating and offering opportunities to progress and consume, it also brought with it new problems linked to these new individual freedoms.

In addition, and interwoven with the political and economic changes outlined above, we have born witness to social changes to the family epitomised by increasing numbers of women wanting or needing to enter the workforce, increased rates of divorce and family structures, a decrease in family size and rise in different family formations, the creation of the teenager as a separate and largely unsupervised member of society (Garland 2001:77). Transformations in communities and families have at their core the entry of women into the labour market to fill the burgeoning jobs in the service sectors\(^4\). The rise in work for women impacted on family structure. Garland

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\(^1\) For example, the decline in manufacturing industry in the USA as a percentage of the total economy fell from 25.9 per cent in 1970 to 17.5 % in 1990 in the USA and from 38.7% to 22.5% in the UK during the same period

\(^2\) The data available shows that the share of income going to the top 10% of the population fell over the 40 years to 1979, from 34.6% in 1938 to 21% in 1979, while the share going to the bottom 10% rose slightly. In 2010, while the top 10% received 31% of all income, the bottom 10% received just 17%. In 2010, the richest 10% held 45% of all wealth in the UK whilst the poorest 10% held only 1% representing an unmistakable increase in poverty and inequality.

\(^3\) The rate of married women entering the world of work rose from 14 per cent of the total population in 1951 to over 50% in 1980. Similar rise were experience in the UK where women formed 29% of the active workforce in 1951 rising to 43% by 1991
(2001:78) highlights a noticeable decline in fertility rates during this period with women beginning a family later in life, having fewer children and returning to work after childbirth. Possibly the most startling social transformation relating to the family structure during this period is the rate at which marriages ended in divorce. In England the rate of divorce and separation increased sharply as did the number of children being raised in single households. As Garland (2001:83) notes the scale of the transformation in family life were so significant that ‘in the space of only 40 years the traditional image of the nuclear family - a married couple living together with children - had come to bear little relation to the real domestic lives of most of the population in America and Britain.’

New economic and social realities and the relationship to crime

The period of late modernity has then witnessed the coexistence of rising consumption, general affluence for many and a concomitant rise in the overall crime rate in every Western industrialised nation, something Garland (2001) has termed an ‘epistemological crisis’. Indeed as Taylor (1999:16) notes it is a sociological and cultural shock to find the uncritical acceptance of a constantly developing and improving society to be a fallacy. The rise in recorded crime during a period of a general rise in general living standards and prosperity is significant. In England and Wales the police recorded crime rate doubled between 1955 and 1964 from 500,000 to one million crimes (Reiner 2007:62-63). By 1965 the crime rate had doubled again and then doubled again by 1990 as a result of the increase in absolute and relative deprivation rates (Taylor 1999:16). Late modern economic and social transformation had clearly made society a more criminogenic milieu with increased opportunities for crime and reduced levels of social control afforded by the family and church. In addition an ever increasing number of individuals were present in communities who were losing out in the changes to the labour market and welfare restructuring and were ‘at risk’ of crime. This included an increasingly large number of teenage males enjoying time outside of the home and hence outside of family and work controls. As Currie notes, as a result of the interconnectedness of the economic, the social or community and the familial when discussing violent crime, "we are likely to see great structural inequalities and community fragmentation and weakened ability of parents to monitor and supervise their children - and a great many other things all going on at once, all entwined with each other, and all affecting the crime rate" (Currie 1997 in Reiner 2006:80).

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5 In 1938 only 1 in 38 marriages in England ended in divorce compared to 1 in 2.2 by the mid-1980s (Garland 2001:83). In the USA in the 1990s the number of children born to a single parent household rose to 30 per cent on average and 70% in some African America families.
Neoliberal and Conservative mentalities as an antidote to late modern problem of crime.

Dean (2010) and Reiner (2008) have outlined the increasing turn to a neoliberal rationality of government since the 1970s as a way to address political, social and economic challenges in Western capitalist states. Whilst the neoliberal term or concept has been used in a multiplicity of ways which often incorporate communitarianism or neo-conservative political ideology, here the term is used to refer to a sea change in the government of liberal democracies since the 1960s and 1970s. After the second world war, government was largely understood as an activity undertaken by a national welfare state acting on behalf on a singular ‘domain’ understood as society (Dean 2010:176). Indeed, the Keynesian attempts to govern and intervene in the health of the economy and society is encapsulated in the attempts to secure full employment and lifelong care for people from the cradle to the grave. The State took on a wide range of social and economic obligations principally by the use of state investment in sectors such as transportation, public utilities, housing and manufacturing that were vital to mass production and consumption. Harvey (1989 in Smart 2003:122) also notes that “governments also moved to provide a strong underpinning to the social wage through expenditure covering social security, health care, education, housing and the like”.

However by the late 1970s the post war settlement of centralised state planning, high levels of economic development and the universal provision of social care was coming under increasingly challenge by academics and political leaders who began to envisage the state as too large, too expensive and restricting the freedoms of entrepreneurial individuals. Indeed any conceptualisation of a crisis of the state really alludes to a fundamental lack of confidence with the Keynesian welfare state’s ability to manage and encourage economic prosperity.

Garland’s (1996, 2000, 2001) thesis stems from the view that since the late 1970s the government’s constructions of crime and approaches to crime and disorder have been restructured and reconfigured as a result of a collective experience of crime and insecurity in society. For Garland (2001:110) government has a central predicament around contemporary crime control. Firstly, governments of all persuasions see the need to withdraw their universal claim to be the most effective provider of security in the face of entrenched high crime rates and secondly and concomitantly, politicians are concerned about the disastrous political implications of withdrawing the claim to protect in the face of the politicisation of crime and punishment. As a consequence in the last thirty years of the twentieth century, governments of all persuasions have had to develop new approaches and adaptations to the predicament of rising crime rates and it’s associated fears and insecurities, particularly in relation to violent and property crime and the
increased politicisation of crime. For Garland (2001:139) the presence of high rates of crime in society has become understood as a normal social fact and the state has had to adapt its strategies in accordance with this new mentality. This central predicament or weakness of the state around crime and punishment is played out in a multiplicity of ways and policy decisions which can sometimes appear fragmented, contradictory or volatile (O’Malley 1999, Daems 2008:3). Rather than identifying a grand narrative such as discipline or reform, rehabilitation or correction, Rose (2000:183) identifies a range of competing and complementary ways of thinking and acting on the crime problem. As a result, the contemporary field of crime control and punishment includes both inclusionary and exclusionary thoughts and practices particularly when one considers responses to the politicised and racialized problems of crime and punishment. The older ways of government addressing crime by invoking ‘social’ notions of treatment, welfare and rehabilitation now coexist and compete with radically different urges to manage and exclude with strategies to empower and accept personal responsibility. As Rose (2000:183) states,

“Demands for exemplary sanctions against offenders are accompanied by schemes for naming and shaming and blaming focused on the relations between offender and victim. The prisoner is to be incapacitated or the prisoner is to be taught life skills and entrepreneurship, or the prisoner is to be stigmatized and made to accept moral culpability or the prisoner is to be helped to reintegrate into society. The spread of community types of correction such as fines, probation orders, community service and so forth go hand in hand with an inexorable increase in the prison population and the constant expansion of the prison building programme”

Conservative, law and order government agendas

Responding to crime has emerged as an issue at the core of government activity as a result of substantial transformations in economic and social life (Stenson 2000). Relatedly in the last 30 years the discipline of criminology has had to respond to fundamental changes in government thinking in relation to how it should conceptualise the crime problem and best respond to it. In particular, whilst the Keynesian welfare state helped to create a society where most, if not all, benefited from economic prosperity and a rise in living standards until the 1970s economic crisis, the welfare state began to be attacked, in light of rising crime rates. The attack on welfarism developed, not merely as a poor and ineffective government strategy to reduce criminality, but rather, as problematic which can lead to dependency and inactivity and actually underpin the high rates of criminal behaviour in society (Garland 2001:92-93, Rose 1996:330)

The social and economic transformations detailed earlier have led to a generalised sense of insecurity in late modern society. It is this feeling of insecurity which has affected nearly all
Western Capitalist nations fuelling an ever louder demand for protection from crime and lawlessness by citizens and a general acceptance of the need for an intensified and punitive response to lawbreaking (Bell 2011:15). Feelings of insecurity run high and amount to demands for safety and security from government which become hard to meet. Conservative ‘tough on crime’ responses posit that offenders are rational actors who can be deterred or preferably incapacitated from criminal behaviour have found favour with the electorate, in comparison to those which espouse re-integrative and welfarist solutions (Bell 2011:2). Sections of the public, with significant feelings of insecurity and dislocation, respond with a much greater sense of condemnation to crime. They are much less willing to countenance sympathy for the offender who has abused his or her freedoms in society. In penal policy, criminal behaviour has come to be conceptualised much more in terms of the offender’s danger or risk to a community of law abiding citizens marked by fear, insecurities about crime and victimisation and condemnation of the law breaker. Less time is given to the notion that offenders can be changed or afforded second chances and rather more is given to their neutralisation or ‘management’ through harsh criminal sentencing and regulatory controls (Garland 1997:7).

Furthermore, a common experience of victimisation, or the fear of becoming victimised, has led to what Garland (2001) has called a ‘crime complex’ whereby general fears and concerns are shaped through the lens of crime and victimisation. Allied to this sense of insecurity, and the political foregrounding of crime and punishment, came the perception that crime has continued to rise, contrary to data indicating crime rates stagnating or falling. Allied to this was an increasingly view by the electorate and politicians that high rates of crime was a problem borne of ineffective control with the statutory pillars of the penal and criminal justice system deemed ineffective and broken rather than enjoying any sense of legitimacy and public support.

Garland (1996) demonstrates how a range of Conservative government assertions may take the form of a criminology of the ‘other’ where government’s deny the central predicament of the state’s new limitations to afford security. They adopt a strategy of ‘denial’ in creating a politicized Neo-Conservative penal agenda involving tougher legislation and increased levels of incarceration which moves away sentencing based upon rational decision making and proportionality. Similarly, expressive modes of punishment such as shaming the offender or militaristic boot camps shape a governmental discourse around crime and punishment which is expressive, deliberately emotional, harsh and unforgiving. As Garland (1996:461) notes,

”It is a criminology of the alien other which represents criminals as dangerous members of a distinct racial and social groups which bear little resemblance to ‘us’. It is moreover a criminology which trades in images, archetypes and anxieties, rather than careful analysis and research findings, more a politicised discourse of the unconscious than a detailed form of knowledge for power.’
The turn to Neoliberal governmental rationalities

Conservative punitive strategies adopted by government, whilst denying the realities of high crime rates are indicative of demonstrations of the state’s power to punish. However these ‘criminologies of the other’ (Garland 2001) are only one aspect to an array of government strategies and solutions to the predicament regarding crime control (Garland 2001). What has received rather less academic attention, but my central concern here, have been much ‘quieter’ (Loader and Sparks 2000:80) and less prominent shifts in some of the fluid governmental, institutional and administrative arrangements to cope with rising crime rates and concurrent demands for economic efficiencies and effectiveness.

The Neoliberal rationalities of government have been most significantly found in the work of F.A Hayek’s (1994) The Road to Serfdom and the political ideas of Keith Joseph and Margaret Thatcher. All agree that the key solution to economic decline is the belief in the power of free markets and in taking individual responsibility to address societal problems. It is worthwhile recounting what Thatcher stated in 1987 (Dean 2010) as evidence of an emerging Neoliberal rationality in British politics which decentred state welfarism and emphasized personal responsibility.

"I think we’ve been through a period where too many people have been given to understand that if they have a problem, it’s the government’s job to cope with it. I have a problem I’ll get a grant'. ‘I’m homeless, the government must house me’. They’re casting their problems on society. And, you know there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and there are families. And no government can do anything except through people, and people must look to themselves first. It is our duty to look after ourselves, and then to look after our neighbour" (Dean 2000 p177)

Thatcher outlines three strands of Neoliberal political rationality which form the core of such ideology. Firstly she notes how neoliberal political rationalities focus their attentions around the excesses of government, secondly the freedoms associated with individualism which underpin some aspects the reform of penal policy and the triumphalism of the market in new fields such as community justice and rehabilitation (Sandel 2012:6 Turner 2011:47, ). This emerging thinking about the relationship of the individual to the state can be built around the tenets of individual responsibility rather than state dependency, the foregrounding of freedom and autonomy via participation and reliance on market principles and relations, and finally a multiplicity of governance arrangements unsettling the previous reliance upon the public sector and state. Whilst Neoliberalism has been often invoked but ill defined, this work uses the analytical framework of Mudge (2008) who conceptualises neoliberalism, firstly as an intellectual
idea or “face” in that it is a concept distinguished by its Anglo American transnationalism and the unadulterated emphasis of the free market as the source and providers of human freedom, economic prosperity and efficiency. Secondly, Mudge (2008:704) notes Neoliberalism’s bureaucratic face in the expression of neoliberal ideologies in state policy and action. She highlights how neoliberal ideas are expressed in state liberalization, the deregulation of previously ‘sacralised’ public services and government activities to privatization and the loosening of left versus right divisions in politics. Finally, Mudge (2008: 705) highlights a third political face of neoliberalism which attempts to move beyond parochial party politics to encompass political elites, interest groups, grass roots organisations and private groups to lobby for a common sense approach to and unquestioned foregrounding of the market. Whilst definitions of neoliberalism abound, Bourdieu’s notion of an “ideological system that holds the market sacred, born within the human or social sciences and refined in a network of Anglo-American – centric knowledge producers, expressed in different ways within the institutions of the post war nation state and their political fields” encapsulates Mudge’s three faces of Neo Liberalism outlined here (cited in Mudge 2008:706).

The neoliberal governmental rationality has developed where the remedies to social problems such as crime and disorder lay less with the state and government but increasingly more so in the private and civil spheres of endeavour (Turner 2011:115). The construction by government of quasi or artificial markets such as that in adult social care or probation and rehabilitation were envisaged as an alternative to government characterised by excessive state expenditure, increased bureaucracy, economic stagnation and dependency were increasingly articulated by Neoliberal thinkers and policy makers. In addition the belief in the market competitiveness is that individuals and organisations will adapt their behaviour to maximise their position in any market without the need of state legislation to coerce them to do so (Davies 2014). Furthermore, and relevant to the notion of market provision is the concept of competition between individuals and organisations here the notion that a "the same good has more than one potential producer, and more than one potential purchaser, allows the market mechanism to magically rise and fall" (Davies 2014:76). The centrality and ‘truths’ of markets in Neoliberal thinking is best summarised by Keith Joseph,

"Markets are a state of nature which has spontaneously evolved and to disregard their rules is as pointless as attempting to ignore the laws of gravity (Joseph in Turner 2011:123).

Since the 1960s and 1970s the ways in which we think about the state and government has undergone profound change. Previously the adoption of the welfarist state had succeeded in encapsulating government as interventionist from the cradle to the grave. The state represented a unified body i.e. government in defence of a collectivist society. However, according to
neoliberal political orthodoxy, the interventionist state no longer serves the best interests of all citizens and ensures freedom for everyone. Rather the Keynesian interventionist state is considered as inefficient, corrupt, and damaging by interfering in the natural operations and decisions of free markets. The neoliberal notion of the state is one which should actively create markets in public sector utilities and duties such as community justice, in what are reconsidered and reconceptualised in the language of market pluralism as single state monopolies (Bell 2011). However, the emphasis here on the enduring yet reconfigured role of the state does rather contradict assertions that the state has become minimalised, ‘hollowed out’ or rolled back (Farrall 2006, Munck 2005:62). Rather Neoliberal politics involve the shifting of state intervention from service delivery to new forms of governance underpinned by logic of competition, marketization, deregulation and activation policies in order to achieve renewed capitalist growth.

In order to capture the increasing presence of market based developments and a plurality of actors in crime control, Garland’s (2001:124) constructs a governmental approach he terms a ‘responsibilisation strategy’ where the state seeks to mobilise non state actors in an attempt to extend the reach of the state’s interests. Garland (2001) states that creative linkages between state organisations are encouraged and non-statutory bodies in both the private and not for profit sectors are activated to carry out government’s agendas in crime control work. Similarly, the notion of responsibilisation can also be extended to the citizens or offenders themselves who are encouraged and activated to take personal responsibility and manage their own sense of insecurity or risk by purchasing security services and adapting their own behaviour so as to minimise the possibility of victimhood (Valverde 2017:109), Hinds and Grabosky 2008:2, Ilcan and Basok 2004:130)). This new governmental mode of ‘responsibilisation’ is therefore,

‘an enhanced network of more or less directed, more or less informal crime control, complementing and extending the formal controls of the criminal justice state? Instead of imagining they can monopolize crime control, or exercising their sovereign powers...state agencies now adopt a strategic relation to other forces of social control. They seek to build broader alliances, enlisting the ‘governmental’ powers of private actors and shaping them to the ends of crime control’ (Garland 2001: 124)

Despite the emergence of new practices which attempt to share the responsibility of crime control via new practices such as partnership or marketised approaches (Crawford 1999), this new conceptualisation of crime control ‘beyond the state’ has had a limited impact on the world of penalty or community justice. Plurality in the provision of rehabilitation services or offender supervision have arrived late on the stage in comparison to other areas of the criminal justice system such as policing and the crime prevention field. Academic attention to private and
community policing and security is well established with the work of Stenson (1993), Button (2007), Wakefield (2003) and the development of the field of crime prevention work involving voluntary sector and private sector involvement has been expertly charted by the work of Crawford (1999). Indeed, the identification and analysis of responsibilisation strategies in Garland’s (2001) work has largely been conceptualised as indicative of changes to crime preventative strategies such as situational crime prevention. Indeed, he states that a “new rationality of crime control – a new way of thinking and acting that differs quite radically from previous modes of crime control...involving a whole new infrastructure of arrangements whereby state and non-state agencies coordinate their practices to enhance community safety” relates to preventative work where the private and voluntary sectors will flourish in a dispersed, disorganised field of preventative endeavour (Garland 2000:349). Thus far much of academic scholarship has been concerned with the realm of policing and crime prevention (OMalley 1992). Criminology has documented a move to localised, community based crime prevention initiatives since the Morgan report of 1991. The main focus of the Morgan Report was the benefits for government of conferring upon local authorities a statutory responsibility for crime prevention and community safety initiatives. In an early attempt to ‘govern at a distance’ the governmental rationale for a ‘community safety strategy’ lay not in the prescription of specific preventative initiatives but rather in the assumption that the state would offer a sense of corporate responsibility, establishing the objectives and priorities in consultation with partner agencies and the public, the deployment of resources, the co-ordination of policies, and ensuring effectiveness to meet outcomes (Crawford 1999).

The state’s role activated business, community organisations, local authorities and police services under a range of crime prevention multi-agency arrangements. Rather than the state handing down authoritative answers to complex, localised crime problems, the community or locale itself is implicated in the task of resolving the problems they are experiencing through the creation of local partnerships between government, private sector and charities and complex webs of preventative work (Crawford 1999). The fields of punishment and rehabilitation have, until recently, remained firmly entrenched as a function of the state despite the development of important private sector providers of punishment and prisons. Indeed the harsh and exclusionary ‘governmental strategy of denial’ constructed by Garland (1996:459, 2001) emphasizes the separation of the responsibilised preventative work and state punitiveness.

**Analysing plurality in Community Justice - Foucault’s governmentality thesis**

Despite never wishing to become a famous criminologist, the influence of Michel Foucault’s work within the discipline of criminology is enormous (Borch 2015, Valverde 2017). Principally, this
has been reflected in terms of his highly influential analysis of the development of punishment and prisons contained in his work ‘Discipline and Punish’ (1977) and a range of Foucauldian inspired studies into prisons and community based punishment such as Cohen’s (1985) Visions of Social Control. However, this thesis is influenced by some of Foucault’s lesser known and more latter thinking around the State’s government of others and oneself, entitled ‘governmentality’. In fact, Foucault’s later work around governmentality could be considered as his ‘second wave’ to emphasize its growing influence of academic criminological thinking. In essence, his work around governmentality developed from his earlier perspectives in Discipline and Punish (1977) which located a diffused power in society designed to create individuals as ‘docile bodies’ brought to conformity by social control and the disciplinary power of government (Valverde 2017:33). Foucault’s latter work on governmentality paid more attention to the multiplicity of ways in which certain populations and individuals are governed which highlighted alternatives to sovereignty or “top down form of power which comes down on people only a certain times” or disciplinary power which exercises “a more continuous and fluid power...by means of techniques such as examination, observation and normalisation” (Valverde 2017:80). However governmentality is used to describe much greater sophistication in the exercise of power including the governance of populations and their aggravated characteristics and by individuals themselves as active subjects whose attitudes and choices of behaviour come to be conjoined with the aims of governing authorities (Dean 2010, Burchill et al 1991). For Valverde (2017:81), governmentality is an umbrella term describing an “indeterminate range of exercises of knowledge and power” and a variety of differing governing practices. Often these advanced liberal practices act upon ways to incentivize and to guide citizens, rather than to punish and to coerce to shape behaviour.

Indeed, Foucault’s work on neoliberal governmentality offers both a new perspective which emphasizes the multiplicity of actors involved in the shaping of free citizens’ behaviour and a powerful new analytic to how crime and criminality is problematized, the way crime and offenders are thought about and acted upon in a practical sense (Garland 1997, Dean 2010) At its core, the governmentality analytic refers to the range of governmental rationalities or reasonings and technologies or practices, associated with liberal rule, by which populations are rendered thinkable and measurable for the purposes of government (Dean 2010:25, Foucault 1980). As an array of technologies of government, governmentality is understood as the analysis of strategies, techniques and procedures through which different authorities seek to enact programmes of government which can be a “complex assemblage of diverse forces, techniques, devices that promise to regulated decisions and actions of individuals, groups and organisations in relation to authoritative criteria” (Rose and Miller 1992; Burchill 1996:42). In effect state power is effectively translated into the work of other actors and the wider relations of authority. In terms
of an analysis of contemporary neoliberal political ideology, Rose and Miller (1992) have developed Foucault’s analysis to discussion of power beyond the state. Power, they argue, should be viewed as a matter of networks and alliances rather than the direct imposition of state or sovereign will. Rose and Miller’s (1992) analysis presupposes that within the networks of governance are chains of actors, all with their own subjectivite freedoms, who translate centre objectives down the chain. Here, Rose and Miller (1992) see the importance of neoliberal government as ‘governing at a distance’, involving multiple actors who blur the demarcation of the state and civil, or between the public and the private spheres.

Neoliberal political ideology encourages private entrepreneurship in social matters and dealing with social problems such as crime. As such “political power is exercised today though a profusion of shifting alliances between diverse authorities in projects to govern a multitude of facets of economic activity, social life and individual conduct. Power is not so much a matter of imposing constraints upon citizens as of ‘making up ‘citizens capable of bearing a kind of regulated freedom” (Rose and Miller 1992:174). Inherent in such government thinking and strategy is the notion that government deploys techniques of agency to other institutional spaces or service deliverers who may need to govern or regulate their own activities. (Crawford 1999:209.).

Whilst the art of government has been described by Foucault (Burchill et al 1991) as essentially a problem solving exercise, Dean (2010:19) reminds us that it intrinsically links to questions of morality. The attempt to shape conduct implies the idea of a prescribed standard against which to be measured rather than the freedom to act as one might wish. This sense of directing conduct is important in late modern society where responsibility for one’s behaviour is increasingly seen as the responsibility of the individual themselves. Government therefore asserts how individuals ought to conduct themselves whether that is to be crime free, healthy and fit, employable and self-improving and to correct oneself when the individual does not meet the standard (Dean 2010:19). For example, Dean (2010:19) notes that government uses a strategy of morally regulated or subjective freedoms to life, “It is moral because policies and practices of government, whether of national governments or of other governing bodies, presume to know, with varying degrees of explicitness and using specific forms of knowledge, what constitutes good, virtuous, appropriate, responsible conduct of individuals and collectives”.

The Neo–Liberal penal subject – empowered and responsible.

Rose and Miller (1990) offer a second trajectory for neoliberal rule. Whilst the first emphasises that state power is multifarious and differentiated and its site of power increasingly dispersed
from the centre, the second trajectory relates to the idea that state government relies less on constructing citizens as coerced subjects or “ideological dupes but as autonomous actors whose subjectivity is shaped by their active engagement with the powers that govern them and by which they govern themselves” (Garland 1997:183). Michel Foucault’s 1982 essay ‘The Subject and Power’ presented a vision of governance whereby the subject was an active participant and subject where power is exercised. The work sees subjects as being able to choose to act and align their choices to the approval of governing authorities (Dean 2010:21). By moving beyond practices of government which centre on the emperor or prince or monarchical power, Foucault’s analysis of governmentality acknowledges that the practices of government are multifarious and concern many kinds of people such as the head of a family, the teacher or the professional so that the notion of state power is broadened out to move beyond the formal institutions of the state legislature and law making bodies to encompass plural forms of government far removed from the state (Foucault 1994:206). Garland (1997) notes how increasingly government power is exercised through the active subject in her or his behaviour and thoughts. Individuals who are capable of choice and action thus align their own thinking and actions in line with the objectives of governing authorities. "This type of power does not seize hold of the individual’s body in a disciplinary grip or regiment individuals into conformity. Instead it holds out technologies of the self, to be adopted by willing individuals who take an active part in their own ‘subjectification’. Far from abolishing the individual’s capacity for choice and action, this kind of power presupposes it” (Garland 1997:175)

Similarly, Dean (2010) and Hannah Moffatt (2008) have focused their attention on the shaping of citizen’s behaviour by techniques of encouragement in an increased yet regulated sense of freedom. As neoliberal thinkers have often seen individualised freedom and emancipation as absolutely central to the political idea, the neoliberal penal subject has also been recast in such a light. Neoliberal mentalities of rule envisage subjects of the state as over governed; either restricted in their freedom by the constraints of the interventionist state or rendered dependent and inactive by the offer of universal welfare (Ferge 1997:25). Resultantly, the offender has in the past been symbolically represented as being in need of treatment or readjustment from state professionals, whether by the provision of welfare and care, psychotherapeutic endeavours or cognitive behaviour programmes. These professionalised strategies seek to minimise offender’s propensity for risk taking behaviour and treat any lack of awareness and consideration for those identified as victims of their criminal behaviour. Alternatively, more recently under neoliberal governance, the offender is considered as an empowered and active consumer of services, making choices about how best to change his or her own behaviour. Those offenders who can be salvaged under neoliberal governance, are deemed to be able to take responsibility for themselves as active decision makers in their lives. They are presented as active and innovative seeking to
“enterprise themselves as marketable entities maximising their personal value and achieving the means for self-fulfilment” in the free market (Dean 2010:23). As O’Malley (2009) states, the neoliberal government of offenders in the criminal justice system is based upon the premise that all are expected to avail themselves of the skills, resources and knowledge made available to them in the market in order to maximise their own security, health and well-being; to build their own self-esteem, care for themselves and engage in learning (Ferge 1997).

“Neoliberal penalty seeks through the calculus of punishment primarily to press upon the offender (and potential offender) the model of individual responsibility. Accepting responsibility for one’s actions does not imply accepting or obeying any set of morals. It implies accepting the consequences of one’s actions. The individual may choose, are free to choose, in a way and to a degree never envisaged by normative disciplinarity – but if those choices lead into criminal offending, they must take the burden of their choice (O’Malley 1994 in Hannah-Moffat 2001:172)”

For Foucault (1990), government has been increasingly characterised more by the technologies (behaviour) of the self rather than a disciplinary ‘state grip’ (Garland 1997). The individual is to be governed through strategies of empowerment and choice rather than have such agency taken away by the state. Government is indeed not the suppression of the individual, but rather, the cultivation of individual's subjectivity in certain ways, aligned to government aims e.g. the idea we secure or insure our valuables to reduce crime rather than rely solely on state authorities such as the police to ensure our security (Dean 2010: Hannah-Moffatt 2001. For governmentality scholars analysing contemporary neoliberalism, individuals are conceptualised as self governing and active players rather than passive recipients in the processes of the government of oneself and others with the state decentred from power relations. Indeed, for Foucault (Burchill etal 2011:) power only exists where there is the possibility of resistance and hence where individuals have relative freedom to shape their decisions and actions in order to meet the authorities’ prescribed behaviour.

As such practices which can sometimes be seen as running counter to governmental messages about how to take care or govern oneself can be a means for resistance to government and involve the identification of a range of ‘counter conducts’ of the self involving other objectives and methods of governing oneself (Rose 1990).

This thesis charts how the volunteer ex-offender peer mentor is a new emblematic ‘making up’ (Hacking 1985) of the ex-offender as an active rehabilitation subject governed at a distance by relative freedoms to assume new valorised or authorised subjectivities, roles and functions in the criminal justice whilst simultaneously being subject to coercive restraints as the ex-offender.
Indeed as Rose (1989:213) notes a neoliberal strategy of government is to “oblige” individuals to be free rather than dependent upon the state and as a result create the possibility of their ‘governing at a distance’. To analyse government then is also to analyse the self and the various practices of the self which shape and sculpt behaviour (Foucault 1998). However the technologies of the self are utilized and relate to rationalities of government rather than being completely free and separated from the practices of government. As Burchill (1996) highlights such interconnections or contact points between technologies of power and of the self are illustrated in how macro sovereign strategies relate to how individuals such as parents or teachers conduct themselves via micro strategies in families or schools for example.

This empirical research explores how ex-offenders as peer mentors enjoy a new legitimacy in rehabilitative work having ‘been there’ with respect to criminal activity and experiencing the criminal justice system but this is a regulated, moralised conception of active responsibility, akin to “enforced self regulation” which clearly demark moral standards of self improvement, maximisation of ones skills to enter the paid work force and a demarcated life away from criminal activity. Indeed as Rose and Miller state “personal autonomy is not the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations” (Rose and Miller 1992:174). A key to Rose and Miller’s analytic of political power beyond the state is the centrality of knowledge whereby government is intrinsically linked to the activities of expertise whose role is enacted though a range of diverse tactics of “education, persuasion, inducement, management, incitement, motivation and encouragement” (Miller and Rose 1992:174).

This thesis charts how the making up of the ex-offender peer mentor volunteers, in the field of rehabilitation and probation fields, represents a government strategy which acts at a distance. This new responsibilisation of the ex-offenders themselves encourages them to conduct themselves in law abiding, generative and active way. The foregrounding of the penal voluntary sector and their peer mentor volunteers represents a government strategy which offers individuals and organisations active involvement to resolve issues relating to recidivism and resettlement after prison which hitherto have been seen to be the preserve of authorized governmental agencies. However, the opportunities for the penal voluntary sector and peer mentors is “that they must assume active responsibility for these activities, both for carrying them out, and of course, for their outcomes” (Burchill 1996:29).

The need for a Liquid penology - shadow states and plural punishment

The discipline of criminology is therefore situated against extreme change in society. Garland and Sparks (2000:1) go so far as to say that criminology’s subject matter is ‘centrally implicated
in the major transformations of our time’. As a result of such tumultuous political, social and economic transformations detailed earlier, the discipline of criminology needs to shift its traditional focus and frameworks of analysis to have contemporary relevance. As such criminology ‘must be a subject that constantly reconstitutes itself if it is to come to terms with the social and legal worlds that is aspires to comprehend and which it intends to intervene’ (Garland and Sparks 2000:3).

Modernist criminological thinking has traditionally been focused upon a narrow conceptualisation of the sovereign state and its criminal justice system, with a focus on law making professionals employed by the institutional pillars of state, the police service and prison and probation services (Garland 1997). With respect to the huge expansion of harsh punitive mentalities and government actions the focus on punitivism has meant that punishment has remained firmly ensconced as the responsibility and act of the nation state despite emerging evidence to the contrary. Three strikes sentencing arrangements, no frills incarceration and the resurrection of the death penalty in the United States, coupled with a worldwide expansion of incarceration as the first response to crime rather than a last report, has focused academic attention of the actions of the domineering, punitive sovereign state (Lea and Hallsworth 2013). The traditional notion of state formation from the 18th century onwards was the creation of an ensemble of rules over a geographical area. The creation of a national language, a common coinage, the fusing of time and space into a single entity, and the unification of legal codes and authorities all bear witness to this idea of a single unified state able to act and rule with considerable autonomy (Rose and Miller 1992). As such the provision of state punishment has traditionally been understood as a key function of government traditionally performed by authorized state authorities.

However, more recently a more fluid and liquid criminology has been developing whereby criminologists have begun to appreciate and chart the ways in which regulatory powers or governance arrangements impact upon individual citizens’ lives. In addition they have been alert to the ways in which the provision of security or prevention of crime have become the focus of a wider range of authorities who extend the reach of the criminal justice system and introduce new knowledge, expertise and methods. Indeed Rose (2002:324) argues for a decentring of analysis away from the "criminal justice system encapsulated in codes, courts and constables".

In charting the contemporary landscape of crime, order and control, Loader and Sparks (2007) highlight how entrenched conceptions of the field of crime control have begun to unravel as a result of a significant rise in crime rates, cultural, economic, societal and technological transformations and political transformations from the late 1970s in England and Wales. They argue that one of criminology’s contemporary habits of a unerring focus on the state needs to be
reconsidered. The criminal justice system overall is fragmenting and increasingly characterised by pluralisation including the involvement of non-governmental authorities. Garland and Sparks (2000:4) note how "The continuing erosion of clear cut distinctions between the public and the private realms of crime control, together with the displacement of the criminal justice state from centre stage in the production of security and crime control, have had a major impact". As a result the political discourse constructed by opposing binaries such as public versus private, state versus civil society or government versus the market do not adequately characterise the diversity of ways which government rule is created, flowing simultaneously through all these organisations and fields of practice. As such with respect to new approaches to penality, scholars need to be aware of governmental *inventiveness* and the nuanced ways of governing populations and individuals in different ways.

Rather than see power as "monolinear"(Dean 2010:30) with destructive techniques of sovereign power being replaced by replacing disciplinary attempts to normalise, only to be replaced further by post-correctional techniques, Foucault (1997:107-108) encourages an analysis which enables us to see these three forms of power in a triangular form, representative of the fact that all three techniques are used and recast simultaneously in order to maximise the happiness of the population and provide security. As a result Rose (2000:183) notes how government techniques are sometimes complex and contradictory with techniques aimed to re-train and employ offenders coexisting with government strategies to imprison them indefinitely.

A criminology which ignores the increasing plurality of voices, expertise and authority on crime matters continues to focus on the outdated notion that the criminal justice state is the sole solution to crime problems and was also responsible for their delivery (Rose 1993:295). Loader and Sparks (2007) note how late modern crime control is volatile, uneven and contradictory. They encourage us to see how the power of the state has remained even whilst statutory actors of police and prisons have been challenged by a market logic and partially replaced by private interests and actors. This highlights how contemporary law and order agendas and the punishment of offenders represent the 'flexing of the muscles of the displaced state'(Bauman 1999 in Loader and Sparks 2007:81) as a response to increased demands for safety and security from citizens. As such this enables scholars to conceptualise a change in the nature of the state power from 'an imagined state as being a centralized body within any nation, a collective actor with a monopoly of the legitimate use of force in a demarcated territory' (Rose 1999:1) to one which is fragmented, has new flows and alliances with private and other interests on a localized and globalised scale.

The criminological mirror therefore needs to be fixed not only upon the reconfigurations apparent in the ‘state system,’ but also to encapsulate newer and broader governmental
strategies around the relationship between state, crime, obedience and punishment. Referring to
the latter, one such approach is the increasingly core governmental strategy to extend its
influence outside the formal statutory criminal justice system and increasingly into the complex
fabric of civil society – an increasing awareness of efforts to control crime beyond the state (Rose
2000). Indeed, more recently where academic scholars have attempted to incorporate a penal
state back into theoretical and empirical endeavour, questions remain about the role and
boundaries of such state activity, the nature and shape of correctional agencies and the amount
of autonomy that correctional organisations and practitioners have to resist governmental
agendas and shape their own practice (Garland 2013). Indeed, as Garland notes in his 2012
Sutherland address (2013:499) whilst we may be witnessing a growing reach of the penal state,
‘modern states are internally differentiated, with power being distributed across multiple agencies
and between multiple groups all of which compete for control.’ Garland (2001) continues however
to see the powerful role of the state where punishment is considered. Indeed his thesis in the
“Culture of Control” is limited as to the nature of punishment and the involvement of non-penal
players within it. Garland (2001) rather sees a one dimensional future for punishment contained
in his ‘criminology of the other’ thesis which emphasizes the presence of a strong central state.
As such there is little in his analysis to capture responses to criminal behaviour in rather less
punitive or exclusionary ways such as the Coalition government’s Transforming Rehabilitation
agenda, restorative justice approaches or the increasing use of out of court initiatives. Garland
(1996) has less to say how the punishment of offenders could also involve governmental adaptive
strategies which move away and are distanced from traditional state actors and involve the co-
option of other sectors in the architecture and delivery of punishment. Garland (2000, 2013) does
little to cast his gaze over the possibilities of responsibilised community based punishment of
offenders by non-state actors in a possible shadow penal state. As such the two juxtaposed
governmental strategies to address crime control by denial and acting out and by adaptation and
realism to address crime prevention present too rigid a dichotomy in order to characterise the
complexity of volatile and contradictory approaches to crime control in late modern times. For
Garland (2001, 1996), the involvement of the private and voluntary sectors in crime control
emerges in the more technical and rational preventative sector, rather than playing a central role
in the punishment or supervision of offenders subject to legal sanctions. Garland’s (2001) macro
analysis of punishment remains wedded to modernist understandings of criminology in so far
as it places the state centrally through, state institutions actors and state practices in the in the
construction and delivery of it.

As Beckett and Murakawa (2012) highlight by limiting his analysis of punishment to the harsh,
expressive, “criminology of the other”, Garland (2001) fails to open and illuminate the broader
‘shadow carceral state’ emerging beyond the confines of the more visible criminal law and justice
institutions. They usefully remind us that ‘the penal system has become not only larger, but also more legally hybrid and institutionally variegated than is sometimes recognised’ particularly when government strategies demand that penal control expands without the requisite costs (Beckett and Murakawa 2012:223). Furthermore, Miller (2014) details how faith based charities and voluntary organisations involved in re-entry in the United States of America enable the state to actually extend its reach into the communities and lives of the poor and hardest to reach during a period of fiscal retrenchment. Similarly, Kaufman, Kaiser and Rumpf (2016:2) note how “the penal state reaches beyond carceral confinement and the well documented iterations of this confinement through civil laws and regulations, bureaucratic operations, and for profit and non-profit nongovernmental organizations”. Scholars have begun to conceptualise resettlement and re-entry activities as a hybridised field that activate organisational and human actors in voluntary, private and state agencies to intervene in offender’s lives in particular ways. Miller (2014) favours an analysis that governmental responsibilisation strategies in rehabilitation and punishment actually defers responsibility away from the state and onto the shoulders of charities and non-state actors. Importantly, he notes that the co-option of non-statutory actors also takes on the task of ‘knowing, understanding and shaping the criminal subject’ with them.

However by conceptualising new and important regulatory forms of control as being ‘other to the state’ or ‘beyond the state’ rather than an analysis of exactly what they are,’ (Armstrong and McAra 2006:8) criminology is only beginning to broaden its understanding of a fragmented penal field. Only very recently has academic attention begun to appreciate the transformations in the punishment of offenders with the development of new agencies below the borders of the nation state (Armstrong and McAra 2006:8), the inclusion of a range of private and voluntary sector actors as increasingly significant in our range of responses to law breaking (Corcoran 2011). The lack of scholarship with respect to the plurality of actors in punishment continues to be a result of few empirical or grounded research studies into privatised prisons or probation. Where research has been undertaken it seems a key consideration of academics has always been compare it to the previous state arrangements in the field. Only more recently, and after undertaking research into the penal voluntary sector has significant studies by Abrams et al (2016), Tomczak (2017), and Corcoran (2011) shed light of the specific arrangements and relationships between the state, the penal voluntary sector and the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders. A rather thicker analytical frame is essential in detailing the rich complexity of the power to punish in late modernity where the state presents itself as simultaneously sovereign and decentred. Contemporary criminology and penology therefore needs to continue to respond to punitive arrangements which involves new actors and practices, stretching the penal gaze beyond courts, prisons and probation officers to new networks and
multiple ‘architectures of punishment’ and across penal and civil spheres. Neoliberal political rationality locates civil society and civil institutions as key to delivering government. The activities of charities and non-governmental organisations are not considered as part of the state but rather as part of governance arrangements actively reforming and transforming what has traditionally been state activity as its remoulds itself into a range of governance functions for a huge range of providers of criminal justice (Foucault 1991).

Criminology then must take as its central concern the fragmentation and diffusion of state power within society and crime control more specifically (Dean 2010). These perspectives encourage us to see beyond historic, statutory organisations to highlight new sites of authority or control and to consider new rationalities and technologies of control. Overall they outline a new governance of control which involves the state and the incorporation of a range of other actors in markets of rehabilitation and punishment where the state is merely one provider of such services. However, criminology scholars shouldn’t just assume that diffusion or fragmentation of state activities necessary leads to minimisation of state power. In the field of penality, whilst the sovereign state continues to enact legislation and use coercive power, it also attempts to have more direction and clout in the lives of free individuals’ by governing at a distance through a network of responsibilised actors (Lea and Hallsworth 2013).

Conclusion – The penal voluntary sector and peer mentor volunteer in community justice

This chapter has charted the recent blend of neoliberal and neoconservative governmental mentalities in crime control. It has highlighted how harsh coercion, restraint and domination are to the fore particularly when moralistic and paternalistic neo-conservative mentalities are powerful. However, at the same time, neoliberal government policies are increasingly present with the penal subject governed by regulated freedoms to rehabilitate, to assume self-responsibility, become empowered and a law abiding citizen. As a result in contemporary penalty we see a volatile and contradictory array of expressive, disciplinary and empowering approaches to the crime and punishment problem (O’Malley 1999). Increasingly present are strategies which are underpinned by repression, discipline and control with those which offer governance of the criminal from a distance without any recourse to coercion, rather acting upon individual self to reform, autonomy to make decisions and exercising choice to maximise happiness (Rose 2000). Neoliberal penal policy is a flexible strategy offering multiple solutions and goals about what to do with offenders who break society’s laws.
In an increasingly fluid and complex society, studies around governmentality offer criminologists a move away from totalising and centrist theorisations of coercive sovereign power. Governmentality opens up understandings of the governance of others and of open ended ways of thinking about government (Rose and Miller 1992). Armstrong and McAra (2006) speak of the need for an analysis which recognises the porous nature of punishment’s borders and the need to move beyond the simplistic notion that punishment is the state’s response to law breaking. The discipline of criminology needs to broaden out its analytical lens away from codes, courts and constables to perhaps charities, companies and citizens in criminal justice.

Armstrong and McAra (2006:4) have noted Foucault’s governmentality thesis has moved analysis beyond the state in both the supra and sub-state levels. Consequently, the broadening out of multi textured narratives of regulation to international and transnational bodies, such as the International Criminal Court and to the sub-state level, such as local crime prevention bodies or parenting programmes for ‘criminogenic families’, the state has become simultaneously more remote and at a ‘distance’ and more immediate as power and control is delivered more effectively. Indeed it is empirical research into the new borders of penality which will enable a more nuanced understanding beyond singular, totalising ideas which characterise the entire penal field characterised in terms such as the new punitivism, demise of rehabilitation, or the rise of risk.

In effect the government in England and Wales acts as merely a purchasing or ‘steering’ agency with provision or the ‘rowing’ secured by the financing of a plethora of providers in a market of community justice. The political, social and cultural shifts of late modernity have led Rose (2000:323) to comment upon an ‘intrinsic heterogeneity, contestability and mobility in practices for the government of conduct’.

The research outlined here outlines the nature and impact of neoliberal penal reforms in England and Wales and focuses more explicitly on the field of community justice or rehabilitation endeavours. More specifically, the thesis seeks to analyse the new contours of punishment formed by new ways of thinking and practices in the field of probation. Its central concern is the increasing involvement of a penal voluntary sector in penalty. Whilst charities and their volunteers have been present for a significant period of time in the criminal justice field, only recently has the penal voluntary sector and volunteers returned to the apex of government thinking and policy making around the rehabilitation of offenders. Criminal Justice has often blended the professional with lay community members to combine scientific and rational logic with the community level. For example, Hucklesby and Corcoran (2016:1) talk of the voluntary sector being transformed to become ‘enmeshed’ in the day to day operations of criminal justice particularly where services were traditionally the preserve of statutory agencies. Senior (2012)
talks of the penal voluntary sector becoming centre stage in contemporary reconfigurations of rehabilitation and probation work. It is often stated how intertwined the penal voluntary sector is in the functioning of prisons. The strength of the relationship is illustrated by Martin (2013) who identified how “there can hardly be a prison in the country that could continue to work as it does if there was a large scale collapse of voluntary, community, and social enterprise services for people in custody”.

However, in articulating the extent to which new voluntary actors are being mainstreamed in the community justice field is firstly the Penal Voluntary Sector’s move from the margins to the mainstream in carrying out the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders and the government rationality that some charities have a central role to play in a reconfigured market of community justice and rehabilitation. Secondly, the move to mainstream the penal voluntary sector is intertwined with the governmental mainstreaming of the ex-offender acting as peer mentor volunteers, active in shaping their own and others behaviour in activities largely deemed beyond the state. Indeed, the foregrounding of the voluntary sector was exemplified during the 2007 Probation Service centenary year (Burke and Collett 2015). The Ministry of Justice made great play of the fact that the Probation Service was born out of the work of altruistic amateurs rather than emphasize the much longer and significant impact upon society as the result of decades of statutory provision. What is significant over one hundred years later is the new reconfiguration of probation seems to be no longer as an organisation with a proud if politically shaped history, but rather a commodified set of Probation or rehabilitative tasks which could be undertaken by any provider year (Burke and Collett 2015, Canton 2011). Probation should no longer been imagined as a boundaried institution, practices and professionals. The new challenge is to understand a fragmented and hybridised community justice field which incorporates different sectors and knowledges. As Huckelsby and Corcoran (2016) have noted it is against the backdrop of neo liberal political rationalities that the voluntary sector has been offered new ‘spaces’ to operate in rehabilitation services in a newly created rehabilitation quasi-market (Le Grand 1999) worth £3.7 billion. Responding to this challenge the thesis traces the accelerating agenda to involve the penal voluntary sector in the punishment of offenders in the community and after serving custodial sentences. It uncovers and analyses the methods and incentives the government has created to entice non-state actors into new and challenging areas of penal practice fraught with ethical and practice dilemmas. In addition, the new architecture of punishment involves the individual actors themselves and as a result both the governmental and subjective understandings of ex-offender peer mentor volunteers are analysed together to cover the ways in which peer mentoring practices are understood and made up by those responsible for encouraging such roles and those actually undertaking them. The research seeks to develop our existing knowledge of the impact and effects of responsibilisation strategies by complementing
Garland (2001) and O'Malley (1999) macro level and ‘top down analysis’ of governmental strategies with theoretical insights gained from conceptualising governmentality from below, involving the subjective understanding of those ex-offenders who receive encouragements to take on peer mentor identities and practice in a particular way (Shoshana 2011). By focusing on both governmental strategies to reform the penal sector, outlined in key government documentation, and, by empirical research in a single penal voluntary sector case study, the individual subjective understandings into peer mentors will be uncovered. In addition, by adopting a theoretical underpinning which couples the textual and the discursive in how government’s seek to shape the conduct of ex-offender peer mentor volunteers, the research will uncover how government reforms are welcomed, adapted or resisted by those subject to them. As such the research seeks to enquire whether government reform strategies are perhaps more negotiated between state and civil organisations than previously thought, where certain roles and responsibilities in the crime control field are welcomed and others are not. Finally, the research seeks to highlight the extent to which penal voluntary sector organisations can become altered by such government penal strategies in terms of their value base, organisational culture and the nature of their engagement with citizens who have offended or remain true to their charitable mission (Corcoran 2011).

Despite a developing academic literature regarding the challenges to criminological enterprise which late modernity brings, there remains only embryonic empirical research between charity and the punishment of offenders. This is particularly the case in a reconfigured system whereby such agencies no longer are tasked to operate under the control of or in partnership with established statutory agencies, but rather are increasingly viewed as new penal experts in their own right and able to compete with or replace the traditional state institutions. As Chapter two outlines much of the existing academic interest into the penal voluntary sector has been to answer important research agendas which have begun to scope the shape and size of the penal voluntary sector (Meek, Gojkovic and Mills 2013) or normative and ethical questions regarding whether charities ought be involved in this new sphere of work (Corcoran 2009, Benson and Hedge 2009). Rather less attention has been given to how we conceptualise or understand the contemporary links between charity and punishment save for recent work by Tomczak (2017) and Abrams, Hughes, Inderbitzin and Meek (2016). Moreover, at a more embryonic stage is research and knowledge on ex-offender peer mentors engaged in the active supervision and rehabilitation of themselves and those leaving prison. Such research requires the criminologists to meet the challenge which Garland and Sparks (2000:20) pose where new rendezvous between academic disciplines are made and new criminological imaginations are outlined, formed beyond the gaze of the state and the professional.
Chapter 2: The ‘hyperactive mainstreaming’ of the penal voluntary sector in community justice in England and Wales

Introduction
This chapter analyses the development of the penal voluntary sector in recent government policy as a key organisational actor in the reform of community justice and rehabilitation in England and Wales. More specifically, it addresses the reconfiguration of the Probation field and community based rehabilitation services. It offers an analysis of governmental thinking whereby charitable organisations have moved from being seen as operating in conjunction with the state, often filling in the delivery gaps for hard to reach groups, to being conceptualised as important actors in a competitive marketplace for probation and rehabilitation services following the Coalition government’s (2012) Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.

The chapter begins by firstly, highlighting how defining and encapsulating the broader voluntary sector is deemed problematic in much academic research and how this conceptual uncertainty is replicated in research and analysis of the penal voluntary sector as a single and unitary governable entity. Secondly, the chapter details the Labour (1997-2010) and Conservative Liberal Democrat Coalition (2010-2015) government’s positioning of the voluntary sector in community justice, emphasizing the nuanced ebbs and flows in the relationships between the state and penal voluntary sector which culminated in the realisation of a quasi-market for community justice. In doing so it traces how charities, who work with offenders and ex-prisoners, have traditionally been imagined by government as organisations which added value to the statutory delivery arrangements for the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders. However more recently, government penal policy has pointed towards a new conceptualisation of a singular and unitary penal voluntary sector, able to contest and compete with government and business for government contracts in this field. Finally, as the change in rationale for voluntary sector organisations is outlined, the chapter rehearses and analyses the various academic perspectives on the contemporary place of the penal voluntary sector and the respective welcomes and warnings for the sector which have been voiced.

The call to the Penal Voluntary sector to reform public services

When situating any research into the penal voluntary sector, it is important to consider the history and key themes and controversies inherent in the broader changes to public policy which has impacted upon the voluntary sector. The mainstreaming of charities in the penal voluntary sector operating in the community justice field relates to more broader changes in the relationships between government, public policy and the statutory, private and third sectors.
which have enjoyed bipartisan political support. Smart (2003:130) notes that the changing relationship between the public and private spheres, conceptualised more broadly as the State versus the Market economy or social democracy versus Neoliberal government rationalities continues to be an important focus of social, political and economic academic analysis.

The impetus for change in delivering social and penal policy in England and Wales harks back to the 1970s crisis of welfarism. The crisis in the welfare state arose both as a critique of state inefficiencies by advocates of purely market-based solutions and also emanating from a radical critique against the state’s bureaucratic, self-serving and unresponsive attitudes to the users of services. Indeed at the end of the 1970s, New Right governments conceptualised the State as being indicative of a self-serving and bureaucratic socialism, starkly unable to meet the complex demands and desires of a changing world (Smart 2003:120). Subsequently public sector services have faced a dual critique as to their inefficiencies and professional self-interest. Margaret Thatcher summarised these twin critiques when she stated that "already large and unwieldy after its expansion in the two world wars, the British government very soon jammed a finger in every pie, ... it levied high rates of tax on work, enterprise, consumption and wealth transfer...It made available various forms of welfare for a wide range of contingencies - poverty, unemployment, large families, old age, misfortune, ill health, family quarrels – generally on a universal basis" (in Burton 2013:17).

In England and Wales amongst successive governments of every persuasion, the voluntary sector has enjoyed an ever closer relationship with the state, principally as a result of filling in the gaps left behind as a result of the statutory sector withdrawing from its service delivery function in a range of education, health and social policy arenas.

Defining the core characteristics of ‘a loose and baggy monster’

Any definition of the voluntary, not for profit or more latterly, ‘Third’ sector is intrinsically problematic. These terms are used to refer to a ‘bewildering’ (Kendall and Knapp 1995:66) range of organisations, activities and collections of individuals who often view themselves in a pluralistic sense rather than as a single collective entity (Alcock 2012: 221). Charities are often increasingly differentiated in size, field of intervention, ethical standpoint and ambition. In scoping the broader voluntary sector in England and Wales, it is important to note that the sector encompasses large multinational charities such as Mind or Barnados through to playgroups and localised, small scale services run on a shoestring budget. Indeed, considering the notion of a unified voluntary or Third sector in a critical sense, fee paying schools and universities enjoy some elements of charitable status. Adding to the diversity of this ‘loose and baggy monster,’ (Kendall and Knapp 1995) are also campaigning organisations, reliant upon the support and
The voluntary sector's contribution to society has centred around an idea that it should act as a contestant against other sectors to deliver a marketised range of social and human services which were traditionally the work of the state. As a result the voluntary sector has changed in subtle ways, but most noticeable a bifurcation between the vast number of small scale, fundraising organisations and a few large scale charities who are able to offer economies of scale to deliver government contracts. Both the Labour and Coalition governments advocated for wholesale government public sector reform giving importance to the delivery of evidence based policy regardless of 'who provides' the service. This has meant that broader 'disorganised welfare mixes' (Rochester 2013) at the national, regional and the local level have been created incorporating a blurring of the traditional boundaries between the state, voluntary sector and business.

Similarly, in the community justice and rehabilitation field under successive government plans, community justice has fragmented as Probation Trusts have been abandoned to be replaced by independent Community Rehabilitation Companies made up with private sector prime providers, the penal voluntary sector and ex-public sector Probation staff mutuals in a market of community justice and rehabilitation. The porous and fluid nature of sectoral boundaries in contemporary delivery of penal policy is exemplified by the government announcement in a Ministry of Justice news briefing that the competition to run HMP Berwyn had been successfully won by the public sector HM Prison Service. However on a closer reading, HMP Berwyn would also see around a third of the prison outsourced to private and voluntary providers. The then Prisons Minister, Andrew Selous stated,

“The construction of the new prison in North Wales is already underway as part of the Prison New Capacity and Unit Cost Programmes. I can confirm that the new prison will be operated by Her
Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) but with 34% of service provision outsourced, including the running of the large industrial workshop complex. This new model will bring the public, voluntary and private sectors together, working to provide the best rehabilitative environment and to tackle reoffending rates.” (MOJ press release 24th February 2015).

Despite significant diversity and heterogeneity amongst voluntary sector organisations, Carmel and Harlock (2008) identify that successive governments have sought to govern the voluntary sector as a single uniform terrain. Certainly in community justice and the resettlement of offenders after custody, such a singular construction of a penal voluntary sector became problematic in terms of simultaneously creating opportunities in a rehabilitation market for large powerful business interests, localised small scale and specialist voluntary sector providers and voluntary activists alike.

Problems regarding the conceptualisation of the nature and boundaries of the voluntary sector begin with that the voluntary sector is often conceptualised by highlighting what it is not (Alcock 2012). For example, charities are often spoken about as belonging to the non-statutory sector, or as a non-governmental organisation or the ‘not for profit’ sector. Rather than providing a nuanced understanding of the voluntary sector itself, these terms merely acts as a comparator to the pure state or market benchmarks. Indeed, even more recently the use of the term ‘Third Sector’ as a conceptual framework alludes to a unified ‘catch all’ where everything that is not the state or private business can be located.

The Third Sector Research Centre located at the Universities of Southampton and Birmingham has attempted to benchmark criteria to provide a more positive and meaningful definition of the voluntary sector. They state that organisations in the voluntary sector have an identifiable legal form, have non-profit making distribution, undertake reinvestment into the organisation and are independent of government and self-governing with various levels of voluntarism in their work (Kendall 2003). However much the voluntary sector is fraught with inconsistencies and problems, in order to develop our understanding of the voluntary sector it is worth analysing it’s key set of functions (Kendall and Knapp 1995:67). The ‘Service’ provision function typifies those voluntary organisations who offer a direct service to members of the community. The key here is that in recent years the voluntary sector has increasingly been seen as a major contributor to provision in the health, education, social services, legal, and more latterly the penal sphere (Rochester 2013:36). The ‘mutual aid’ function is also of considerable relevance to this research in that the voluntary sector has an important, yet under researched, tradition of offering self help and information exchange around a common need or interest. This has been usually forged around areas such as a psycho-social or medical need. Interventions such as bereavement services, addressing substance misuse problems and a range of support focusing
on issues around identity have a long association with mutual aid. Of particular relevance here is the notion that the mutual aid or self help group can be defined as a group of individuals who experience common problems who can share their personal stories and knowledge to help one another to cope with their situation and "who simultaneously help and are helped" (Hasenfield and Gridron 1993 in Kendall and Knapp 1995:70). It is noteworthy that this mutual aid function of some charitable endeavours contrasts with notions of middle class beneficence to those in need. Here relationships are often based on hierarchy and dependence or communicate a moral or religious obligation to those in need. Such underpinning values were indicative of the charitable origins of early probation practices based upon the exhortations to lead a sober existence by the Church of England Temperance Movement (Vanstone 2004). Alternatively mutual aid often avoids relationships which carry with them stigma and the maintenance of inequalities in society. Rather the 'mutual aid' function can be understood as offering reciprocity to both parties involved or the sustaining of more equitable relationships and services between individuals which are mutually beneficial and offers the potential of social mobility (Rochester 2013:16).

Thirdly, the voluntary sector has often been described as acting as a pressure group and developing practices which create a critical or campaigning voice to government. Brenton (in Kendall and Knapp 1995:67) states that this function involves "the production of pressure on decision makers in any sector to change policy and practices usually on behalf of some identifiable group" and the use of information to lobby, use direct action or advocate on behalf of others. Since Labour’s mainstreaming of voluntary organisations in service provision there has been much written about the relationship between the third sector freedoms to challenge and to advocate when they are delivering government contracts, sometimes being paid for by outcomes and results which the government have designed. A very real concern has been expressed regarding the Third sector’s independence, none more so that in the emerging penal voluntary sector. The Charity Commission itself in 1998 had a stark warning with respect to those organisations contracting with government,

"some charities felt that entering into contracts with public bodies can lead to charities losing their independence ... Trustees should be wary of allowing the priorities of public bodies to exert and influence over their charities long term policies and direction" (Morris 2000:124)

A key element of government policy making has been that disparate voluntary and community organisations are increasingly thought of as a unified Third Sector. This creation of a homogenous third sector is deemed by government as more flexible and innovative than the Statutory or public sector and as more affordable than the private sector to deliver government ambitions. With the increasing complexities and blurring of the boundaries between sectors comes a need for a
conceptualisation of the voluntary sector which can encompass and contain the heterogeneity of charitable organisations and actions. Kendall (2003:6) offers a broad 'default' definition of the voluntary sector which includes organisations which "are formal, non-profit distributing, constitutionally independent of the state, self-governing and benefitting from voluntarism" (Kendall 2003:6). The inclusion of formal organisations into Kendall's (2003) definition omits the significant number of individualised, informal or household activities which can also characterise the community sector. However in order to provide some much needed boundaries to what we wish to consider here, core features of formal voluntary organisations are that they have a formal charter, a constitution or set of rules including charitable trusts which are independent of the state and enjoy self-government.

Policy arguments for the mainstreaming of the voluntary sector have always been founded on the basis that it offers something different to those practices characterised in the public and private sectors. The landmark Wolfenden Committee (1978) maintained that delivery by voluntary organisations could be cost effective, innovative, flexible and pioneering. Those advocating for pluralism in welfare, education or the penal sector argue that voluntary organisations are responsive, close to service user needs, participatory and empowering in contrast to their government partners (Harris, Rochester and Halfpenny 2001:6). Finally, the voluntary sector has been deemed valuable by government as it is imagined as having a large pool of volunteer labour. As a result for government the presence of a large voluntary sector invokes an image of a strong community of localised groups and activated citizens working on behalf of others who need support and assistance in society.

Constructing the penal voluntary sector as governable terrain

Conceptualisations of the penal voluntary sector are rare as the whole idea of charities and their volunteers operating in the penal field which punishes, rehabilitates or supervises citizens can seem to be incongruous. There is little public awareness of the existence of charities who supervise or rehabilitate those citizens who have offended against society. Rather the notion of charitable endeavour in criminal justice has traditionally had a better fit with care related practices to benefit the victims of crime. To add to the definitional imprecision, the penal voluntary sector incorporates real diversity in terms of its mission, the nature of its service users and delivery methods. The penal voluntary sector operates through volunteers and increasingly a significant proportion of employed staff. In addition the sector contains small and localised organisations and large scale charities who may have a national footprint.
What can be said is that the penal voluntary sector is conceptualised as heterogeneous in scale and size. Indeed it could be deemed a somewhat disconcerting ‘loose and baggy’ penal monster to reuse Kendall and Knapp’s (1996:55) metaphor. Corcoran (2011:33) understands the penal voluntary sector as “charitable and self-defined voluntary agencies working with prisoners and offenders in prison and community based programmes.” For Corcoran (2011:32) the penal voluntary sector is a more distinct group of charities and not for profit organisations who deliver interventions to offenders who are subject to legal punishment in the prison and in the community. Indeed, whilst Corcoran (2010) talks of a ‘penal voluntary sector’ as a number of organisations, rationalities and practices to supervise and rehabilitate, there remains a lack of specificity as to what type of organisations and practices make up the penal voluntary sector. Similarly, with talk of a specific penal voluntary sector it is important to consider whether such charities see their role and functions as being primarily in the ‘penal’ system, involving the punishment or supervision of offenders. Alternatively other charities may be differentiated by continuing to provide welfarist activities within an established penal welfare mix (Garland 1984). Tomczak (2017:169) also supports the idea of a lack of definitional clarity within the penal voluntary sector noting how the sector can be better understood as divided into three tiers based on their relationship to state funding.

The penal voluntary sector is conceptualised as operating firmly in the field of rehabilitation and the punishment of offenders and in some cases activity involved in activities which could be considered punitive or expanding the carceral net (Tomczak 2015). Nevertheless, academic work has used the term Penal Voluntary Sector somewhat descriptively without theoretical rigour and as such much of what constitutes the penal voluntary sector continues to remain below the radar of academic research (Corcoran 2011:33, Tomczak 2017). This far the heterogeneity of the size and character of the penal voluntary sector has been largely masked by the use of the unifying and descriptive term ‘penal voluntary sector’. The unique contribution of Tomczak’s (2017:170) work was “to consider the heterogeneity of penal voluntary organisations looking both within the and beyond the penal service market and providing multi-level analyses of charities that are fully statutory funded, partly statutory funded and not statutory funded”. In addition, the inclusion of organisations such as the Penal Reform Trust and Clinks highlight how those charities concerned with penal affairs are not solely delivery agents keen to respond to government agendas. Rather, organisations in the sector can coordinate and share good practice for charitable organisations to take advantage of government funding opportunities or alternatively act as a brake and critic to government policy.

Whilst it is important to remember that the involvement of the voluntary sector in the work of prisons and probation service has a long and distinguished history, contemporary developments
represent a rapid pace of change which will undoubtably serve to reshape the boundaries between the state and charity and change the shape and nature of the penal voluntary sector (Bryans, Martin and Walker 2002). Consequently, we have witnessed a number of startling developments in the penal field. For example, examples of mission drift and substantial value change was exemplified by NACRO, who was previously known as a penal reform charity under the guise of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders. Recently the charity was involved, as part of a consortium, to run a prison after a long standing campaign to limit the use of custody as a response to offending behaviour (Neilson 2009).

A “penal baggy monster”? - Scope and Scale of the Penal Voluntary Sector

Any analysis of the penal voluntary sector therefore needs further clarification and analysis as to its size, and nature. In 2010 Clinks estimated that there were 900 voluntary sector organisations working principally with offenders in prisons and in the community (Mills, Meek and Gojkovic 2011). In addition, Mills, Meek and Gojkovic (2011) note that whilst this number is considerable, the charities involved have a significant amount of heterogeneity and differentiation as to their nature and mission. The vast majority of organisations which make up this field are characterised by being small in size, localised, with limited funding and reliant upon a significant amount of volunteering to carry out their many functions. Indeed Tomczak (2017) notes how the vast majority of such small scale and localised charities exist beneath the radar of government policy or academic attention. However, crucially for the government’s Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) agenda, a small number of very large charities also exist in this area such as NACRO and Catch 22. These organisations typically receive much, if not all, of their funding from statutory sources. Other charitable actors, including St Giles Trust, not only work and provide services in return for statutory funding but also have relationships with the private sector and other sources of capital.

One of the most significant analyses of the size, nature and scope of the penal voluntary sector has been the work undertaken by Gojkovic, Mills and Meek (2011) as part of the Third Sector Research Centre at the University of Southampton. Gojkovic et al (2011) attempt to map out the landscape and extent of VSO’s work with offenders across the seven pathways of resettlement identified in Reducing Reoffending National Action Plan (MOJ 2008). Based on an analysis of the Charity Commission dataset, and the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO 2008) which includes a much broader set of groups and individuals such as social enterprises, community groups, societies and faith groups, the authors demonstrate how difficult it is to establish an accurate number of charities and voluntary sector groups working in this field assisting offenders in the prison and community. Gojkovic et al (2011) calculate that from the
Charity Commission dataset only 200 charities identified themselves as providing services of interventions for offenders. However, when the key words offender, offence and prison were used to target organisations who worked principally with offenders, the research unearthed 750 charities. The authors state that 750 organisations would therefore consider themselves as working with offenders as one of their principle aims. The analysis of the NSTSO data set revealed an even more varied understanding of the size and shape of voluntary and community organisations who work with offenders, ex-offenders and their families. The authors conclude that from the NSTSO data set that a significant number of voluntary bodies work with offenders and ex-offenders as a key client group but importantly continue to conceptualise their work as being outside the formalised criminal justice or penal system.

It is difficult to apply the term penal voluntary sector uncritically to the high number and variety of organisations who work with offenders and their families in the penal system and civil society. Caution needs to be exercised when attempting to construct rigid and formulaic boundaries between the penal and civic realms. Indeed the authors above detail how the penal voluntary sector’s work in the penal and community spheres was ‘interpenetrated’ rather than being conceptualised as separately boundaried. Gojkovic et al (2011) detail that 59% of charities who work with offenders state that funding from public bodies at a national and regional level constituted their principle source of funding. When looking at the size and shape of the penal voluntary sector using the NSTSO data set the authors assess that 61% of Third sector organisations working with offenders have an annual income of £100,000 or less compared with 80% of all third sector organisations. Furthermore, only 9% of charities in the penal voluntary sector receive an income of over one million pounds. To add to the heterogeneity, 27% of voluntary sector bodies reported receiving no income at all (Gojkovic et al 2011). Taking this important data into consideration, the authors conclude that the penal voluntary sector can be conceptualised as a polarised field between those organisations who have little to no income funding their charitable endeavours and a small number of large scale organisations with substantial income from statutory, national and local government contracts who are characterised by the significant use of paid employees rather than volunteers. In a similar vein Tomczak (2017:78) demonstrates the enormous variety of charities in the penal voluntary sector in her analysis of 40 voluntary organisations working in the penal sector. She notes how Nacro was the largest charity in the sample with an income of £61 million, whilst AFFECT (Action For Families Enduring Criminal Trauma) a group of people who currently have, or have had, a family member in prison had an income of £3,500 and were except from Charity Commission reporting.

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6 A total of 18,380 organisations identified their work with these groups but only 4,916 or 3% of the data set identified their 'field' as being one of criminal justice.
Tomczak (2017) echoes Armstrong (2002:356) in questioning whether the “not for profit” descriptor effectively develops any understanding of the sector or represents a convenient ‘imaginary’ of the Penal Voluntary Sector being a range of altruistic organisations fundraising and giving their time and energy for free.

Macro scale empirical research on the penal voluntary sector is fraught with conceptual and methodological challenges. There is considerable difference between the vast majority of small organisations working locally with offenders in a singular ‘sector’ alongside the large multi-million pound charities highly reliant upon government funding to operate and capture more of the community justice and rehabilitation market. For example, important distinctions between such organisations can revolve around to what extent the charitable organisations employ volunteers or paid professionals can relate to their relative size and financial clout in contracting with the state. When considering how many penal voluntary sector organisations may participate in the government’s Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) agenda, it is obvious that many will not be large enough to scale up in a national programme of reform which involves considerable resources capable to handling high levels of financial risk. Furthermore, for commentators such as Benson and Hedge (2009:36) the large charities being enticed to play an important part in the corrections marketplace of the future in England and Wales have shed a significant amount of the characteristics which make them part of any third or voluntary sector, distinctive from the statutory or private sectors. Indeed they go as far as to say the rehabilitation field is dominated by large charities in the fragmented penal voluntary sector characterised by behaviours more akin to large charities in the fragmented penal voluntary sector characterised by ‘corporate, ambitious, often national, often predatory, voluntary organisation have already ‘transformed’ into private sector lookalikes…happy to compete aggressively and with the resources to argue their ‘goodness and efficiency’’ (Benson and Hedge 2009:36)

The heterogeneous collection of organisations, who work principally with offenders and their families has, under successive government administrations, been increasingly been understood as a single governable terrain, the penal voluntary sector. However it is important to note that the penal voluntary sector remains blurred in terms of sectoral boundaries or as a distinct entity. Indeed an important consideration is made by Tomczak (2017:4) where she notes that the penal voluntary sector’s distinctiveness can be attributed to their legal charitable status. Whilst she notes how such charities are distinct from the statutory criminal justice system, she rightly problematizes this distinction by offering a critique which suggests that the penal voluntary sector can be seen as part of the “wider cast” of non-statutory actors playing an active part in the punishment or rehabilitation of offenders (Tomczak 2017:4). As a result any simple notion of a distinctive and unitary penal voluntary sector enjoying considerable independence from the
statutory penal system to pursue altruistic practices is highly problematic. Whilst some charities
appear to be at risk of becoming ‘captured’ by responsibilisation agendas to reduce recidivism
and deliver punishment, the vast majority of charitable endeavours operate outside the
formalised penal system under the radar of government funding and until recently academic
research.

The Charity and Punishment Nexus

Despite the longstanding presence and enduring role they have played in social and criminal
policy, voluntary or third sector organisation have largely remained invisible to scholarly interest
until recently (Abrams et al 2016, Tomczak 2017). Also negligible has been the public’s awareness
of the vast number and nature of charitable organisations working with lawbreakers. However,
this lack of awareness is subject to change with the increasingly foregrounding of the penal
voluntary sector as a core actor to address some of society’s entrenched problems around the
punishment and rehabilitation of offenders (Tomczak 2017). Subsequently, the contemporary
foregrounding of the penal voluntary sector represents the latest government policy and
programme to involve the voluntary sector and individual volunteers in the community justice
sphere which emanated from a long held notion of charity acting to complement statutory sector
delivery to a new rationality of government whereby the penal voluntary sector acts
independently in a community justice marketplace and seeks to compete with the state.

The Voluntary Sector with Probation - cooperation and complementary practice

The enduring relationships between the statutory Probation Service and the voluntary sector
represent a long and proud tradition (Rumgay 2003, Nellis 2002). Indeed the Probation Service’s
unique position within the Criminal Justice system has made effective working relationships
essential with sentencers, police and prison officers, and a whole host of organisations in the
voluntary and community sector. As Rumgay (2003:195) suggests the Probation Service has
traditionally operated simultaneously within the formalised and statutory criminal justice system
and with local community environments adding much needed ‘glue’ in the criminal justice
system. Probation officers have a long tradition of occupying professional space which involves
advising sentencers on the most appropriate punishment, working with offenders in their
localities to improve their social position and with community organisations in order to impact
positively upon the life experiences and factors which resulted in law breaking.

Bryans, Martin, and Walker, ed (2002) note that voluntary sector organisations experienced a
proliferation of activities within and beyond the prison in the 1970s as they responded to new
emergent social problems around substance misuse and gender and economic inequalities. The Probation Service’s history of partnership arrangements with the voluntary sector entered a new phase in the 1990s in England and Wales. Rumgay (2003) has noted that this time represented a ‘heyday’ for partnership approaches between the statutory and voluntary organisations with the idea appearing for the first time in Probation strategy documents. This characterised a move from ad-hoc partnership arrangements and local informality to relationships with voluntary organisations becoming key governmental strategies or business plans. In the Home Office’s (1990) document ‘Partnership in dealing with offenders in the community’, the government’s clarion call was to promote and extend partnership relations with an array of private and voluntary sector actors. However, whilst the government’s view was for voluntary organisations to have an important part to play in cooperation and in conjunction with the statutory sector, the Conservative government in 1991 stimulated an alternative idea of involving non-statutory actors in the penal system by stimulating competition by the creation of quasi-markets to transfer prisons from the public to the private realm (Corcoran 2011:37).

Partnership was defined as ‘relations between the probation service and the private and voluntary sectors, whether on the basis of grants of payments, or services in kind or joint working relationships’ (Home Office 1990). In emphasising the benefits of an ethos of partnership within multi-sectoral working in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, the new strategic direction for the statutory sector was clearly in terms of moving away from its traditionally monopoly in terms of delivery with offenders in the community to the harnessing of other providers who could complement and work cooperatively with the statutory provision of services to offenders. This process of partnership working and collaborative endeavour was initially centrally allocated from the Supervision Grants Scheme before being devolved to local Probation Areas who were informed they should spend at least 5% (then later raised to 7%) of the Area budget on partnership activity with the independent sector.

Third Sector for the Third Way: Labour government and community justice reform 1997-2010

The Labour government’s approach to public sector reform has been described as a period of rapid policy change resulting in a rise in the profile of the voluntary sector to rival any of the earlier periods in the history of the voluntary sector (Alcock 2011:158). Under Labour the forefronting of the voluntary sector was marked both by significant policy development and a conceptualisation of an increasingly diverse range of charities under a singular ‘Third Sector’ descriptor, able to be governed as a unitary sector much akin to the public and private spheres. The Labour years also earmarked a new phase of relationships between the state and the
voluntary sector. In her analysis of the changing relationships between state and third sector, Lewis (2005) states that the turn of the new millennium heralded a new relationship of equal partnership between state and voluntary endeavours rather than the supplementary role the voluntary sector had performed to state provision prior to this period. The creation of the Compact between Labour and the voluntary sector was completely without precedence in terms of redrawing the relationships between the state and charitable endeavours. The Compact was symbolic of a new relationship with government and a new policy environment and opportunities for growth for the Third sector (Lewis 2005). The ‘Third Way’ approach to planning public services thoroughly rejected a centralised state led approach or a total reliance upon market forces to shape and distribute welfare. The pragmatic mantra of what mattered most was ‘what works’ rather than who delivers, neatly encapsulates Labour’s Third way notions of public sector delivery which envisaged the voluntary sector as an alternative to delivery by the state and private capital. For Labour, by being a separate sector which was explicitly not the state and not the market, the voluntary or third sector could offer a genuine alternative provider of public services. Such transformations in public service delivery was no longer a matter of partisan politics but rather an irreversible change. The Labour government were keen to strike a difficult balance between profit, wealth accumulation and success for some and social inclusion amongst those who were not principally the beneficiaries of the globalised free market (Page 2001:513).

Labour’s emphasis on the targeting of significant resources to those charitable endeavours able to scale up and deliver public policy in services formerly delivered by the statutory sector meant that not all charitable organisations were able to benefit from the strategy. Excluded from Labour’s focus on delivering government functions were smaller, often more community based organisations. The impact of this was to bifurcate the Third sector between those largescale charitable organisations able to innovate and scale up their activities with substantial business acumen and the vast majority of voluntary action who were not able to respond and act in this way (Rochester 2013). Government policy under Labour focused almost entirely on only 2,000 national charities or 2% of voluntary organisations with budgets of more than one million pounds accounting for almost 70% of the entire sector’s incomes (Davies 2011). Benson and Hedge (2009) note that this 2% represents corporate national charities who increasingly operate like private sector organisations concerned with maximising their profile and footprint and market share.

As Darendorf (2003 in Rochester 2013:212) notes that under Labour, “increasingly it appears that the ‘sector’ is in fact two sectors; one genuinely voluntary, happily remote from government, hard pressed to meet the charity tests of social usefulness – and the other
Labour’s mainstreaming of the Third sector envisaged a sector which would include traditional charitable organisations and mutual organisations in addition to social enterprises in an even broader and “baggier monster” at the centre of public service reform. For example, the then secretary of state for Business and Enterprise John Hutton argued in 2006 that “government must be ever sharper and more adept at creating and managing contestable forms of service delivery. Alternative providers, whether in the private, public or third sectors, should be the norm, not the exception” (quoted in Davies 2011:23). This was encapsulated in Labour’s creation of an Office for the Third Sector (OTS) in 2006 to encourage growth and coordinate the activities of the voluntary and community sector (Davies 2011). The Office for the Third Sector (OTS) website in 2006 explained that the notion of a unified Third Sector “encompasses voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutual both large and small”. The OTS took over the coordination of all government policies for the sector, enjoying a large budget and a dedicated Minister for the Third Sector which raised the profile further. For many voluntary organisations such as St Giles Trust, the beneficial social impact on the community was not merely a side effect of economic activity but the motivation for involvement in arrangements with private capital such as the Peterborough One Service (Defourney and Nyseens 2006).

Finally, it is important to note that Labour’s relationships with the Third sector did change over time. This change can best be described and analysed as a move from direct contracting arrangements between government and charitable endeavours to deliver public services to policies based on the government creating competitions to outsource the work of statutory agencies in new quasi-marketplaces (Rochester 2013:79, LeGrand 1999). Such marketplaces were to replace centralised and bureaucratic approaches deemed self-serving and outmoded (Milbourne 2013) Whilst it is imperative to trace and analyse the nature and significance of governmental policy making towards the creation of the Third sector in terms of its field of activities, shape and size, it is also important to trace ideological influences of the development of the sector. Rochester (2013:85) notes that the culture and values of the competitive marketplace have radically shaped the Third Sector culminating in a stark examples of winners and losers in the sector.

The move to winning government work by competition between charities and businesses has shifted the emphasis of public service delivery ever closer towards the government’s needs. Contracts can be devised and proscribed by government and subsequently, may be removed from the traditional voluntary sector focus on service user need previously afforded by the provision
of grants. As a precursor to the Coalition government’s relationships with the Third sector, Labour commissioning enabled the government to decide what services it wished to fund, what outcomes and results it expected and how much it wished to pay for them. Voluntary sector organisations then had a stark decision to make in respect of whether it wished to compete for what was on offer. Whilst there are obvious gains to be made with respect to financial stability and growing the charity, mainstreaming of the Third sector by contestability and competition does not mean that all charities and voluntary organisations are able to take advantage and reap rewards. Only those charities who are able to act in a business like fashion by writing bids for specific contract specification or partnering with the private sector in some cases to offset financial risk are able to grow and develop in this new world of public sector reform (Davies 2011). Those organisations able to bid and compete, and scale up their delivery to meet national policy initiatives seek to gain enormously from successive government reforms.

The Carter Review of Correctional Services: ‘End to end’ management and the pluralisation of community justice

The Carter review of correctional services (2003) and the subsequent Offender Management Act 2007, amounted to a step change in the marketization of the field of community justice and the foregrounding of the penal voluntary sector. Carter (2003) called for a split between offender management from offender rehabilitative programmes and interventions designed to effectively reduce recidivism. Offender managers would therefore supervise offenders and broker a range of interventions to offenders provided by a mixed economy of statutory, voluntary and private service delivery competed for in a market in offender-related services (Burke and Collett 2015:52). The call from Carter (2003), which was subsequently adopted by government, was for greater use of competitive multi sector arrangements in work with offenders in what he called contestability. However, importantly for Carter (2003) the statutory Probation Service still had a significant role to play in a marketised field as a possible delivery agent to manage prison licences and community orders. For Carter (2003), the issue was more about which service provider offered the most effective and value for money services rather than ideological concerns over ‘who should deliver’ and from which sector.

As a result of Carter’s (2003) vision, governmental thinking around the penal voluntary sector crystallised around a new ethos in the nature of the relationship between the statutory, private and the voluntary sectors. The central idea from the review of correctional services was that

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7 The total amount of income from statutory funding for Voluntary sector organisations rose from £8 billion in 2000 to nearly 13 billion in 2007. On average voluntary sector organisations have around 36% of their funding from government in the form of contracts and commissioning (Rochester 2013).
working relationships between the probation service and voluntary and private organisations could be characterised by a new ethic of contestability rather than by a traditional understanding of cooperative and complementary roles and practice. The state’s role as a delivery agent remained only in so far as it could successfully compete with other providers to win contracts to deliver services to offenders. This signalled a change in our understanding of the terms of engagement between the state and providers from the non-statutory sector. Carter’s (2003) end vision was that the Probation Service would be reduced to being merely one of a number of competitors in a ‘mixed economy of corrections’ involving the voluntary and private sectors. Helen Edwards, Chief Executive of National Offender Management Service in 2005 echoed Carter’s central proposals of competition and contestability leading to improvements in quality of service and efficiency saying, ‘We want to get a wider range of partners involved in managing offenders and cutting re-offending. Therefore, we will legislate to open up probation to other providers, and will only award contracts to those who can prove they will deliver reductions in reoffending, and keep the public safe. We need to bring in expertise from the private and voluntary sectors to drive up the quality and performance of community punishments’ (NOMS 2005).

The Labour Government’s (1997-2010) blueprint for the market in Probation ‘Restructuring Probation to Reduce Offending’ (2005) outlined how the National Offender Management Service and regional Directors of Offender Management will commission services across Probation Area boundaries and across the custodial and community divide from any organisation in the Statutory, Private or Third sectors. Probation boards would become Probation Trusts in readiness for competition with a range of other providers, and would not seek to exist if new business is not secured.

As Rumgay (2007) has observed, the discourse around relationships between the public and voluntary sectors had shifted from the language of complementary practice and mutual cooperation to contestability and competition where old colleagues and partners would now become competitors. The Offender Management Act 2007 removed any remaining barriers to the use of private and voluntary sector providers to deliver what was previously statutory probation services and enabled the Minister of Justice to privatize those Probation Trusts who were deemed to be failing and outsource their work to other independent providers. As Corcoran (2011) notes the Offender Management Act 2007 further ratcheted up the use of performance management and outsourcing to the market in a bid to govern the probation field by the establishment of a market. As a result Labour had taken a different tact in the relationship between state punishment and charity. The focus upon contestability ensured that older notions of partnership arrangements between the sectors would be relegated in favour of contracting out. Future developments under Labour government made little reference to the presence of 42
Probation boards previously delivering probation activities. Instead a National Director of public service interventions was established, coupled with ten regional offender managers whose role was to begin the process of commissioning probation work by 2005. During this period of rapid and substantial organisational restructuring of the Probation Service by the Labour government, Burke and Collet (2015) note that the field was characterised not by the smooth development of a market in probation activities but rather a continuous sense of uncertainty and crisis with a never ending sense of structural reform until the May 201 general election.

The Coalition government, austerity and the development of the “Big Society” in England and Wales

The Coalition government’s policy towards the Third Sector continued the belief that charities are more effective and efficient than the public sector by getting closer to the consumer or service user. They are held in a positive light as innovative and have a desire to advocate for the excluded or unheard. As a result the mainstreaming of the voluntary sector to take on and deliver previously state functions continued on an unparalleled level during the Coalition government. However, the Coalition’s approach to the relationship between state and third sector had the specific backdrop of a global financial crisis and a government discourse around the turn to charitable endeavours and volunteering in a “Big Society” to deliver public services (Norman 2014). Whilst it was obvious that any notion of a Big Society was important fiscally, the Coalition also stressed the programme’s ability to harness the voluntarism and altruistic endeavours of activated citizens to rein in power from central government and give power back to communities and citizens (Painter 2012).

The key facet shaping the policy relationship between state and the voluntary sector since 2010 was the lasting legacy of the great recession of 2008. The sheer singular enormity of the 2008 recession and its impact upon voluntary organisations and welfare services is best encapsulated by Gough (2011) when he states, “The financial crash of 2008 and the ensuing global recession have been widely recognised as the most decisive capitalist crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The scale of the crash, the speed in which the circuits of finance capital unravelled, its origins within the heartlands of Anglo-American capital, the synchronised global slump in output and the gigantic scale of government reactions, marked it apart from all other post-war financial crises.” (Gough, I 2011:49).

First, the scale and nature of the financial crisis required massive government intervention to stave off runaway banking collapses and a catastrophic loss of confidence in financial
Importantly alongside the enormous government financial assistance to bail out the banking industry, the worldwide economic crisis continued to drive down projected future economy growth rates, which reduced tax revenues still further and expanded central government expenditures. In Gough’s (2011) analysis, the economic crisis cost the United Kingdom Exchequer over 10% of GDP in 2009 in the form of escalating expenditures and falling revenues, and it would continue to weigh heavily on public finances for many years to come. As a result of this global recession and collapse in economic growth tough decisions need to be taken in order to reduce the unprecedented deficit. The UK Treasury responded to the crisis with a refusal to increase income tax but rather make swathing spending cuts and rethink the role of government which became known as austerity. The programme of austerity had two facets which are of note here. Firstly, the programme of austerity meant a severe reduction in government expenditure in almost all of public sector expenditure. Secondly, the notion of austerity also signalled a more ideological transformation in neoliberal government and questioned the role and extent of the capitalist state. As the Treasury department noted,

“The Government is committed to achieving the bulk of this through reductions in Government spending, rather than tax increases, while protecting the quality of key frontline services. This Spending Review is not just about cutting spending and setting budgets. It will be a complete re-evaluation of the Government’s role in providing public services.” (HM Treasury, 2010,).

As Clifford (2016) notes the fiscal crisis in England and Wales had impacted upon the poorest and most vulnerable in our society and resultantly the need for voluntary sector organisations services have never been so keenly felt. However the 2008 crisis and state bailout of financial institutions meant there was less money in order for voluntary organisations to operate in any mixed economy of welfare or care. Importantly, funding for Local Authorities in England and Wales, which had provided a significant amount of funding for voluntary organisations, fell by 33% between 2009 and 2014 (Clifford 2016:4). The upshot is that a crisis originating in the financial sector in which the City of London is deeply implicated will be rescued by a savage attack on the living standards of the majority of UK citizens, notably those with the lowest and least secure incomes” (Clifford 2016:4).

In order to ameliorate the worst ravages to society and poverty in the United Kingdom, the then Prime Minister, David Cameron turned his attention away from extending state led provision to a much vaunted idea of the “Big Society”. At its launch in 2010 Cameron stated;

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The Big Society is about huge culture change...here people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplace.. feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities. The success of the Big Society will depend on the daily decisions of millions of people- on them giving their time, effort, even money, to causes around them. So government cannot remain neutral on that – it must foster and support a new culture of voluntarism, philanthropy, social action" (Cameron 2010 in Hardill and Baines :2011).

The Big Society agenda can be seen to continue the direction of travel of the Voluntary sector mainstreaming in public policy and the contribution of voluntarism was enlarged and intensified in a regime of budget cuts, with demands for more for less and calls for a business-like approach. The Big Society agenda placed volunteerism at the centre of third sector endeavours in order to deliver government services in times of fiscal restraint and cuts to funding (Norman 2014). The replacement of expensive public sector employees by an army of cheaper voluntary sector volunteers was a clear outcome in Cameron’s calls for a Big Society even if the range of tasks imagined rarely moved beyond libraries and the upkeep of parks and green spaces (Szreter and Ishkanian 2012). Society is only big insofar as it ignites the empowerment of individuals and communities to take on greater levels of responsibility and act to find the solutions to entrenched social problems.

Whilst the Big Society political project emphasised the unleashing of individual action, another key theme enmeshed with the Big Society idea was the continual reform of tax hungry, public services and devolution of power to local communities. As Norman (2010) states government for the Coalition was often conceptualised as merely a funding channel for a pluralist approach to what was previously state provision. Whilst Norman (2010) refrains from proposing that the entire public sector should be handed over the voluntary sector, in view of the differences in size between the two, he does note that the Big Society is the latest governmental attempt to recast the relationship between state, society and the individual by harnessing the strengths of the Third sector. The notion of a smaller state and public sector cuts is best encapsulated by Prime Minister David Cameron in his Hugo Young lecture of 2009 when he called not only for a more enterprising state but actually makes reference to the state inhibiting solutions to the very problems it attempted to address. He stated,

“the size and scope and role of government in Britain has reached a point where it is now inhibiting, not advancing, the progressive aims of reducing poverty, fighting inequality and increasingly general wellbeing. ...the recent growth of the state has promoted not social solidarity but selfishness and individualism.” (Norman 2014:1).
The potency of the Big Society policy agenda is therefore that it combines the Conservative Party's traditional demands for a smaller, steering, regulatory state and the perceived need for urgent, fiscal austerity. Similarly, the positive valorisation of the notion of society enabled political buy in from the Liberal Democrat coalition partner.

**Breaking the Cycle via a ‘Big Society’: The Coalition government and community justice reform**

The continuation of attempts to marketise the community justice field was a major strand in the Coalition government's Green paper on penal reform 'Breaking the Cycle: Effective punishment, rehabilitation and sentencing of offenders' (Ministry of Justice 2010). Burke and Collett (2015:63) noted that the strategy represented a quickening of Neoliberal reforms in the probation field. In an attempt to place the reduction of offending to the fore in penal policy, the Breaking the Cycle strategy paper introduces what it describes as a 'revolution' in community justice which had traditionally been the preserve of statutory agencies. Furthermore, the strategy contained a government ambition that the transformation of the community justice sphere could be cost-neutral to the taxpayer as a result of the perceived benefits of a competitive market and a diverse range of delivery agents focusing relentlessly of the reduction of recidivism rates. The policy states;

"we will introduce a 'rehabilitation revolution that will pay independent providers to reduce reoffending, paid for by the savings this new approach will generate within the criminal justice system" (Cabinet Office 2010:26)

The paper focuses upon two key areas to achieve transformation in community justice. Firstly, the Coalition government continues to herald the innovation and strengths in the private and voluntary sectors to this area of public policy. Secondly, the introduction of a new ‘payment by results’ funding mechanism to all providers of custodial and community punishments by 2015. The payments made to new providers from the private and penal voluntary sector organisation would be paid for by their effectiveness in reducing reoffending and the resultant savings in the criminal justice system. The paper estimated that the vicious cycle of recidivism costs the UK economy between £7 to 10 billion pounds per year (Ministry of Justice 2010). Amongst the saving from the reforms is a crucial aim to introduce a new 12 month mandatory supervision requirement imposed on all those prisoners sentenced to less than 12 months custody with high levels of rates of recidivism. This new workload in the penal sector was to be delivered by new actors in the private and voluntary sector.
The Coalition government’s support for the incorporation of the private and voluntary sectors was accompanied by concerns regarding the inefficiencies and wastefulness of the statutory sector. They referred to the experience of the previous Labour administration’s funding of the penal system which reached record levels without enjoying commensurate improvements in policy outcomes. Nevertheless, these record levels of funding for the Probation Service did not make significant inroads into the high caseloads and stubbornly high recidivism rates but was spent on numerous internal reorganisations, increased bureaucracy and staff at the national headquarters of the National Offender Management Service (Mills, Silvestri and Grimshaw 2010). The Coalition government’s view was that the expenditure on the public sector was rewarded by a lack of focus on outcomes in rehabilitation and recidivism rates with little consequences or accountability for such a failure.

In detailing the underlying philosophy for a ‘Rehabilitation Revolution,’ the Coalition government articulated that government should become more competitive, entrepreneurial and innovative. In addition, in February 2011, the then prime Minister David Cameron made an explicit link between the Big Society agenda, voluntarism and rehabilitation of offenders when he commented “take rehabilitation of offenders: it’s a classic example of where we need a Big Society approach rather than a big state approach. The big state approach is failing” (cited in O’Brien 2011). All these qualities are deemed to be embedded in marketised delivery of community justice by the private and voluntary sectors rather than the state bureaucracies who are considered to be unresponsive to customers, embedded to outmoded delivery practices and inefficient (Painter 2012). Indeed, the language of the competitive free market was used to view public interest work to be monopolistic and crowding out entrepreneurism and innovation. The Breaking the Cycle consultation paper charted the full extent of the reforms which were envisaged. There was a need to,

“fundamentally reshape... probation services to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, empower frontline professionals and make them more accountable by means of reforming the ways in which probation trusts are managed,...reviewing targets and standards to ensure greater flexibility and professional discretion...and reforming NOMS to reduce costs and enable effective local commissioning” (Skinns 2016:15).

The place of the statutory sector remained important in the market for community justice involving statutory, private and voluntary competitors. The governmental thinking at the heart of Breaking the Cycle agenda (2010) was that the statutory sector or public sphere was as an

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9 As the Centre for Crime and Justice illustrate Probation Trust areas experienced record funding increases during the Labour administration with expenditure more than doubling from £431m in 1998/1999 to £897m in 2008/2009, representing an increase of 63.4 per cent in real terms.
equal competitor in the community justice market. As such the government announced their intention to “draw on the skills of the private sector and civil society, as well as enabling the public sector organisations to compete in new markets” (MOJ 2010:2).

The rather limited reforms envisaged in the Breaking the cycle were further expanded upon in the Coalition’s (2012) consultation paper Punishment and Reform: Effective Probation Services. Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Ken Clarke set out previous reforms to the prison estate in order to create meaningful places of work and activity and the extension of payment by results. However of note, he earmarked a further period of reform by stating,

“The changes we are introducing cannot end here. The next stage of reform is sentences in the community and the operation of the Probation Service which supervises them... I set out radical plans to make sentences more credible and reform probation so it is more effective in reducing crime, by extending competition and opening up the management of lower risk offenders to the innovation and energy of the widest possible range of providers”. (Home Office 2012)

The Ministry of Justice’s Punishment and Reform (2012) consultation highlights further governmental thinking with respect to the reconfigured community justice field. It balanced a need for innovation contained within new delivery agencies with a need for the expertise of the statutory probation service acting as the commissioner of services from the private and voluntary market in what the then Justice Minister, Kenneth Clarke, called a “major and well defined role”(MOJ 2012:19). Clarke envisaged that Probation Trusts would manage the specification and budgets for the delivery of the entire range of community based offender management services and ensure competition in specified services such as low risk offender management between other providers (Skinns 2016:155). The public sector’s role is therefore encapsulated as embodying knowledge and expertise in the provision of rehabilitation services to offenders and able to lever in the best practice from the private and voluntary sectors “with the prize being a more dynamic and effective probation service – one that keeps the best of the public sector, but that also benefits from the innovative thinking and flexibility of business and charities”(MOJ 2012:3). A new commissioning probation service would ensure a strong local flavour to commissioning arrangements with local Probation Trusts acting as the glue which holds the multiple parts together. However the seeds of the split in the probation workload based on risk is already apparent in the Coalition government minds with the proposal for a market in the supervision of low risk offenders.

‘Transforming Rehabilitation’: The Penal Voluntary sector as Probation in a marketised community justice
The Coalition government’s final phase of community justice reform was contained in the ‘Transforming Rehabilitation: A revolution in how we manage offenders’ (2013) document under Justice Minister, Chris Grayling who took office in September 2012. Clarke’s demotion and the subsequent reorganisation at the heart of the Ministry of Justice symbolised an inherent tension between the liberal and conservative values in the Coalition policy making. Indeed Laws (2017:187) notes how in his view, both the demotion of Kenneth Clarke and the resignation of Baroness Warsi as Conservative Party chairman signalled a move to the Conservative Right. Laws (2017:187) states that the moves were illustrative of “the moderates… have been demoted… the hard men like Grayling are in”. Criticism of Clarke was significant following his participation in an ill-fated radio programme when discussions on differential sentences for an early guilty plea were misconstrued as a case for differential sentences for the offence of rape. His replacement by Chris Grayling was noteworthy as he was a noted free market ideologue and populist politician. Grayling’s punitivism and desire to grab a newspapers headline underpinned his controversial proposals to pass on the costs for court fees to the defendants themselves in order to raise money to enable the Ministry of Justice to remain within budget. Such a proposal would have a detrimental impact on those with low incomes and should large debts be incurred, be an impediment to successful rehabilitation (Laws 2017:399). Chris Grayling’s move to the Ministry of Justice also represents the culmination of government attempts to create a pluralised, commodified market in community justice. The state no longer is represented as the “senior commissioning partner” with the penal voluntary sector now conceptualised by government as an interdependent ally in the provision of rehabilitation of offenders after custodial sentences and in the community.

The Transforming Rehabilitation penal reforms (2013) represents a further attempt to govern rehabilitation and after custody interventions at a distance through a number of actors. As Carlen and Tombs (2005: 426) has stated,

“governments have increasingly distanced themselves from policy delivery and instead repositioned themselves as an indirect consumers of penal products via agencies operating to get the best deal for themselves and their electorates who nowadays have been taught to think of themselves more as customers of government agencies than as participants in government (2005:426).

The marketised community justice market envisaged in the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms (MOJ 2013) was de facto the third of the strategic reviews of the probation field after MOJ (2010) Breaking the Cycle and MOJ (2012) Punishment and Reform. Grayling (MOJ 2013) highlighted his focus on rehabilitation and dealing with offenders “life management issues” extending supervision to all prisoners released from prison for both short term and long term sentences. Whilst for Grayling his vision for supervision after prison release was very simple, it was also
hugely ambitious. The Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) agenda sought to ensure that peer mentors were present to meet those leaving custody at the gate, to have a place to live secured, and an individualised package of support arranged to address any needs. Consequently, a plurality of wider non-governmental providers and individuals are activated to undertake these tasks with the penal voluntary sector implicated in the new arrangements. Grayling stated "the great majority of community sentences and rehabilitation work will be delivered by the private and voluntary sectors who have particular expertise in this area...our reforms will make use of local experience and integrate with existing local structures" (Grayling 2013:6).

Under Transforming Rehabilitation (2013), the final reconfiguring of the Community Justice field took shape with the following reform proposals. Firstly, the strategy contained a proposal for a competitive market for all low and medium risk offenders in case management and offender rehabilitation services to open up diversity and plurality in providers. New providers from the private and voluntary sectors, called Community Rehabilitation Companies were commissioned in 21 contract package areas and incentivised by payment in part by results in order to achieve reductions in recidivism (Robinson et al 2016, Burke and Collett 2016). Providers would have to tackle the causes of reoffending for example by providing mentors and signposting to their services aimed at gaining employment of skills, or accommodation providers of substance misuse specialists. Secondly, rehabilitation provisions will be extended to prisoners released from short term sentences of less than 12 months (and longer than one day), effectively increasing the community justice caseloads by 22%. Thirdly, the reform programme created a statutory National Probation Service to carry out a limited responsibility for public protection via maintaining core public interest tasks such as undertaking risk assessment and management on dangerous offenders, continuing to advise the courts on sentencing and the provision of information and assessments to the Parole Board. The Ministry of Justice reiterated the role of government as reduced to that of a market facilitator by "working to build a strong market for this competition, working closely with the market to test out key principles and ideas" (MOJ 2013: 13)

Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) offered further extensions to the reforms earmarked by the Breaking the Cycle Green paper in 2010. It strategically reconfigured the public sector by plans for the National Probation Service to supervise 31,000 high risk offenders and outsourced 70% of the probation work focused upon the supervision and rehabilitation for the 236,000 medium and low risk offenders by creating Community Rehabilitation Companies. The Community Rehabilitation Company contracts were deemed to be worth between £5 billion to £20 billion over a ten year period (MOJ 2013:14). For each contract a lead contractor was identified with a diverse supply chain involving localised and smaller providers arranged in ‘tiers’.
As Sköns (2016:157) has noted Chris Grayling’s determination to outsource and marketise the work of low risk offenders put the “rev” into the revolutionary plans by the creation of business opportunities “entirely consistent with the turn to punitivism and the neo liberal insistence of the virtue of rolling back the state”. Collett (2013:175) noted how the reforms under this agenda were a rehashed search for the “holy grail of credible community services...within an incomprehensible and fragmented framework of privatised provision”.

The government thinking underpinning Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) envisaged diversity of delivery agents with a core place for the penal voluntary sector’s ability to offer an unrelenting focus upon achieving outcomes for service users, and an intrinsic drive to innovate and practice efficiently. However, the outcome of Transforming Rehabilitation competition highlighted a rather different outcome where delivery was to be concentrated with limited diversity in providers. The results of the commissioning arrangements for Transforming Rehabilitation highlights a considerable tension between government rhetoric and policy about the importance of localism and plurality in delivery and the outcomes of the commercial competition. As Senior (2013) warned, expertise might be crowded out in favour of organisations who demonstrate inexperience in the community justice practice but all of the commercial expertise to be successful in a market. After the period of competition, only one of the twenty one Community Rehabilitation Companies contracts was awarded to an organisation outside the private sector. Indeed six areas were won by Sodexo who already held 5 private prison contracts and five areas were allocated to Purple Futures run by Interserve. This was a surprising result as prior to announcing the successful bids the Ministry of Justice suggested that the competitors were diverse involving significant presence from the penal voluntary sector and public sector mutual (Robinson et al 2016).

For the penal voluntary sector the results of the Transforming Rehabilitation competition were very mixed. St Giles Trust was one of the main winners from the penal voluntary sector, partnering Ingeus a private company, and another large charity ‘Change Grow Live’, formally known at Crime Reduction Initiative, to form a company called the Reducing Reoffending Company. The Reducing Reoffending Company won two contract package areas and from June 2014 took charge of firstly, Staffordshire and West Midlands and a second lot covering Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland. However, very few voluntary organisations were involved as main actors in the competition and fewer still were successful. In terms of mentoring practices, apart from St Giles Trust’s success, a Band of Brothers were successful in London and Thames Valley contracts with a US led corrections company Management and Training Corporation. Indeed, rather than encourage plurality in the field the commissioning framework delivered exactly the opposite. The previous 35 independent
Probation Trusts, operating prior to the marketization of probation and rehabilitation work, were replaced by only 8 different private and voluntary sector providers. The National Audit Office (2016:18) noted the significant gap between government ambition and actual outcomes in relation to a plurality of community justice delivery from the Transforming Rehabilitation marketization of probation,

“More than 700 private, public and third sector organisations registered an interest following initial advertising. In the event only one of the 21 CRCs, for Durham Tees Valley, was won by a contractor from outside the private sector”.

Wither the Transformation of Rehabilitation? Post-Coalition penal reform

The smoothness and effectiveness of the implementation of the Transforming Rehabilitation (MOJ 2013) penal reform agenda is patchy aside from actually achieving the wholesale marketization of 70% the rehabilitation and probation field. The dismay at the extent to which rehabilitation practice has failed to be the centre of the penal reform agenda is illustrated by Aiken and Samuels (2017). They note that as a result of a high turnover of Justice Ministers and a safety and security crisis in the prison estate, penal reform to make prisons places of rehabilitation and opportunity have been severely curtailed. They state,

“the revolutionary zeal for rehabilitation seems to have been replaced by an understandable, though myopic and almost exclusionary, emphasis on prison safety – understandable given the increases in prison suicide and assaults. While the current prison safety challenge may have taken the focus of Ministers and civil servants away from the underlying drive towards fundamental reform, the need for a Rehabilitation Revolution is as pressing today as it ever has been. The revolution is at risk of stalling before it has really begun – and the government must do more than recommit to the consensus that exists and think boldly on making rehabilitation a reality”. (Aiken and Samuels 2017:7).

However prescient the need for an intensification and refocus on the rehabilitation revolution agenda, further penal reform by the Conservative government (2015 to present) has been created outside the market in rehabilitation and community justice. More recent reforms to develop rehabilitation have been considered within changes to prison governance and not within the marketization of rehabilitation and the creation of Community Rehabilitation Companies. Rather, Justice Ministers have turned their attention at liberating the role of prison governors in delivering change in the penal secure estate. For example, before running out of parliamentary time prior to the General Election of 2017, the Prisons and Courts Bill, introduced by Justice minister Liz Truss, outlined further deregulation and devolution in the penal sphere. She stated,
"We will also remove current restrictions so that from 1 April 2017, governors have the freedom to: Design their regime to meet local delivery needs and target training and work in prisons to match the local labour market. Prisoners could, for example, work shift patterns to deliver new commercial contracts. This would help them to meet the standards to reform offenders and prepare prisoners for life on release."


This lack of focus and drive at continuing penal reform efforts in the community justice field has rather decentred the penal voluntary sector from influencing the agenda. It may be that the contribution which the penal voluntary sector and volunteers were to make to enact positive change in the wake of the 'Big Society,' have transformed into solely commercial opportunities for 'big business'. Indeed, much of the Ministry of Justice’s time and effort after the Coalition government’s reforms has been to reconfigure the payment mechanism for Community Rehabilitation Companies in order to prevent the private and penal voluntary sectors from walking away from rehabilitation services altogether. Two providers responsible for 50% of the outsourced rehabilitation work have noted how the post custody supervision workload has been rising whilst the actual payments for CRCs have reduced largely as a result of the collapse in community sentencing. Subsequently government have received warnings that multinational providers could terminate their contracts with government. Both Interserve Justice and MTCnovo, warned that pulling out of their probation contracts "will be an option on the table that will have to be considered" (https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/mar/21/private-companies-could-pull-out-of-probation-contracts-over-costs). In order to prevent such a serious situation from realising, the government announced in January 2018 that the Community Rehabilitation Companies had received extra payments totally £342 million and were still expected to report losses ranging from £2.3 million to £43 million by 2021-22, partly due to the sharp fall in the number of offenders being sentenced to community punishments.


Furthermore, the Transforming Rehabilitation (MOJ 2013) cultural and organisational reform agenda post the Coalition government has had a deleterious impact upon overall broader probation practice. The Probation Inspectorate have warned that thus far "The financial model, the financial underpinnings for these organisations, is not sufficiently stable and it is substantially..."
inhibiting these CRCs as they seek to develop and implement new operating models” (Stacey 2017:2). Furthermore Dame Glenys Stacey added that promised innovations from the incorporation of the private and penal voluntary sectors had yet to become apparent in the sector. It is difficult to overstate the extent of the damning indictment of Transforming Rehabilitation by the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. The inspectorate has inspected all National Probation Service and CRC areas and made the following observations. The Inspectorate identified that the initial Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) teething problems have given way to more fundamental problems with the marketization of the probation field. Dame Glenys Stacey, Chief Inspector of Probation states, “In 2014 the government implemented its Transforming Rehabilitation plans for probation services. The change happened quickly and within timescales and costs set by ministers, but its implementation left some difficult issues to manage. The teething problems we identified in a series of early inspection reports have largely been resolved. More deep-rooted problems now prevail” (Stacey 2017:5). Her team noted differential quality in the supervision of the statutory probation service and the private and voluntary sector providers, both in terms of the quality of oversight to those leaving prison and in respect to the interventions and services on offer. The Inspectorate states, "we see clearly that there is now a two-tier and fragmented service, with individuals being supervised by the NPS more effectively overall. Of course, the NPS is funded differently, and more generously. Having started with enthusiasm, many CRCs are now not commissioning the full range of specialist services that are needed to make a difference for people with particular problems”.

Finally, the Inspectorate of Probation is critical of the nature of innovations in the system which have been identified. Their concern is that such transformations in practice have resulted from commercial concerns rather than enhancing effective practice to benefit service users and ultimately reduce levels of recidivism. They note new practices were limited and amounted to telephone supervision and meeting in public libraries rather than bespoke probation offices. "Yet in some CRCs, individuals meet with their probation worker in places that lack privacy, when sensitive and difficult conversations must take place. Some do not meet with their probation worker face-to-face. Instead, they are supervised by telephone calls every six weeks or so from junior professional staff carrying 200 cases or more. I find it inexplicable that, under the banner of innovation, these developments were allowed”. These criticisms from the Probation Inspectorate have also been considered alongside a recorded increase in the number of serious further offences by offenders, some of whom were on post custody licence to the Community Rehabilitation Companies. Whilst the base numbers are low the number of offenders on probation charged with murder, manslaughter, rape and other serious violent or sexual crimes
has risen by more than 25% since changes to the service in England and Wales from 409 offences in 2015-2016 to 515 offences by 2016-2017.

Key themes for research: The effects of Neoliberal reforms on the Penal Voluntary sector

Recent government mainstreaming of the penal voluntary sector in a reconfigured probation field have provided significant opportunities for charities who have a tradition of working with offenders. The response of the penal voluntary sector to it's increased presence in the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders has been varied and uneven. Important ethical debates have been voiced within the sector as to whether charities should be involved at all in this highly punitive and politicised area of government policy or whether the sector's involvement in punishing citizens represents an ethical 'line in the sand' (Silvestri 2009, Corcoran 2011). At other times charities have responded with pragmatism to their involvement in punishing citizens. For example, the Serco and Catch 22 consortium which successfully bid to run a prison encourage observers not to 'get hooked up on the fact that the doors are locked' (Corcoran 2011:32). For them effective work to improve prisoners' health, education and life opportunities can be undertaken by reforming a chronically dysfunctional prison system from the inside (http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/team-catch22/fundraising/article/994466). Subsequently, those charities involved attempt to assure fundraisers in a pragmatic sense that the welfare, advocacy, security and punishment roles are intrinsically separate and will be undertaken by different parts of the private and voluntary sector enterprise. Such ethical concerns have also been joined by a number of other risks for the penal voluntary sector and volunteers from participation in government agendas in the penal field.

Risks for the penal voluntary sector in the marketization of community justice

Whilst the voluntary sector has often been lauded for its person-centeredness, innovation and creativity, Tomczak (2017:41) notes that there is very little knowledge as to exactly how the penal voluntary sector can positively affect offenders and prisoners. This is especially important to ascertain when the charities participating in government outsourcing and contractual relationships are undergoing undoubted pressures to scale up and maximise their footprint in order to partner with the private sector. Empirical research is required in order to contribute to knowledge as to what practices and values charities demonstrate when working with
offenders and their families to lead law abiding lives. Such research is important in order to add
knowledge and move on from reliance upon the “imagery of what we think they are doing”
(Armstrong 2002:362). Furthermore, grounded empirical research will undoubtedly uncover
greater levels of complexity in the nature of the penal voluntary sector, highlighting the ways in
which charities can adapt to or actually resist ‘responsibilisation’ (Garland 2000) from the state
and maintain their mission and traditional ways of working. Alternatively, empirical research
will confirm some observers worst fears that the very characteristics which made the penal
voluntary sector valuable and credible, will have been sacrificed in government attempts to use
it as a lever for the hyperactive reform of the public sector. As Hucklesby and Corcoran (2016:5)
highlight greater involvement in delivery can come with pressures to become agents of the state.
“The landscape is not simply one in which more and more criminal justice services are being
provided by the voluntary sector but one in which the voluntary sector is being expected to become
the service deliverer of government policy”.

Whilst successive government attempts to create a quasi-market in community justice and
rehabilitation work offers the penal voluntary sector a once in a lifetime opportunity to scale up
its operation and achieve real opportunities for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in
society, a number of academic commentators in the field of third sector studies and criminology
have sought to offer some insight as to the potential pitfalls and risks which marketisation may
create. An important critique of the relationship between charity and punishment is that the
penal voluntary sector could become institutionalised and lose its distinctiveness and soul
(Corcoran 2011, Hucklesby and Corcoran 2016:6). Similarly, marketisation may pose a threat to
the welfarist values and the central place of the service user in third sector work, resulting from
goal distortion or mission drift particularly in relation to puntivism and new beneficiaries such
as the victims of crime. Finally, scholars have noted how Neoliberal penal reforms may result in
silencing the penal voluntary sector’s campaigning or advocacy voice and reduce such charities
to unquestioning delivery agents. Abrams et al (2016:18) express such concerns about co-option
when they say;

“If the penal sector wishes to make optimal and continued use of innovations in promising and
proven programmes, we need to rethink how to facilitate this in a way which allows for a
meaningful experience. We also need to ensure that the values of the voluntary sector– and its
commitment to community-based work and progressive social change – won’t be usurped by the
more punitive discourses and practices that often (but not always) characterize prisons and jails.”

Analyses of funding the penal voluntary sector has been important with respect to the sector’s
independence and distinctiveness. This has become more apparent in light of the number of large
scale charities in the sector which are reliant upon state funding to carry out their work with
service users and that of government penal policy. As Benson and Hedge (2009:35) note charities will either “rollover” to government demands to become part of a shadow state by competing for government outsourcing or “go under” and fail to survive.

“Stick to your Knitting!” Maintaining independence and distinctiveness or co-option to the state?

The third sector’s independence and creativity through the involvement of thousands of volunteers, including ex-offender peer mentors, can break down barriers to accessing services, change trenchant attitudes, and build the motivation necessary to bring about positive and lasting change in service users (Hucklesby and Corcoran 2016). The valorisation of the penal voluntary sector’s inherent ‘difference’ is made in a range of public policy discussions and academic discussions where ‘the third sector has unique and positive attributes which are different from the public and private sector.’ (Hanson 2008 in Ministry of Justice 2008) As such the penal voluntary sector’s involvement can introduce such valuable ‘specialist knowledge’ for the broader penal sector offering those charities involved significant opportunities in terms of expanding their delivery to a wider group of service users and extending their footprint (Tarry 2006).

However, the Coalition’s proposals to mainstream the voluntary sector in order to revolutionize the public sector contain significant threats to the voluntary sector’s traditional independence of a campaigning voice, its own distinctive mission, and independence of action (Tomczak 2017, Corcoran 2011). At times voluntary organisations can find themselves under pressure to change their missions and organisational forms in response to their involvement in public service delivery (Barnes 2006 in Carmel and Harlock 2008, Wolch 1990). For example in September 2014, the Minister for Civil Society, Brooks Newmark stated that government was concerned about charities who acted in the political realm and urged the third sector to concentrate purely on the quality of their delivery.

"We really want to try and keep charities and voluntary groups out of the realms of politics. Some 99.9% do exactly that. When they stray into the realm of politics that is not what they are about and that is not why people give them money." He added "the important thing charities should be doing is sticking to their knitting and doing the best they can to promote their agenda, which should be about helping others."

(https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/sep/03/charities-knitting-politics-brook-newmark)
Carmel and Harlock’s work (2008) suggests that successive governments have constructed the vast array of community and voluntary organisations as a homogenised Third sector service provider. Resultantly, the diversity within the penal voluntary sector and individual charitable organisations can be lost along with their distinctive ethos and goals and become “enmeshed in the day to day management of the criminal justice system” (Hucklesby and Corcoran 2016:1). This is particularly prescient in lower level government outsourcing contractual arrangements such as volunteers taking on engagement roles in Integrated Offender Management programmes and other aspects of statutory probation practice. The extent of government interference in the governance arrangements of the voluntary sector, witnessed particularly in the educational field for example, does give rise to claims that much of the largescale charities with government trustees merely amount to a “shadow state” such is the extent and penetration of government influence in charities’ activities (Worch 1990).

Morris (2000:123) warns of the risk to the voluntary sector’s traditional independence and institutionalisation from engagement in contract culture. She notes that whilst funding via contracts to undertake specific duties or interventions can lead to increased surety of funding and ability to forward plan, the power of being ‘paid by the piper’ may also lead to a dependency culture as the priorities of funders influence the aims and values of the charity. Subsequently, the Charity Commission warned in 1998 (in Morris 2000:124),

“some charities feel that entering into contracts with public bodies can lead to charities losing their independence … trustees should be wary of allowing the priorities of public bodies to exert an influence over their charities long term policies and direction”.

Furthermore, any critical and campaigning voice of the penal voluntary sector could be lost with only innovations and efficiencies in delivery valued by government. As a result government calls to main stream the Third sector in public policy are also designed to shape the involvement of charities in particular ways. Charities have been urged to focus on delivery by “sticking to your knitting,” and lose their lobbying and political voice. Such risks to the penal voluntary sector’s critical voice are important to consider as their critique is needed in a highly punitive and politicised penal climate. In addition funding for work with offenders is highly focused around winning government contracts rather than independent fundraising efforts (Tomczak 2017).

Evidence of risks to the penal voluntary sector’s independence and distinctiveness to be replaced by bland managerial practices are also voiced by Mills’ (2009) research into the voluntary sector’s work with black and minority ethnic communities affected by crime. She notes that charities entered into ‘tragic bargains’ with government funders in their constant struggle for survival. This resulted in bland, generic service provision which was dictated by central
government rather than service user needs, resulting in a ‘distance between rhetoric about innovative practices and the reality of the provision typically enables by their funding environment’ (Mills 2010 p2). Funding also compromised the voluntary organisation’s original mission around social justice in some respects. One organisation, committed to highlighting the over inflated issue of gangs and gun crime, found that it’s mission was compromised by receiving funding from the police when actually tackling gun crime was added to the remit of their interventions with young people (Mills 2010). ‘Mission creep’ describes how some charities can lose their original purpose and ways of working as a result of having to adhere to the specifications of any contract arrangements. In doing so the charity effectively becomes part of the broader shadow penal state eschewing it’s traditional compassionate approach and takes on penal ethics and values. Similar ‘mission creep’ or funding colonisation has been highlighted in the influence Crime Reduction Partnerships had in contracting with the voluntary sector with drug outreach work (Barton 2006). Barton’s (2006) research highlights how the state’s discourse around managerialism changed the nature of drug outreach work. ‘Good practice’ in drug outreach to the particular ‘hard to reach’ client group transformed from being characterised by adhoc, fluid and responsive delivery modes to replicable, predictable and auditable practices in order to secure Drug Action Team contractual funding.

There is a real risk that the penal voluntary sector may have to adapt its own traditional value base and ethical stances away from long treasured service user needs, should it successfully participate in a politicised criminal justice and where service user rights are a secondary to those of victims and the public. Institutional isomorphism can be a risk where the penal voluntary sector erodes its own legitimacy through changing some of it’s core, fundamental values. This is especially prescient in the field of penality and rehabilitation where deterrence and compulsion often lie behind rehabilitation interventions and are all historically part of a care and control statutory sector value base (Corcoran 2011:32). Similarly, isomorphism is a real threat not only in mimicking the statutory sector but in addition as the Penal Voluntary Sector allies itself with corporate prime providers as part of the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda the need to be market-orientated, entrepreneurial and adopt managerialism becomes ever more intense (Milbourne and Cushman 2015:468).

In a 2009 conference entitled ‘Partners or Prisoners? Voluntary sector independence in the world of commissioning and contestability’ the then National Offender Management Service, Third Sector lead, Tina Jenkins concluded that successful charities would be those who could work with service users but also turn their attention to new ‘clients’, such as victims in the criminal justice system much like the reconfigured Probation Service has done over the last twenty years (Garland 1997). As a result successful charities in the penal voluntary sector are imagined as
those who can transform themselves into quasi-government actors rather than continuing to practice in time honoured ways.

A significant amount of academic literature has characterised relationships between government and penal voluntary sector relationships as indomitably focused around unequal power relationships characterised by mission creep to focus upon reducing reoffending rather than providing for social justice and meeting client’s need and voluntary sector practices becoming increasingly narrow shaped by contractual specifications rather than innovation and creativity, the debate has had little nuance to it and has been totalising in the impact of neoliberal outsourcing of the probation field. Charities have been described as having their independence threatened, of being forced to change their priorities to fit with government ambitions for them and unable to avoid the pull of the market in securing their futures (see Tomczak 2027:33). Often penal voluntary sector charities are therefore portrayed as powerless and lacking agency when they compete in quasi-markets or contract with government.

Whilst observations of a loss of independence and criticality within the penal voluntary sector as it moves centre stage in probation and rehabilitation are important to consider, not all commentators agree with the inevitability of contracting with government and losing independence and distinctiveness in the penal voluntary sector. For example, whilst noticing how contracts can shape the delivery of the penal voluntary sector, Moseley (2006:31) notes the analysis is flawed arguing that “charities are not docile recipients of government largesse – we play an active role in shaping policy and spending priorities as well as simply carrying out the work. A vibrant voluntary sector must therefore include a campaigning voice – the ‘watchdog of the state’ as some term it”.

Mission creep and turning private? The impact of Neoliberal contract culture on the penal voluntary sector in a community justice market.

Successive government penal reforms aimed at creating a quasi-market in aspects of community justice practice offers up key questions for analysis and consideration regarding the nature and extent of the impact of neoliberal political culture on charitable endeavours (Tomczak 2014, Corcoran 2009). Corcoran (2009) notes how market based thinking has been centrally implicated in such penal reforms despite the fact that traditionally the voluntary sector has been conceptualised as operating outside of market or profit based relations (Corcoran 2009:32).
Some charities operating in this marketised penal field have been afforded an increasingly important role to play in the reform of probation work and have received a higher profile as a result. Large players in the penal voluntary sector have moved closer to the market as a result of their immersion in outsourced public sector work. Subsequently, concerns have been voiced that the traditional character and value base of the voluntary sector has become eroded by the pull of the market and replaced by new commercially oriented values such as the need to develop links with business and capital, develop a competitive edge against other charitable competitors and become entrepreneurial in order to commodify their services for purchase (Corcoran 2009, Benson and Hedges 2010). As a result, Tomczak (2017) notes how such privatisation policies can ‘desacralize’ charitable endeavours which were previously protected from the effects of market competition. For example, the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO), reflecting the larger charities and social enterprises, vigorously supports the creation of quasi-markets in public sector delivery. They have stated how the sector has to become more business like in outlook and practices and ‘professionalise or perish’ (Kendall 2003).

Concerns highlighted above about voluntary organisations becoming co-opted as agents of the state have been coupled with concerns as to the risks of subservience to big business or the aping of the private sector under neoliberal penal policy (Maguire 2016:47). Such concerns regarding the relationship between voluntarism and finance has led some to see the penal voluntary sector as merely ‘bid candy’ (Tomczak 2014:474), a staging post or as a decoy to mask government ambitions for the total privatisation of public services.

Evidence from the market created by Grayling in the Department of Work and Pensions work programmes serves as a stark warning of the risks for the penal voluntary sector. The market was similar to the Transforming Rehabilitation programme of reform as it was underpinned by a payment by results structure and the market was split into large geographical contracts which only large, private sector prime contractors and large charities in the penal voluntary sector were able to scale up and take such financial risk. The large prime providers in the work programme were also encouraged to sub-contract aspects of delivery out to smaller organisations to create a supply chain. A recent survey of the voluntary sector’s involvement in a subcontracting relationship with the private sector to deliver the government’s work programme reported that private sector companies thought the voluntary sector organisation would undertake the delivery of the programme for free, in an rather ‘innovative’ understanding of the voluntarism of the independent provider. In other case, the voluntary sector in the private sector supply chain was paid a quarter less per job than the prime contractors as a result of the view that the voluntary sector were able to deliver more cheaply.
The idea that the voluntary sector could become a prisoner rather than a partner to the large private sector corporates in corrections is a real one. Learning from the Department for Work Pension’s welfare to work programmes, the Department’s own research led to the conclusion that ‘there was little evidence that prime providers were developing in house provision to enhance the quality of customer services. Instead, partner agencies (usually voluntary) were increasingly used to address specialist service needs. Service innovation on the part of prime providers was largely focused on reducing operational costs and achieving performance efficiencies’ (DWP 2010).

The risks for the penal voluntary sector presented here are that by participating in markets in outsourced government work, the penal voluntary sector can lose its traditional focus on social justice, meeting service need and it’s innovative and creative characteristics in order to provide low cost services, maximising return for private sector prime providers and the owners of Community Rehabilitation Companies. In doing so, resultant risks are that charities become transformed into profit making businesses reconfiguring or distorting their mission and underpinning raison d’etre. As Milbourne (2013:76) notes “competition demands a privileging of motives around winning- bidding and gaining contracts for services-which necessary entails shaping provision to meet funders’ requirements and maximising competitive advantages”. For example, unprofitable campaigning or mutual aid activities are replaced by a focus on the commodification of services and the profitable delivery of practices under contract in a re-engineering of the charities who work with offenders (Corcoran 2011:41).

It is important to note that such concerns regarding transformation in the very essence of being a charity from linkages and contractual arrangements with capital in, for example, Social enterprises or Community Rehabilitation companies, are not felt universally across the entire penal voluntary sector. Tomczak’s (2017) research details the variation in the sector highlighting how there were few charities able to take advantage of government penal outsourcing in probation and rehabilitation with the vast majority of charitable activities far too small and localised to take part. As such the above concerns of independence and for the penal voluntary sector from cross sector activities in government contracting and coupling with the private sector are relevant only for those big and medium sized players such as St Giles Trust who actively took part in the government marketization of probation.

The penal voluntary sector and payment by results (PbR): Crime controlled or harnessing innovation?

The financial crisis in 2008 has created a fertile soil for new and innovative funding mechanisms for the penal voluntary sector and the delivery of outsourced public services. Perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of the Coalition government aims in the ‘Breaking the Cycle’ (MOJ 2010) and
‘Transforming Rehabilitation’ (MOJ 2013) penal reforms concerns the profound changes in the funding of outsourced probation and rehabilitation in England and Wales. The centrality of only ‘paying for success’ financial instrument (Myers and Goddard 2016) to the claims of a funding ‘revolution’ is highlighted by the Coalition government when they stated “we will introduce a ‘rehabilitation revolution’ that will pay independent providers to reduce re-offending, paid for by the savings this new approach will generate within the criminal justice system”. For government the fundamental aim of Payment by Results is to achieve impact and improve service quality by offering bonuses to service providers for performance improvement or by withholding payments for poor performance (National Council for Voluntary Organizations, 2013). Coupled with the view that organisations themselves will demonstrate greater evidence of effectiveness payment by results is seen as a major drive towards a penal system which is characterised by innovation, creativity and diversity in services to offenders and move away from central government prescription and uniformity. By paying for those interventions which demonstrate the required reduction in reoffending, it is envisaged that old, ineffective approaches will end and efficiency will improve and costs for the rest of society will be lowered. The fundamental aim of Payment by Results was to improve service quality by offering bonuses to service providers for performance improvement or withholding payments for poor performance, improve transparency around spending by putting a tariff on service user needs and ease pressure on public spending budgets by staggering payments over longer periods of time10 (National Council for Voluntary Organizations, 2013). The significance of payment by results or for success programmes has been described “as paradigmatic …of the next stage in the public-private partnerships that western democracies use to administer and fund social programming including crime control” (Myers and Goddard 2016:3)

Such innovation in funding arrangements could be used in the future market to fund traditionally state organisations such as the prison. A proportion of the prison income could be made subject to payment by results principles. HMP Doncaster partnered with outsourcer, Serco and another main actor in the penal voluntary sector, Catch 22 to become the first prison to be contracted out on a payment by results basis with a proportion of its contract dependent upon the recidivism rate of prisoners released having served 12 months or less who would not normally be subject to

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10 The Coalition government have announced that initially six pilot programmes based on payment by results will be created in September 2015. The pilots were to be designed to test different models for managing contracts and rewarding successful providers. At this early stage the government identified two projects which will manage offenders on community sentences and on licence, two projects for those offenders leaving prison after short term sentences and two local schemes that will bring partners together to prevent offending and re-offending. In all these pilots providers will only get paid for meeting or surpassing agreed outcomes.
supervision upon release (Tomczak 2017). Specifically the HMP/Serco pilot indicated that 10% of the prison’s annual contract was at risk against a reoffending reduction target of 5%. If the reductions in recidivism is surpassed then extra payments are made by the Ministry of Justice. If the target is not met, 10% of the contract payment is returned to the Ministry of Justice. Importantly in the Doncaster project, organisations are funded up front for their work rather than experience a funding lag where payments are made after one or two year reconviction data is produced. Again the risk of future criminality here is not retained by the state (or the taxpayer) but rather shared or passed on to the payment-by-results provider.

St Giles Trust has also been at the forefront of such payment by results programmes in the rehabilitation of offenders. Indeed the Peterborough One Service was launched in 2010 as the world’s first social impact bond (SIB) in order to reduce the 60% recidivism within a year among 3,000 inmates at HMP Peterborough. The project’s impact marker was a 7.5% reduction in recidivism across all 3,000 offenders or 10% reductions in recidivism in 3 cohorts of 1,000 offenders. If these targets were met the Ministry of Justice agreed to pay for success and a return of up to 13.5% would be made to the investors in the project (MOJ 2011). Funding for the project was obtained upfront by an intermediary called Social Finance who raised £5 million pounds from seventeen investors. A Social Impact Bond (SIB) is a new way to finance social programmes. It is a form of outcomes based contract between public, non-profit delivery agents and funded by private investors. As Warner (2013:304) notes “SIBS integrate philanthropy, venture capitalism, performance management and social programme finance into an innovative new mix” thereby creating creative and powerful linkages between activities in these traditionally disparate sectors. Opportunities for new funding vehicles are not without consequence for the penal voluntary sector. McHugh et al (2013) notes how blend of contractual binds, performance management and the influence of the market can have significant unintended consequences. For example they note that a high priority is placed on providing activities with a measurable impact, which may or may not be those most needed by the service user. For example the emphasis is placed on “impact investing and its seductive message of doing good and making money”. Provision can also be shaped around the boundaries of the contract and issues which are important for service users ‘parked’ (McHugh 2013:250). As a result the performance measures specified for payment either reconfigure practice differently or worse still are completely detached from the realities of work undertaken by the penal voluntary sector (Gosling 2016).

Similarly, the Transforming Rehabilitation penal reforms meant that charities wishing to be involved in the supply chains for the 21 CRCs in the marketization of probation would do so via a payment by results funding mechanism. The Transforming Rehabilitation programme created a
payment structure comprising of a fixed fee for the provision of the CRC services such as through the gates post custody supervision and for delivering the sentence of the court with an additional payment by results element to incentivise performance and outcomes (Annison, Burke and Senior 2014).

The Coalition government’s reform agenda via a payment by results model meant that smaller, local charitable organisations were unable to participate due to their lack of financial resources, ability to scale up their provision and possess the appropriate commissioning expertise to have risk transferred onto them for under performance. Indeed Tomczak (2017:12) makes the important point that the overwhelming number of charities who work with offenders and their families are actually unable to contract with the state, never mind partner with a global company and win significant Transforming Rehabilitation contract packages areas. A key TR success criteria was the focus on localism within the proposals. Smaller charities may have significantly better relationships to local communities and have uniqueness to their service delivery but are unlikely to be able to wait for payment for their work until reconviction data is available after two years. Smaller charities will have to consider other ways of funding their work than reliance upon the traditional grant provision or existing commissioning arrangements (Clinks 2011). The results of the Transforming Rehabilitation commissioning illustrated how smaller charities can only move from the margins of work with offenders and their families by taking part in any future penal sector markets through subcontracting with larger national Third Sector actors or alternatively by partnering with private sector security companies or multinational outsourcers in order to deliver on a regional basis. Working on their own, even large scale national charities in the penal voluntary sector found that the government’s intention to transfer some, and in cases of ineffectiveness, all of the financial and reputational risk of further reoffending to the independent providers too much of a risk (Collins 2011:21).

Conclusion – The State and Penal Voluntary Sector - From working together to market competition

There is much to preserve in the Penal Voluntary Sector’s ability to deliver interventions to disenfranchised and vulnerable individuals in society both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the criminal justice system. By presenting their services as client led, non-compulsory, non-punitive and engaging, traditional interventions from voluntary organisations have more chance of reaching those hard to reach groups than the coercive and punitive state. The penal voluntary sector has until now remained largely wedded to a welfarist, altruistic and humanistic approach to working
with people when it exists outside the criminal justice system. The key challenge for the sector and the concern here in the empirical research into a single penal charity is to what extent can these values continue to remain central to charity’s cause when it contracts with government and private finance and assumes a delivery role as a new member of the state’s network of punishment and rehabilitation of offenders.

The marketisation of the probation and rehabilitation field has had an enormous impact upon the penal system in ways which are only now being understood. As the Coalition’s strategy was unravelled the full extent of the rehabilitation revolution, the results of the marketplace and the implications for the penal voluntary sector have become clearer and scholars are moving from broad based warnings to actual empirical research into the complex relationship between punishment and charity (Tomczak 2017, Abrams etal 2016). There have been winners and losers in the marketplace with those charities who participated and allowed themselves to be reconfigured and adapt readily to the changing function and role of the penal voluntary sector to embrace the melding of voluntarism and business ethics and practice in new hybrid philanthro-capitalist structures will be best placed to thrive (Carnegie Trust 2010). Without government considerations as to how to ensure smaller, innovative and localised charities can have a voice and participate in work with offenders, the Transforming Rehabilitation marketization opens up a stark vision of the penal voluntary sector in the future as resembling ACEVO's ‘new breed of professional, entrepreneurial, and inclusive not for profit organisations...capable of delivering high quality, market tested service based on evidence based performance’ (cited in Corcoran 2011 p43).

Those charities offering interventions which are innovative and have an evidence base or measurable impact will continue to succeed in penal markets. Indeed in future years we may witness a revolution in the penal voluntary sector as much has been witnessed in community justice field through future government’s ambitions to further to decentre the state. The risk is that those charities whose interventions are cheap, are easily replicated across geographical areas and politically acceptable will gain favour. The market in corrections could fundamentally impact on the sector’s tradition for risk taking innovation, client centred practice, advocacy and a welfarist stance, destroying the very attributes the coalition values in the sector (Corcoran 2011).

Tomczak (2013) has recognised the strong emphasis given to Neoliberal marketized reforms to the probation service in current academic literature. She notes the potential threats to the distinctiveness and independence of the voluntary organisations who operate in this field which are outline above. However importantly to take academic scholarship in a new direction, Tomczak (2014) notes how the effects of neoliberalism are experienced differently within the penal in penal voluntary sector. Up until this point, academics often equated participation in
the marketplace as automatically leading to transformation and an automatic loss of criticality, independence and distinctiveness (Wolch 1990, Corcorcan 2009, Benson and Hedge 2009). However, Tomczak (2014) offers a rather more optimistic, nuanced and mature critique and challenges any analysis of an apparent oversimplification of the relationship between the voluntary sector and the quasi-market in rehabilitation and probation work. Therefore, in Tomczak's (2014) research, her appeal for a deeper analysis to understanding the nature and experiences of the penal voluntary sector which remains open to the possibility of voluntary sector agency to resist or adapt to the pressures of Neoliberal marketized reforms is well made. Tomczak (2017) reminds researchers that the penal voluntary sector is not an atomised or a homogenous sector and the effects of government outsourcing and new funding mechanisms will impact differentially across the sector. A more nuanced understanding of the Penal Voluntary Sector is needed which moves on from conceptualising it as either immune to Neoliberalism or alternatively hopelessly subjected to and reshaped by, Neoliberal economic and ideological power. The penal voluntary sector is incredibly diverse and Neoliberal penal reforms should not be narrowed down solely to a consideration of its goal distortion considered co-existent with the profit motive. Only grounded empirical research into charities themselves allows room for identifying charity's adaptation or resistance to such the total co-option by government or business and the loss of cherished charitable values and principles as a result of operating in market conditions. Rather than conceptualising all charities in the Penal Voluntary Sector as having a choice to either to rollover to government and private business, or go under and perish, the research offered here details how charities can continue offer innovative or niche delivery models. These are so highly prized that charities can remain true to their core beliefs and value base. Charities such as St Giles Trust are described as being 'highly dependent' upon government funding and their participation in government constructed quasi-markets for service delivery. Nevertheless St Giles Trust is central to the government's call for new practices and innovation in the probation field are valued as they offer something significantly different to statutory delivery. As such new research presented here takes up the work of Tomczak (2017) and offers research into St Giles Trust, a key actor in the penal voluntary sector. It seeks to analyse the individual relationships between punishment and charity have been configured in a variety of ways within the charity's activities, offering insight into the presence of a continued sense of agency and power to participate in government outsourcing, advocate for its ex offender client group and continue to produce peer mentor led practices. Furthermore, Tomczak's (2017) challenge to consider breakages and gaps in the impact of Neoliberal market reforms for the PVS, academic researchers seem to have overlooked the importance of those individual volunteer actors in the penal voluntary sector. This study outlined the very real and distinct possibility that volunteer practices can also act as a bulwark against
total transformation or mission creep as a result of operating in a market for rehabilitation. Garland (2001:24) makes an important contribution to conceptualising the nature of change when he warns that in rushing to herald epochal changes "a new configuration does not finally and fully emerge until it is formed in the minds and habits of those who work the system". Subsequently, if research into the penal voluntary sector is to develop and shed light on the complexities in the nexus between punishment and charity then research and analysis on the discursive and practice level is crucial to shed light on how individuals make sense of their role and practices in the penal voluntary sector.

The research on peer mentor volunteers in this work is open to the possibilities of resistance to powerful interests. Empirical research has found exactly this sense of agency in salaried professionals (for example, see Cheliotis (2006) on probation officer working cultures and Appleton (2008) on correctional practices with life sentenced prisoners). It could be argued that the volunteers and ex-offender peer mentors in the penal voluntary sector have even less reason to be restrained in some Neoliberal iron cage which subsumes their caring, altruistic, innovative and diverse ways of working with those in the penal system. In relation to the Penal Voluntary Sector and St Giles Trust here the acronym often used when discussing the hegemony of Neoliberal market reform, TINO (There is No Alternative) may not be accurate for St Giles Trust at all.

The analysis of research in chapters five, six and seven move on to document and analyse how individual volunteer actors situated within the St Giles Trust charity understand and carry out their peer mentor practices. The work utilises both a classical analysis of governmentality through strategy and policy documentation and incorporates new aspects of governmentality ‘from below,’ including how such governmental policies create individual and group subjectivities such as peer mentor identities and practices this work. In addition this work seeks to analyse how such ‘touching points’ between the strategic and the subjective can lead to adoption of government strategies and creates practices which reshape or resist government attempts to transform and reshape penal voluntary sector and volunteering practices (Shoshana 2011, Gains and Stoker 2011). As a result this research highlights ambiguity, inconsistency and agency in the take up and deployment of peer mentoring ideas in policy making.
The legitimacy afforded to the notion of a singular unified penal voluntary sector to give meaning to a whole range of heterogeneous voluntary organisations has been inextricably linked by a "similar but less remarked process" through which the voluntary actions of individuals (Rochester 2013:53) have become more visible. In recent years both voluntary organisations and individual volunteers have moved from the "shadows to the spotlight" (Kendall 2010:1) of public policy making. Successive governments have conflated the perceived benefits of voluntary organisations with individual volunteering, despite a significant number of larger, corporate charities increasingly being characterised by paid employees and professionalism (Rochester 2013). In line with contemporary government expectations of charitable organisations themselves, individual volunteers have had a significant weight of expectation placed upon them to contribute to the well-being of their fellow citizens. Volunteering is increasingly becoming formally arranged in voluntary organisations as part of the organisation's strategy to secure government contracts. In doing so charities seek to demonstrate that whilst volunteers are used in delivery, they are trained, developed and managed in a professional manner. Volunteer tasks are often centrally directed by the organisation and increasingly informed how best to practice. Rochester et al (2010) identifies that such formal, organised volunteering in large charities often resemble paid employment despite volunteers being the 'jewel in the crown' of charities, particularly with respect to bid legitimacy and as an emblem of innovation and effectiveness. Despite a developing role in what was previously public sector delivery, a great deal of research and academic literature on the penal voluntary sector has omitted to include any analysis of those who volunteer their time and energies and actively make up and give the voluntary organisation its life. In a similar vein, studies of volunteering have failed to situate those active citizens within an organisational framework which shapes their value base and volunteer practices in specific ways. This thesis therefore attempts to highlight and analyse the linkages between an organisation in the penal voluntary sector with their individual volunteers by analysing new individual voluntary actors in community justice.

This chapter focuses upon the recent incorporation of individuals, who are or have been service users in the criminal justice system, to become centrally involved in the delivery of the Coalition government's (MOJ 2013) 'Transforming Rehabilitation' agenda in England and Wales. It will highlight how the government's call for revolution and transformation in the field of
rehabilitation has led to the greater involvement of ex-prisoners or ex-offenders in work traditionally the remit of probation professionals (Buck 2016:1). In re-constructing ex-offenders as ‘peer mentor,’ volunteers, their involvement serves as a representation of the government’s clarion call for innovative and effective rehabilitative interventions. The chapter traces the origins of the peer mentor notion and early attempts to incorporate the offender in interventions to reduce criminality or recidivism. It notes how Coalition government’s review of corrections constructs the offender as peer mentor. In doing so it highlights important questions regarding a new construction of offenders as being centrally placed to offer assistance in the process of desistance from crime.

The interest in ex-offender rehabilitation and community re-entry has received almost unprecedented attention in Western Europe and the United States of America ever since Jeremy Travis reminded policy makers and proponents of mass incarceration that “they all come back” to the community (Travis 2005). As a result, the focus on the efficacy of rehabilitation processes and the ways in which correctional agencies are able to shape offender behaviour has become a reenergised area for criminology (Ward and Maruna 2007). As Burnett and Maruna (2006) note most agencies approach to reducing recidivism have traditionally focused on the premise that ex-offenders either need their risk factors monitored by technology and surveillance or their active criminogenic needs addressed by treatment programmes. As Farrall’s (2002) research demonstrates some of the programmes to address criminogenic needs such as poor thinking skills and rigid problem solving often went unrecognized by the offenders themselves and as a result there was minimal buy in to change these.

More recently the focus on risks and criminogenic needs have been critiqued and more strength based rehabilitative processes have been developed in order to motivate and offer hope to ex-offenders that leaving crime behind could be a realistic goal for them (Ward and Maruna 2007). As Travis (2005) notes such strengths based approaches serve to enable both policy makers, professionals and the offenders themselves to see prisoners or offenders as possessing strengths and assets which could be utilized by the community. Subsequently, in prison establishments in England and Wales, we have witnessed an explosion of programmes which aim to utilise and develop offender’s creativity, energy and kindness to others. Usually such activities involve the development and re-deployment of practical skills to repair wheelchairs, computers and cycles for example or the redevelopment of community space and other good works. However, more recently such strength based processes have foregrounded the use of programmes to encourage active citizenship and involve volunteer ex-offenders in the range of activities to help themselves and others leave crime behind and live a law abiding lifestyle.
Governmental mainstreaming of the volunteer

Democratic governments in the West have a long established interest in volunteering. Both Right and Left political persuasions have held out a clarion call for citizens to get more interested and active in their communities. For example, Sheard (1986 in Davis Smith 2001:185) has noted that recently the turn to volunteering has acted as a “panacea for whatever society’s current ills happen to be”. Putnam (2000:117) notes how helping others less fortunate than oneself became part of the core civic duty of all American citizens in the late nineteenth century.

This governmental perspective of volunteering as a key contribution to public policy reform first became evident over 30 years ago in the policy stances of the Thatcher Conservative government in the UK which employed the term ‘active citizen’ (Jochum et al. 2005) to refer to someone active in their local community, often in voluntary roles such as school governor or scout leader (Faulks 1998). The idea of the active citizen fits within the Neoliberal political philosophy that advocates scaling back the role of the state, reducing the work of paid government professionals such as social workers, housing departments, or probation officers with the individual citizens or those with the problem taking on more responsibility. Essentially, the active citizen harks back to Victorian origins of mutual aid rebadged under Neoliberal governments to encourage those who share a central concern to come together and devise a shared way of dealing with the problem preferably without the involvement of the government. Time and again politicians have turned to the idea of volunteers to deliver services to the hard to reach, or to deliver innovative, cost effective and sensitive services in contrast to a self-serving state bureaucracy (Davis Smith 2001).

The construction of the ‘active citizen’ therefore engages in freely given time and energy, on a semi-formal or informal basis for no financial payment (Kendall 2010). Instead of state funding to alleviate poverty or improve communities and alleviate social problems, volunteering has been seen globally as a key alternative resource. In conjunction to the mainstreaming of voluntary organisations, volunteering has moved from the shadows to the spotlight in government policy (Kendall 2010:1). As Hyatt (2001) suggests, for successive Neoliberal governmental rationalities “the appeal of the volunteer lies in his or her image as an “empowered” and self-governing person who appears to operate independently of formal state structure : creating social capital that does not carry with it a price tag that presumes on the largesse of the public purse” (Hyatt, 2001, p. 206). Similarly Hedley (in Hooper 2000:92) clarifies the specific facets of voluntarism,
“volunteering is: unpaid (except for out of pocket expenses), freely chosen, done through the medium of an organisation or agency, and for the benefit of others or the environment as well as oneself. Volunteering is not: paid work (including low or semi paid work, eg, employment training); compulsory or coerced, informal help between friends, family or neighbours or self-help, religious and leisure activities”

The Labour government (1997–2010) however framed the active citizen in terms of responsibilities and duties such as service to one’s local community (Pick, Holmes, and Brueckner, 2010). They argued that, in contemporary society, volunteers and communities are presented as being better able to deal with social problems than governments. When volunteers are seen as active citizens; they are ‘good citizens’ demonstrating personal responsibility and the giving of time and energy to others who were not so successful in society. Within this governmental perspective, good citizenship is reinforced by emphasizing the centrality of individual voluntary action within strong communities. Through constructing volunteering in this way, the intention is that individuals respond to and incorporate ‘volunteering-as-active-citizenship’ as part of their core identities and sense of self, allowing government to gradually divest itself of its responsibility for welfare. The active citizenship therefore is not a “Moaning Minnie” declaring that government should redistribute wealth in order to solve entrenched social problems but rather a citizen who would “roll up her sleeves and get on and do something about it” (Sheard 1995:115). The perceived qualities of altruism and volunteering in strengthening society and individual communities was voiced by the Conservative opposition in 2010. Echoing the work of Putnam (2000) the Conservative Party remarked,

“Volunteers are the beating heart of Britain’s civil society, an indispensable resource for the voluntary sector and in many public services. Volunteering generates social capital—building the network that turns mere places into communities. In economic terms, the value of volunteering can be measured in billions of pounds, but its true worth is beyond price” (Corcoran and Grotz 2016:95).

More recently academics have questioned the strength and relevance of the communitarianism aspects of volunteering. ‘Active citizenship’ contrasts with the recent body of knowledge on volunteer motivation (Hardill and Baines 2011:38). Such research has identified primarily individualistic motivations rather than community based rationales for volunteering, whereby volunteers can be described as both givers and takers in their motivations to volunteer. As Hardill and Baines (2011:38) demonstrate in their research, volunteer motivations form around a duality of mutual aid and self-interest, indeed “of altruism and egoism.” This indicates that government policy towards volunteerism may be at odds with the actualities of voluntary organizations and
the motivations of their volunteers. An older established notion of volunteer motivations, shaped by a sense of faith, community and collectivist spirit or the rewards which can be enjoyed from enhancing the wellbeing of others in society exists alongside these newer individualistic conceptions of volunteering. Hustinx (2010:165) also notes how new volunteering subjectivities in an era of modernization and individualisation resemble "more episodic, noncommittal, and self-oriented types of participation". Resultantly, the traditional notion of the volunteer offering time and energy as an act of altruism or care for others is deemed outmoded. 11

“Using the products of the problem to help solve the problem” - Early advocates of the ‘offender as correctional manpower’

As part of a criminal justice paradigm shift away from the punishment model to a reinvigorated focus on rehabilitation in recent years (Tripodi 2014), volunteer mentoring has recently taken centre stage as one of the key criminal justice’ interventions’ to be founded in every public policy corner (Hucklesby and Wincup 2014:373). In recent years the extension of the concept of volunteering and mentoring to reduce criminality and anti-social behaviour has been developed and refined to encapsulate the notion of peer mentoring involving the support and guidance from someone with similar characteristics of life experiences to the mentee. This move reflects a nuanced yet important difference between mentoring programmes, which essentially pair offenders with volunteer members of the community who are usually from a different socio-economic group with a view to bringing about positive lifestyle change, to peer mentor interventions which involve the use of criminal justice service users or prisoners to offer help, care, influence or shape the behaviour of those in the penal system.

The notion of volunteer mentoring has been ‘talked about’ and ‘talked up’ as a silver bullet as a specific intervention in recent years (Newburn, Shiner and Young 2005) despite mentoring’s chequered history (Brown and Ross 2010:31) and lack of clarity with respect to it’s theoretical underpinning and empirical evidence as to its effectiveness. For example, Tolan etal (2013) note how mentoring has drawn significant interest from policy makers across criminal justice and child welfare policy. Mentoring has been used across a range of interventions designed to prevent, divert, or address delinquent behaviour, school failure, aggression and other associated

11 The Institute for Volunteering research noted that in 2009 in the aftermath of the financial crisis volunteering centres experienced an increase in the number of volunteers with 75% of those seeking volunteering doing so in order to improve their chances of a job with a particular presence of those over 30 years of age (Hardill and Baines 2011:34).
anti-social behaviour (Tolan et al. 2013:10). Hucklesby and Winchup (2014:274) note how mentoring has traditionally been seen as a cottage industry and the preserve of the voluntary sector which is not moving into being a key ‘feel good factor intervention’ in the mainstream.

More recently research into volunteers in probation and community justice has lost favour with criminologists with very little written after Gil and Mawby’s (1990) study of volunteers in criminal justice in England and Wales published in 1990. Only recently has there been a resurgence of research interest on the use of volunteers and the incorporation of volunteer ex-offenders and it is clear that much more can be said about volunteers in the contemporary penal system. Important studies such as Tewkesbury and Dabney (2004:173) note the paucity of literature on prison volunteers whilst offering research on white, educated, middleclass and older men who were largely motivated by a strong sense of religious values and a concern to help others in southern states of America. Tewkesbury and Dabney’s (2004) study sheds light on the nature, motivations and effectiveness of work by a very specific group of volunteers who exhibited wholly different characteristics to the prison groups they assisted. Indeed, more recently academic studies have recast volunteers as offering mentorship to offenders and serving prisoners (Buck 2017). This involves a clear move away from the charitable provision of a general unpaid labour force assisting with administrative tasks or court work to encompassing a role and identity as a volunteer mentor, a role imbued with useful knowledge, skills and experience from which the mentee can be helped or changed.

The idea of involving volunteer lay members of the community to assist those who are returning after incarceration has often being espoused as a display of a strong and compassionate community which complements the contribution of the state. Whilst the idea and concept of using mentors in the penal system has a very long history, little has been written about it. In the USA, the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America mentoring scheme was created in 1904 when influential or “earnest and true” men mentored delinquent boys in the criminal justice system in New York. However the use of peer mentors, that is those who are similar by age, gender, experience or indeed criminality has less obvious origins. Indeed, the notion that offenders who work and spend time together is an active force in contributing to both groups rehabilitation is relatively new in policy terms. It represents a polar opposite to notions of criminogenic peer group pressure.

The 1967 USA Task Force Report on Corrections noted that the use of persons without formal or professionalised training has become an interesting and active area of investigation in corrections. In posing the question how can limited professional skills be apportioned most effectively, the report explores the notion that less skilled practitioners could be a source of manpower in a rapidly expanding correctional system. In addition another impetus for the use
of ex-offenders is the examination of ‘non-traditional’ training for those from lower class backgrounds. Whilst the use of prisoners had been evident in the prison estate for some time, such use was largely limited to the use of prisoners in prison works or maintenance work around the prison itself. However the utility of those in the penal system was extended in the task force report when it stated, “Offenders and ex-offenders can be employed not only in the ways [to produce needed services] but also as participants in their own rehabilitative process” (United States Government 1967:102). The 1960s New Careers movement therefore proposed to make the offender the target for change by placing him or her in the role of the reformer. “If an offender is serious in his attempts to reform others, he must automatically accept the common purpose of the reformation process. In doing so he becomes a genuine member of the reformation group and in the process may be alienated from his previous pro-criminal groups (Empey 1967 in Burnett and Maruna 2006)”. Similarly, the new careers movement in the United States of America notes how the goal should be “to devise ways of creating more helpers... and transform receivers of help (such as welfare recipients) into dispensers of help; to structure the situation so that receivers of help will be placed in roles requiring the giving of assistance” (Burnett and Maruna 2006:87)

For the first time the US Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training (United States Government 1967) noted a new rationale for the use of those who have experience of criminality. It stated that “offenders have something to offer other offenders which can never be provided by staff who have not themselves been involved in crime and delinquency.” (United States Government 1967:1). An example is given of a new president of the state warden’s association who states that he made no secret of the fact that he once served time for a holdup. “He says the mistake he made has helped him to assist others who have broken the law” (United States Government 1967). However, the report is not specific about the specific knowledge or particular skills which ex-offenders own which could transform the corrections field

The use of ex-offenders in probation tasks is under explored save for the idea that their use would be directly in relation to their effectiveness. Whilst much of the US government’s discourse focused on an optimistic avocation of the qualities and skills of ex-offenders, the government report also saw new careers for sub-professionals and for those from the offending and working class strata as a bulwark against the development of an underclass. Pearl and Reissman (1965:5) declare that unless such job development and related changes take place we shall have a “permanent, stable non-working class whose children and grandchildren will be unable to perform meaningful functions in society”.

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Governing penal reform: Peer mentors and reconfiguring the ex-offender

Whilst a great deal of academic attention has focused upon the links between mentoring’s altruistic characteristics and the links between volunteer mentoring and the government’s call for an austerity-busting ‘big society’, peer mentoring's specific conceptualisations, significances and contributions of peer mentoring has received less scrutiny (Hucklesby and Wincup 2014, Newburn, Shiner and Young 2005). Indeed, it is worth noting the words of Maruna’s endorsement of the edited collection by Abrams, Hughes Inderbitzin and Meek (2016) when he notes how their edited collection of institutional and individual voluntary actors in prisons represented a ‘first-of-its-kind’ volume. The Coalition government’s reform to the organisational arrangements in the probation and rehabilitative sectors are critically appraised in Chapter 2. Here the focus is centred upon the previous government’s emphasis on new individual actors in the correctional field as a direct and deliberate consequence of the marketization strategy contained in the Breaking the Cycle (2010) and Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) agendas.

The idea that ‘offenders’ or ‘ex offenders’ could be centrally involved in the penal system represents a powerful counter narrative to the criminal justice system established largely around the power and knowledge implicit in the expert criminal justice professional. Moreover, the idea of peer mentors as a key criminal justice intervention fundamentally challenges previous assumptions that offenders or prisoners are merely risk laden or maladaptive individuals in need of management, treatment or moral retraining by an array of criminal justice trained professionals (Palmer 2008, McGuire 1995, Layton Mackenzie 2009). For example prison programming has tended to neglect the existing strengths and qualities of offenders in the penal system entirely, instead focusing on the personal deficits in offenders, and targeting their psychological states for intervention (Burnett and Maruna 2006).

It is rare to find a consideration of offending peers as a source of assistance, strength, or moreover the key ingredient to reducing future criminality. The notion that those in the system have utility has taken a great deal of time to take hold and has been viewed with deep mistrust and suspicion by the correctional industries and professionals used to seeing offenders as people who are societal liabilities to be incarcerated or supervised (Burnett and Maruna 2006). Examples of prisoners as listeners or enablers of desistance (Perrin and Blagden 2014), offering support or kindness to others (Burnett and Maruna 2006) enabling recovery from harmful behaviours (Reif et al 2014) and assisting others to survive the prison experience (Collica 2010) are all available, however the dominant discourse around the ex-service user or ex offender has remained one of individuals with an enduring sense of exclusion, as dependent upon or a liability to society and the objects of welfare and state professionals.
The literature about prison programmes for offenders has concentrated upon the identification and management of risk factors, the alteration of criminal attitudes, thinking styles and personalities (Andrews and Bonta, 1998; Ward and Maruna, 2007). Although treatment modalities vary in several respects and are tailored for specific types of offenders, many programmes target offenders’ psychological habits that are deemed risks for further recidivism if left untreated. For example, offenders have been understood as needing treatment for rigid problem solving, egocentric and lacking the ability to consider other people’s needs, as poor social communicators and as impulsive and lacking consequential thinking. Correctional treatment in the western world has adopted the risk/needs approach, essentializing inmates into the risks and needs they have that make them vulnerable to reoffend. Critics argue that this discourse ignores the normal human needs that inmates have and instead characterizes their needs as indicators of risk (Hannah-Moffat and Maurutto, 2006; Maruna and Mann, 2006; Ward, 2009; Ward and Maruna, 2007), and importantly ignores the social and situational aspects of their offenses targeting individual pathologies as the source of criminal behaviour (Fox, 1999a, 1999b).

Perhaps controversially in recent government strategic reforms to the penal system, the offender leaving prison constructed as the ‘peer mentor’ is considered differently. The peer mentor is discussed as a social utility to the criminal justice system, able to skilfully shape the conduct of others directly as a result of her/his experience of criminal behaviour and learning derived from experiencing the penal system. Mentoring interventions serve many governmental purposes as exemplified by Hucklesby and Wincup (2014). Firstly, the idea of lay involvement in the correctional system signifies an active and healthy community. Whilst crime and punishment were rarely encapsulated in Cameron’s Big Society idea, the incorporation of volunteers in the criminal justice system expands capacity and reach. It is also a repose to the idea that big government has taken away from citizens the very things they should do by the kindness and goodness in all our hearts (Reagan 1981 in Freedman 1991). The idea of ex offender volunteering to rehabilitate themselves and others in charitable organisations represents a radical encouragement for members of the community to get involved in the criminal justice system and volunteer. Volunteering also democratises and makes transparent the world of rehabilitation and prisons to members of the community beyond formalised governance arrangements such as the Independent monitoring boards etc. Secondly, the idea that the criminal justice system needs to operate within severe budgetary restraints exemplifies the notion that volunteer mentoring is fiscally important for government and represents excellent value for money. Thirdly, the notion of mentoring is emblematic of the idea that the penal voluntary sector (Corcoran 2011) can bring
new values, services and innovation to an artificially created correctional marketplace which forms the core of the Coalition and subsequent Conservative government’s reform of the probation field.

However the government’s appeal for the offenders themselves to become involved in the correctional task, signifies a radically different conceptualisation of the offender and the pathways out of criminal behaviour. Peer mentors are emblematic of the new world of an innovative, increasingly fluid, and marketised criminal justice system. Within the government’s reforms to rehabilitation services, the statutory probation officer is deemed as outmoded, with their knowledge and experience limited to risk assessment and risk management.

In the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2015 the government extended supervision to all adult prisoners serving under 12 months who were previously released without support or supervision. This necessitates a massive transformation and opening up of the Probation field to meet this huge surge in demand for practitioners and it is the ex-offender, peer mentor volunteer who is imagined by government as the Community Rehabilitation Companies’ solution to this predicted surge in workload of low and medium risk of harm offenders.

When Chris Grayling (2012) made a high profile reference to the government’s desire to incorporate volunteer mentors in the penal system he was indicating that an innovative future would involve a plurality of individual actors in community supervision and rehabilitation services. In a scene setting speech to the Centre for Social Justice on November 20th 2012, Grayling (2012) blended the notion of volunteer mentoring and ex-service user peer mentoring as being important innovations to any successful and innovative bid in the Transforming Rehabilitation marketplace. He stated,

“When someone leaves prison, I want them already to have a mentor in place to help them get their lives back together. I want them to be met at the prison gate, to have a place to live sorted out, and above all someone who know where they are, what they are doing, and can be a wise friend to prevent them from reoffending. And also to have training or rehab lined up, because this government is determined to do more to address the root causes of offending: to get drug and alcohol users into recovery, and to address mental health needs. Often it will be the former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow, the former gang member best placed to prevent younger members from rushing straight back to re-join the gang on the streets. There are some really good examples out there of organisations making good use of the old lags in stopping the new ones. We need more of that for the future.”
In addition to Grayling’s (2012) simple and yet transformational vision for the resettlement of prisoners, the Coalition government made several, deliberately articulated links to meld the penal voluntary sector with the use of a volunteer mentoring workforce and imagines both intensive and voluntary mentoring as a key feature of this new provision. Of relevance here is the Peterborough One Service, where St Giles Trust were the main delivery agent. The One Service was deemed as an exemplar of the move to a plurality of institutional and individual actors.

“We have already launched the Social Impact Bond in Peterborough prison focused on those offenders serving less than 12 months in custody. Social investors are paying up front for intensive services and mentoring delivered by the voluntary and community sector. We will pay solely on the results they deliver.” (MOJ 2010:41)

The Breaking the Cycle (MOJ 2010) government strategy associates the use of a volunteer mentor workforce as akin to democratising the criminal justice system through the incorporation of lay actors. By doing so the penal system is envisaged as more transparent and legitimate to members of the community through their participation in it.

“In line with our broader reforms on transparency we also believe that local communities should know how their local youth justice services are performing, and have an opportunity to be involved. Both Youth Offending Teams and secure estate providers significantly involves volunteers to support the work that they do; there are approximately 10,000 volunteers already working within the youth justice system. This includes participation as youth offender panel members and mentors. We want to build on this, including encouraging voluntary and community sector providers, where appropriate, to deliver services.” (MOJ 2010:76)

Furthermore, the mainstreaming of volunteer mentors is strengthened when the Coalition government focused more specifically on the Transforming Rehabilitation (2012) reform agenda. The Ministry Of Justice’s new Operating Model document emphasises the need for private Community Rehabilitation Companies to deliver innovation into the penal system. Here the Government’s vision for a future rehabilitation mixed economy is considered innovative in view of the pivotal use of mentoring interventions.

‘innovative rehabilitative support and mentoring to offenders’, that mentoring will play a pivotal part in the new arrangements. In addition the Centre for Social Justice estimate the need for 15,000 mentors to fulfil supervisory obligations on those who are sentenced to under 12 months and who will receive this for the first time (Aitken 2014).
The Coalition reform agenda which extended the provision of mentors to all prisoners serving sentences of under 12 months, previously were released without supervision, focuses directly on government’s attempts to reduce the high recidivism rates.

“Similarity breeds approbation”. The elastic construction of ‘peer mentoring’.

An important consideration to the government foregrounding of the peer mentor is related to the various meanings attributed to peer mentoring in the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda. Academic commentators have regularly identified that mentoring is an ill-defined concept. Nellis and Tolan (2008) offer some useful characteristics of a mentoring service. Firstly, there is interaction between two individuals over an extended period of time, secondly, the mentor possesses greater experience, knowledge or power than the mentee and the mentee imitates and benefits from the knowledge, skills and experiences of the mentor. Finally, they argue that the relationship has an absence of role inequality that typifies other helping situations marked by professional training, certification or status differences.

Other adjectives used to characterise the mentor role have included facilitating, coaching, buddying, befriending, counselling, tutoring, teaching, life-styling and role-modelling (Philip, 1999; Clutterbuck, 2002). In Freedman’s (1991) study of mentoring as an intervention to youth in poverty in the USA mentoring is described as the voluntary ‘kindness of the stranger,’ designed to address the notion that young people have lost their "natural proximity to caring, mature adults". However, when considering mentoring here the role is conceptualised as embodying relationships between individuals who are inherently different to one another. Mentoring is deemed as a powerful relationship to reignite close and supportive relationships between the young and caring adults who are from a different strata in society such as a loyal, trusted wise teacher or friend from whom to learn.

“The current wave of mentoring is a particular form of voluntarism, one focusing on the poor, primarily involving the middle-class volunteers and promoting personal relationships as an instrument for helping the disadvantaged. This combination is one of the most enduring variations within our broader experience of urban reform activity.” (Freedman 1991)

Nellis (2002) defines mentoring as entailing “someone more experienced guiding, coaching or encouraging someone less experienced in the performance of a task or role. It is more formal than befriending and less formal than supervision and more purposeful than volunteering.”
The Centre for Social Justice have offered a more recent conceptualisation of mentoring. Through the work of Aiken (2014), they acknowledge the core features of mentoring being an absence of power relations, an emphasis on voluntarism and the focus upon practical and personal support. "Mentoring is a voluntary relationship of engagement, encouragement and trust. Its immediate priority is to offer support, guidance and practical assistance to offenders in the vulnerable period around their release. Its longer term purpose is to help them find a stable lifestyle in which accommodation, employment, ties with family and friends and a growing two way relationship with the mentor all play their part in preventing a return to reoffending" (Centre for Social Justice 2014:11).

The conceptualisations of mentoring all differ with respect to the significance of being similar to the mentee and being able to identify with them. This is made even more important when attempting to conceptualise the specifics of peer mentoring practices. The growth of specific peer mentor activities is noted by Fletcher and Batty (2012:4) when they analyse a range of such interventions in the penal system. They indicate that peer mentor work has featured both inside the custodial environment and spread outside in the community. It has focused around the areas of housing support, reading and literacy, the provision of information and reassurance for new arrivals in prison, peer support around addictions, and support through the gate. Perrin and Blagdan (2016:116) stress the notion of mutual reciprocity and shared problems solving as characteristic of Alcoholics Anonymous, perhaps the best recognised peer support programme. Here, individuals share their stories of alcohol dependency and their journey to sobriety. As such the experience of giving and receiving help lies at the very heart of peer mentor practices and mentor and mentee relationships.

Clinks, the umbrella organisation supporting the penal voluntary sector, emphasize the power of similarity in peer support as being "when people with the shared experience provide knowledge, emotional, social, or practical help to each other. It commonly refers to an initiative consisting of trained individuals volunteering to support people with specific or multiple needs to provide practical advice or guidance. This can take a number of forms such as mentoring, befriending, listening, counselling, advocating or being an advisor" Clinks 2012:8

Peer Mentoring and an evidence base.

Whilst St Giles Trust place the ex-offender, peer mentor volunteer at the centre of all that they do, they are not alone at foregrounding the experiences and knowledge of "someone who has been there". For example the charity User Voice declare in a radical attempt to have a user led criminal justice system "that only offenders can stop re-offending". They advocate for a criminal
justice system enjoying the trust and unique insight of people who have experienced the system. They state “User Voice sees the world from a different perspective: We are led and run by people who have experienced the same problems we’re seeking to solve. We focus on Criminal Justice and associated services, including Children’s, Social Mental Health, and Alcohol Services.”

The recent ‘manic and optimistic’ (Boaz and Pawson 2005) turn to mentoring has been considered as a key intervention in criminal justice and with those at risk of crime. The Campbell Collaboration’s (Tolan et al. 2013) analysis of 46 mentoring programmes for youth delinquency concluded that mentoring had a modest positive effect for reducing delinquency and improving academic functioning and similar trends for reducing aggression and drug use. However the evidence is scant as to the identification of the valuable features and most promising approaches to better understand the effectiveness of such programmes. Mentor programmes have also been found to have an impact with respect to enabling female offenders to cope with the traumatic experiences of prison. Garcia (2016:2) notes how the external factors such as an individual’s environment, or circumstances are core to addressing the difficult process of re-entering the community post release and how the peer mentor can help facilitate a transfer from prison to the community.

The provision of support to those in the penal system by others has been highlighted as increasing the chances of offenders’ turning away from crime. However much of this research talks of the efficacy of mentoring from someone from an unequal social and economic position. In mentoring interventions offenders are paired with dissimilar members of the community, often older on average and with higher levels of social capital and societal resources. For example, Garcia’s (2016:8) research notes how mentors’ knowledge of particular problems such as criminality or substance misuse was acquired vicariously through close family members whilst undertaken mentoring work. As a result the mentors were not people who had been there themselves. Similarly, the research undertaken by Brown and Ross (2010:40) on the importance of mentoring female offenders noted that mentors were recruited via a newspaper advertisement and were described as having “good common sense” and generic “life experience” rather than any specific experiences of value. They conclude that as a result of a generalised notion of the mentor interventions only produced a sense of friendship for the female offenders and those who benefitted most from the intervention were those with few key issues in their lives. However, the mentor’s significant links to community were deemed valuable in order to improve the mentee’s levels of social capital.

Rather differently, research undertaken on peer based practices emphasises the benefit of similarity between mentor and mentee. Rowe et al.’s (2007:957) research into a peer support group intervention to reduce substance misuse and criminality among persons with mental
illness noted how peer mentors encouraged participants to maintain their sobriety by communicating new knowledges about leaving crime behind based upon their own struggles and journey. As part of a specific citizenship intervention in the peer support programme in Connecticut, peer mentors straddled roles combining the functions of case manager with role model and paid friend which was more formalised than friendship but less formal than in a pure case management role which involved monitoring functions.

With respect to research evidence on the efficacy of peer mentoring, Bagnall et al (2015) undertook a systematic review of the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of peer education and peer support in prisons. After reviewing the research findings of 57 studies between 1985 to 2012 Bagnall et al (2015) found that the strongest evidence with respect to treatment impact and effectiveness related to those peer mentors delivering interventions rather than the recipients of peer support. The systemic review found strong evidence that being a peer mentor is associated with positive effects on the participants' mental health. Similarly, peer interventions were found to be effective with respect to HIV work and other behaviours deemed risky. They conclude that “peer based interventions can be considered a valuable mechanism to maintain or improve health and wellbeing in the prison setting with positive effects seen on knowledge and behaviour of peer deliverers and recipients” (Bagnall et al 2015:27).

Research by Boyce et al (2008) conceptualised the peer mentor in a supplementary role, undertaking the work deemed not important enough for highly pressured probation professionals. Linked to this, Fletcher and Batty's (2012:6) review of research into the strengths of peer mentors has highlighted how volunteer mentors can allow traditional penal professionals to maximise their time and expertise elsewhere on presumably more important tasks. The peer mentors provided an additional workforce to use for the activities where professional intervention was not deemed appropriate and as a result the peer mentors added value to the workforce of the organisation, easing work pressures of professional staff and ensuring targets were met (Boyce et al 2008).

Newburn and Shiner (2005) highlight that research evidence into mentoring lags behind the work undertaken in the USA. Very little evaluative work has been undertaken in the UK and much of the published research has been small scale and lacking in positivist research methodologies. More recently Jolliffe and Farrington's (2007) analysis of 18 studies demonstrated that mentoring had a statistically significant positive impact upon re-offending. However despite being a Home Office research project only 2 of the 18 mentoring interventions were based in England and Wales. Their findings suggest that mentoring programmes can reduce recidivism by from 4 to 11% (Jolliffe and Farrington's 2007). However an important caveat to their study was in respect to the evaluation of the impact of mentoring alone where it was found that there was no such
reduction in recidivism. Subsequently, they deem that mentoring was effective only when it was one of a range of interventions designed to reduce criminality. Where mentoring was accompanied by behaviour modification programmes, employment and training interventions, significant reductions in re-offending were found. Jolliffe and Farrington’s (2007) research does point to some key features regarding effectiveness. Firstly, the dosage or intensity of the mentoring intervention was related positively to the treatment impact. Similarly, a positive correlation was found where the mentor and mentee met more frequently. Finally, the length of time the mentoring relationship lasted was not related to treatment impact as in fact over time the treatment impact lessened.

The paucity or meagreness (Fletcher and Batty 2012:1) of research evidence for the effectiveness of mentoring interventions is reflected further in the Ministry of Justice Data Lab analysis of 10 mentoring projects running in England and Wales. Research undertaken by the Justice Data Lab in Appendix 1 demonstrates how peer mentoring interventions can best be described as having tentative hints as to the potential of their effectiveness. Where reductions in recidivism, or time to recidivism are less than the control group, many of the findings are not statistically significant. Overall research evidence on mentoring and peer mentoring practices is somewhat at odds with the foregrounding of such approaches in government policy terms. The picture is one of mentoring as an increasingly popular form of offender intervention, but with mixed evidence as to its effectiveness. This incongruous position asks the question why successive governments turned to mentoring as a key innovative intervention in a reformed penal system.

**Birds of a feather desist together? Peer mentoring and leaving crime behind**

The notion that ex-offender, volunteer peer mentors or ‘wounded healers’ have a crucial role to play to enable the government to ‘conduct the conduct’(Dean 2010) of those leaving prison has also received a significant boost from research and academic scholarship in the area of desistance from crime. As such whilst the research into the effectiveness of peer mentoring approaches is rather limited and arguably not substantial enough to form government policy, recent research on those who have left crime behind and desisted from law breaking behaviour has provide a fruitful reference point for charities such as St Giles Trust to cement their approach to work in this field. Recently, academic research across the western world has begun to shed light on the social, relational and individual transformations needed to leave crime behind and challenge the dominant orthodox treatment approach of the ‘what works’ agenda (Layton Mackenzie 2005). Whilst much has been written on the societal and subjective underpinnings of desistance from crime, the importance of organisations and institutions has largely gone
unnoticed and is certainly under researched. For example, Maruna (2001) highlighted the link between the termination of criminal careers and facilitative organisations in his desistance blog where he uses St Giles Trust’s approach of using ex-offender peer mentor practices as being “desistance in action”.

“A few days ago, I was lucky enough to be asked to speak at the St. Giles Trust’s 50th Annual General Meeting. It was shocking how many of the Trust’s staff and managers were familiar with and motivated by the desistance literature. As several told me, if desistance is the theory, the St. Giles Trust (with its commitment to hiring ex-prisoner resettlement mentors) is very much the practice. I left hugely impressed with all they are doing but especially with their remarkably upbeat vibe.”

(http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/2012/10/07/travelling-desistance-hucksters-and-the-hawthorne-effect/)

The political and epistemological significance of the global research agenda on leaving crime behind, known as the desistance agenda, cannot be underestimated (Shapland, Farrall and Bottoms 2017). Practitioners and policy makers have begun to draw upon the insights of those who have been successful in order to consider radical changes to their work to adopt desistance focused knowledge and practice. At its fundamental core desistance research focuses on the ways in which individuals cease a pattern of criminal behaviour rather than the traditional academic concerns of crime causation and life histories. Desistance research studies have focused upon the individual successes of those who are free individuals and living law abiding lifestyles rather than the usual captive audience of offenders serving time in prison. In researching desistance from crime, Maruna (2001), Farrall (2002, 2014), Sampson and Laub (2003) all offer an alternative understanding to the cessation of criminal behaviour to the medicalised models of correctional treatment approaches and as such seek to challenge the professional knowledge base of community justice practitioners. For example, Farrall’s (2002) work to rethink What works in corrections researched 199 individuals who had successfully desisted from crime. His work notes how the research subjects identified how the individual successfully led a law abiding lifestyle related to the development of, and associated subjective meaning from, positive social relationships and opportunities outside the criminal justice system. This contrasted sharply with professional knowledge as the probation professionals in the study attributed desistance from crime as an indication of the treatment impact of correctional programmes which had treated the individual.

Whilst the research and academic publications with respect to desistance from crime is extensive incorporating studies from around the world in a global agenda (Shapland et al 2016), there are
some key research findings to emerge which are directly relevant to the roles and practices which peer mentors undertake. Desistance from crime has been conceptualised as an oscillating process between criminality and conformity rather than a one off event or singular, transformational ‘moment’ in an individual’s life (Farrall et al 2014). Maruna (2001:xvi) states how desisting from criminal behaviour represents the maintenance and continuity of a new state of law abiding behaviour or alternatively as the “discontinuance of undesirable conduct” rather than a moment of treatment or transformation. Desistance from crime involves a sustained absence from criminal activity rather than a moment where the individuals decides to quit criminal behaviour. In addition, a more longer termination of criminal behaviour is achieved when ex-offenders make meaning out of their new lives and develop a coherent, powerful, pro-social identity for themselves. As Maruna (2001 xv) states successful desisters “need to account for and understand their criminal pasts (why they did what they did) and they also need to understand why they are now “not like that anymore”.

Desistance research has shed light on the complex processes of "going straight" arguing that desistance is only partially complete when an individual stops committing crimes. As Maruna (2001) notes we are unsure as to whether desistance from crime is a temporary state of affairs from which the individual could decide to return to her/his criminal behaviour. This fragile state is highlighted by Burnett and Maruna’s (2006) research where a significant number of offenders spoke of their desire to cease criminal behaviour, and yet very few managed to carry out this desire into new behaviours and continue to live a law abiding lifestyle. Sadly, the research found that temptation, hopelessness and the resurrection of older, previously successful criminality can return and the resolve to go straight is lost.

As such academics and researchers have identified a three stage typology of desistance which offers clarity and understanding between the individual who may have temporary stopped offending and the individual who will maintain efforts to go straight. Maruna and Farrall (2004) draw an important distinction between primary and secondary desistance; the former relates merely to changes in law breaking and law abiding behaviour whereas the latter implies a related shift in individual identity which is removed from criminal or deviant behaviour. They note that secondary desistance relates to the shifts in identity and self-concept which matter in securing longer-term, sustained changes in behaviour as opposed to mere lulls in offending. The process from primary to secondary desistance is "the movement from the behaviour of non offending to the assumption of a role of a non offender or ‘changed person” (Maruna and Farrall 2004:174). Subsequently, offending ‘spoiled identities’ need to be shed and recreated if change is to be secured in the longer term where new identities are formed which are incompatible with the criminal past. In addition, as a development to Maruna and Farrall’s (2004) model of desistance,
McNeill (2016) has conceptualised a third stage of ‘tertiary desistance’ to mark the time when others acknowledge that an individual has ceased being an offender and has returned and has a sense of belonging to the community.

The desistance literature therefore creates an intriguing possibility that a possible future for the rehabilitation of offenders could be in facilitating a range of structural and individual efforts to create and maintain a pro-social identity. As Stevens notes (2011) an analysis of identity in late modernity is to be found in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going and as such identity is fluid and agile and actively created by the individual. The re-conceptualisation of identity from being an essential, innate and fixed notion proffers the idea of identity change as being an important, ever present feature of life. Stevens (2011:2) states “identity is inherently fluid and fragile, actively and selectively constructed and repeatedly constructed, dramaturgically performed and achieved, in response to ones' maturing ad mutable cognitions, desires, expectations, choices and conduct, and one's relationships of similarity and of difference with others and the social structure”. Understanding the tales of desistance and the stories of individual journeys through life from criminal activity to law abiding behaviours could have a potential plot twist where the individual assumed a role of a peer mentor and created a new improved self where criminality had no place. Indeed, peer mentors themselves could be the solution to their own salvation. Veysey, Martinez and Christian (2009:3) note how the possibilities of role transformation for offenders hinge on three challenges. Firstly, peers and family may not support such radical transformations in making dramatic shifts such as the one represented by addict to ex–addict. Secondly, available alternative role identities may be severely reduced for offenders and those who experience significant social exclusion. Exposure to roles such as worker or learner may not be forthcoming and institutions may not be geared to offering ex-offenders opportunities to be trusted, accepted and valued. As Veysey et al (2009:4) put it “we want people to stop being criminals but we don’t necessarily want them to teach in our schools or be our neighbours or bosses”. Finally, possessing the stigma of ‘criminal’ can allude to an untrustworthy or chaotic character highlighting the very traits employers do not wish to see in their potential employers. In this respect, previous stigma will lead to the individual remaining an ongoing ‘risk’ with respect to employment or housing etc.

Such challenges highlight the societal and structural factors to desistance from crime. Dynamic change factors do not merely rest with the subjective and individual attempts to reconsider or reinvent oneself into a better person or a pro-social identity. Social, structural and institutional factors are also considered as important in the transition from offender to full citizen. Contact with the penal system, particularly the prison can negatively impact upon a person’s ability to undertake employment upon release, engage in other pro-social opportunities like training and
education. In relation to the effect on personal relationships prison may inhibit the continuation of strong bonds and attachments with family and partners.

More recent research and theoretical developments in desistance research has focused on the important relationship between the individual or subjective and the structural or social factors (Farrall et al. 2014). The importance of this relationship reflects the extent do structural and societal factors underpin or impede efforts by those who have been in the criminal justice system to create a new pro-social self. As a result the nature of facilitative societal and institutional backgrounds to identity transformation and moves from previous criminal selves are important questions to consider and form part of my empirical research here. Structural life events and the meaning derived from them such as gaining employment, finding a partner, caring for children, have been identified as contributing to leading crime behind (Sampson and Laub 1993, Farrall, Hunter, Sharpe and Calverley 2014). Farrall et al (2014) note how in order to fully conceptualise desistance from crime we need to examine how the macro level structures and meso-level influences interact with one another to shape agency. Recent academic scholarship has placed great explanatory weight behind one or the other of these factors. For example, desistance from crime can be a result of structurally induced turning point seems to suggest that individual agency is less importance. This is clearly contrary to studies of desistance by Maruna (2001) and Stevens (2013) who give primacy to the individual’s ability to reconstruct life and assume new pro-social identities as the key to secondary desistance. Farrall etal’s (2014) review of desistance research also refers to a theory of cognitive transformation involving the individual developing an awareness and willingness that leaving crime behind is necessary. However individuals with this level of thinking also need “a hook for change” which offers them a way out. The process of desistance is completed when the individual sees themselves in a different and new role and crime becomes irrelevant and undesirable. Bottoms etal (2004) also highlight the interactivity between structural and subjective factors desistance in leaving crime behind. Their concepts for exploring desistance from crime relate to the individual’s own potential for reoffending, the structuring effects of institutions, such as work or my concern here volunteering which can constrain older action and provide for new behaviours and roles, cultural contexts which create assumptions about the world and individual level social and personal arrangements.

Appreciating the need to consider both structural and subjective factors to understand desistance from crime, the research undertaken here provides a focus on the interplay between individual decisions and activities to reinvent oneself, the organisational context of St Giles Trust in creating opportunities for reinvention and the governmental and institutional strategies encouraging offenders to “go straight.
Generativity has been described by McAdams and de St.Aubin (in Maruna 2001:99) as “the concern for and commitment to promoting the next generation, manifested through parenting, teaching, mentoring, and generating products and outcomes that aim to benefit youth and foster the development and well-being of individuals and social systems that will outlive the self”. In what has become some of the most original and challenging ideas from the desistance research agenda is the notion that ex-offenders need opportunities to undertake acts which offer a sense of care to others. The knowledge that ex-prisoners could act in generative ways to those who remain in the criminal justice system has been considered as a highly risky. For example, Sir Stephen Tumin states in the forward of reformed offender Bob Turney’s book “I have always been rather against the idea of prisoners after discharge becoming professional former prisoners. They should, it seems to me, learn the lessons of imprisonment and move on to fresh lives with new occupation and new interests”. The prevailing attitude towards ex-offenders is that they should be risk managed and contained appropriately rather than be able to gain from the experience by influencing the behaviour of others in the system.

However in respect of the opportunities open to ex-offenders to act with care and compassion for others, Maruna (2001:118) and Halsey and Harris (2011:74) note that the existing penal arrangements are often organised to suppress such opportunities to care for oneself and others’ future. Maruna (2001) champions the idea of creating enabling organisations which offer a range of opportunities for ex-prisoners and ex-offenders to think and act in a generative way to others to facilitate pro-social notions of self. Maruna et al (2004) state “we contend that the world of corrections were to become more of a generative society- that is, an environment in which generative commitments were modelled and nurture and opportunities for generative activities were promoted and rewarded – it would simply be more effective at reducing repeat offending”. Maruna (2001:118) notes how generative acts provide ex-offenders with an alternative source of meaning in their lives and develops a sense of achievement. It also provides a legitimate and respected role from those who value the help and advice from “someone who has walked in their shoes”. Importantly for Halsey and Harris (2011:83), where penal systems continually suppress the act of caring for oneself or others could provide a powerful generative script or identity far removed from criminal activity which harms other individuals and the community, Halsey and Harris (2011:85) and Maruna (2001) therefore note that the opportunities at the institutional
and structural level are almost non-existent with individuals devoid of the opportunities to improve the social and human capital in their lives.

Peer mentor roles therefore should therefore offer a range of powerful roles in society which enable the mentor to demonstrate generative practices to others and by doing so, movement away from the criminogenic norms and behaviours which led to harming others. Peer mentor roles which act as "wise friends" (Grayling 2012) for individuals who have gone straight provide an institutional framework for maximising the acts kindness which ex-offenders are deemed to want to demonstrate. It offers the mentor a sense job satisfaction and personal fulfilment and a sense of belonging to a supportive community of similar individuals. Buck (2016) has produced one of the most sophisticated analysis of the impact peer mentoring may have with respect to distance from crime. By utilizing the Girardian (in Buck 2016) concept of mimetic desire, she notes how peer mentoring could offer powerful role models to mentees. The personal qualities of the mentor are deemed to be desirable to mentees. As a result they come to value and wish to emulate such qualities. The peer mentor's role is therefore one of encouraging such desire to act different in others and facilitate the mimicry of the mentor's self improvement in their mentees or disciples.

The desistance research agenda is an important potential source of evidence for the penal voluntary sector so long as charitable endeavours remain based upon client centred outcomes to build human and social capital and to focus upon the transformations in identity and don't become infected by penal values. Despite a continuing scarcity of empirical research studies, the links between ex-offender peer mentor volunteers and leaving crime behind have been forthcoming in research studies. LeBEL’s (2007) analysis of a sample of 228 formerly incarcerated individuals working in prisoner reintegration programmes, noted how the ex offender had a positive relationship with others, a higher levels of self-esteem, and a greater satisfaction with life. As a result such peer mentor practices may act as a buffer against future criminal behaviour. LeBEL (2007) notes how principles such as "helping helps the helper," should be recognised for its potential in facilitating the recovery and reintegration of formerly incarcerated persons by sharing experiences and acting as a role model.

The role of the St Giles Trust peer mentor engaged in generative acts of caring for oneself and others could enable a shift in the offender's narrative understanding of themselves. By offering support, help and assistance to others a transformation in a sense of self moves the individual away from harming others. Perrin and Blagden (2014) note how the peer mentor role offers volunteer ex-offenders the opportunity to do desistance rather than merely talk about it. Peer mentoring could offer a heightened sense of agency and allow previously hidden real selves or new selves to be created. The idea of assisting others to leave crime behind could be an important
practical outlet which leads to a positive self image. The adoption of peer mentor roles also moves the idea of offender rehabilitation away from correctional programmes and the medical model of rehabilitation whereby offenders are conceptualised as having risk factors or weaknesses which need treatment. Instead the peer mentor role can be a powerful indice of ex-offenders own personal qualities to assume opportunities for generative actions. 

Little research has examined how structural constraints and organisational settings both provide, shape or limit the specific peer mentor identities available for ex–offenders to assume upon release. Considering much of the desistance research can lead to an analysis that socially excluded ex-offenders have such agency that they are indeed ‘free to choose’ from a range of powerful new selves with little research identifying how such transformations are embedded and ‘made up’ in particular ways. Voluntary sector organisations such as St Giles Trust are therefore actively involved and implicated in the ways in which ex-offenders may leave crime behind by assuming peer mentor roles. The need for embedded research of this type is particularly prescient with recent concerns over the extent to which the penal voluntary sector has lost its distinctiveness and independence with resultant risks of institutionalisation and the adopting of existing penal cultures. For example if the construction of peer mentor roles involve the enforcement of statutory orders, activities aligned to punitive mentalities or the bureaucratic management of mentees then powerful, desistogenic peer mentor roles will not be forthcoming.

For St Giles Trust, as a leading proponent of the Penal Voluntary sector, despite its size and contractual relationships with the state, its independence and distinctive mission and peer led delivery model are essential to preserve for its future wellbeing. Ironically, remaining independent and not becoming an image of the state or of business through the government’s penal reform agenda is key to St Giles Trust.
Chapter 4: Research Methodology: Voluntary sector actors in community justice

This chapter outlines the theoretical underpinning to the research methodology of the thesis. It includes analysis of the use of a range of qualitative research methods. Firstly, it incorporates the insights offered by using governmentality as an analytical tool for research, and secondly, the qualitative research methodology and analysis of fieldwork data. The chapter outlines reflections upon the research challenges experienced during the fieldwork and the solutions found with regards to research access, researching an inherently fluid and politicised arena, and researching particular fluid case study and research subject. Finally, it turns its attention to the ethical issues inherent in the research process and how the research design was constructed and adapted as a direct response to the specifics and individual peculiarities of St Giles Trust as the research subject. In discussing the research methodology it attempts to highlight the sometimes challenges and nuanced realities of undertaking research in the social sciences rather than provide a standardised or airbrushed account akin to much of the research journeys detailed in textbooks (Stevens 2013).

Epistemology
In order to discuss the chosen research methodology and research techniques in this thesis, it is important to recognise that every method is saturated with theoretical assumptions about the researcher’s view of the nature of society and social research. Pragmatic accounts of research which merely refer to using appropriate research methods seek to negate how methods and theory are interrelated. As Hughes (1990) states,

"Every research tool or procedure is inextricably embedded in commitments to particular versions of the world and to knowing that world. To use a questionnaire, to use an attitude scale, to take the role of participant observer, to select a random sample, to measure rates of population growth, and so on, is to be involved in conceptions of the world that allow these instruments to be used for the purposes conceived (Hughes 1990 p11).

Research methodologies which attempt to capture or understand the social world need to be able to adequately capture and understand the array of sociological and individual pluralities, subcultures, identities and multiple understandings which are characteristic of contemporary society. Indeed, research methodologies need to be thought of and designed in complex ways to capture and analyse some of the significant transformations in the political social and economic arrangements detailed in Chapter One. As Young (2012a:20) states in the Criminological Imagination,
“the world changes fast, social definitions have no fixity, people’s lives are disembedded, they change jobs, communities, families more frequently, they constantly rewrite narratives of their lives. We do not live in a world of solidity and essences however much we may hanker for them.”

Subsequently, Young (2012a:11) argues for an understanding of the social world which can only be understood and appreciated through an interpretist approach, far removed from the static, positivist methodologies which have come to dominate the discipline of criminology, of research funding agencies and much of the crime control industry. In positivist research there is little desire to question the complex or to debate significance but rather research is conceptualised as delivering hard ‘facts’ and undisputed evidence from which to build evidence based policy. Young’s (2012) work offers a stark choice with respect to seeing the world. For him, research can either open up the human condition and move beyond the taken for granted or indeed offer the very opposite by “a flight to the solid, the secure and the seemingly unchanged” (Young 2012a:63).

An interpretist methodology has an important appreciation of self-constructions, identities and culture where identity is fragmented and transitional. The social world presented here is that of fluidity, with contradictions and conflicts. Deviance and law breaking behaviour and law abiding activities are not clearly delineated and separated and behaviour is not determined nor do individuals act with total free will. The pluralism witnessed in advanced capitalist societies which social scientists have highlighted requires a research methodology which is able to interpret, understand and analyse multiple realities rather than any single evidential truth. Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (1998:133) rejects the idea of generalization because of “an inherent indeterminateness in the lifeworld”.

An interpretist approach, involving the use of qualitative research methodologies was deemed appropriate to capture the profound and exceptional sense of penal transformation in England and Wales. St Giles Trust and its volunteer peer mentors engage in a penal and civic world which is experiencing considerable institutional and personal transformation. They are situated and experience a number of turbulent and fluid liminal spaces, betwixt and between the old and the new (Robinson, Burke and Millings 2016). For example, peer mentors are a group of individuals who are making the transition between prison and the community, moving between incarceration and relative freedom, and leaving and recreating offender and mentor identities. To exacerbate the sense of change and liminality, peer mentors undertake their activities in an institution, St Giles Trust who were on a journey from the margins to the mainstream in community justice.

A multiplicity of meanings can be attached to similar experiences such as peer mentoring activities and indeed different actions can come out of similar meanings of peer mentoring. As
such the notion that there is any sense of fixed and measurable sense of human experience which could be simply and holistically transferred and generalised is problematic for interpretivist approaches (Williams 2008:7). However as Williams (2008) argues the notion that there are no possible aspects of generalisability from qualitative search needs to be challenged. Indeed Williams notes (2008:8)

“the conclusion that the intentional nature of individual consciousness produces far too much variability for generalisations to be made from one interaction to another has never really embarrassed interpretivists...almost every interpretivist study, while acknowledging the subjectivity of the researcher and the uniqueness of the repertoire of interactions studied, nevertheless wishes to persuade us that there is something to be learned from that situation which has wider currency.”

As such whilst peer mentor’s construct their subjective role against a backdrop of St Giles Trust, a moderate generalisation would be that peer mentors in similar penal voluntary sector charities involved in governmental agendas to mainstream the ex-offender peer mentor could construct similar law abiding and helping self-identities or approach their work in similar ways. This is much more plausible analysis than denying the existence of any similarities between situations. As a result the case study design presented here moves beyond claims of being singularly “unique” and makes tentative claims to generalisability for other penal voluntary sector charities who wish to employ ex-offenders as peer mentors in a response to the opportunities provided by the government’s marketization of the probation field (Byrne 2009:2). However, generalising from case study research is not considered to be universalising and does not seek to establish universal laws which dictate how all charities in the penal voluntary sector respond to government penal reforms (Byrne 2009:2).

The empirical research and analysis of organisational and individual voluntary sector actors in community justice presented here foregrounded both the governmental and the subjective experiences of peer mentors in the rehabilitation of offenders. As such by a more grounded approach it aims to offer a qualitative understanding of the nature of peer mentoring, of peer mentor values and how those undertaking these roles in St Giles Trust make meaning from their experiences. The research findings in no way seeks to scientifically uncover what is effective or what works as if some objective reality or truth could be uncovered. The respondents in this research offer insights into how they construct meanings to their work, offering multiple understandings of peer mentoring and of a voluntary sector organisation in a transformed field of community justice. The interpretivist position in social research posits that we do not have a singular relationship between us the subject and the world, rather the world is interpreted through our mind. As Johnson (cited in May and Williams 1996) states,
“hunger, pain and anger in the human world cannot be described without investigating how individuals use language and symbols to construct what such states mean for them. For it is only by understanding the individual experience of subjective interpretation that we will understand why human beings behave in the way they do; why for example thresholds of pain, attitudes to death and so on differ so markedly from person to person and from culture to culture.”

Key research questions
The empirical research had four key research questions which centred on the notion of conceptualising and understanding new institutional and individual voluntary actors in the reconfigured probation and rehabilitation field in England and Wales.

- How can we understand the nature and impact of successive governments’ neoliberal penal reform particularly in relation to the penal voluntary sector and the governance of the peer mentor?
- In what ways do the involvement of the penal voluntary sector and peer mentors reflect new criminal justice professional cultures and knowledges?
- What are the effects of Neoliberal penal reforms on St Giles Trust’s ability to maintain agency and control over its mission and values?
- To what extent does St Giles Trust peer mentor delivery model encourage the cessation of criminal behaviour?

Governmentality as Epistemology
In order to address the research questions identified above, the thesis charts both government’s construction and governance of the penal voluntary sector intertwined with an analysis of how peer mentor’s subjective understanding of their role the thesis turns to the work of governmentality theorists to chart the multiplicity of ways in which organisations and selves are governed by States.

Foucault’s (1991, Gordon 1991) latter work offers a powerful analytical framework for analysing ‘the government of others and the government of one’s self’. Foucault’s theoretical considerations highlight how two poles of governance relate to one another with respect to the government by authorities of populations and by the ways in which individuals work on themselves to shape their own views, attitudes and behaviour (Foucault et al 2011). These various analyses have been terms ‘governmentality’ and offer a framework as to how social researchers can begin to research and make sense of a reconfigured criminal justice system without recourse to totalising or reductionist accounts. Such an analytical framework offers social researchers the ability to reveal
the often volatile and contradictory ways governments can think or imagine and specific ways of acting to resolve a crime problem such as the rehabilitation of offenders.

As an analysis of research methodology Foucault's work on governmentality does not offer a holistic or unified account of the nature and problems regarding crime control but rather allows for open-ended, compatible and contradictory ways of understanding government agendas. Garland (1999:16) highlights how the idea of a governmental rationality refers to the ways of thinking and styles of reasoning that are embodied in a particular set of practices. As a result governmental rationalities are practical rather than theoretical forged in the business of the government attempts to solve problems.

In terms of conceptualising and using Foucault's notions of governmentality in order to undertake social research, it becomes important to analyse and understand how government authorities understand the crime problem themselves and their various proposals for its solution, therefore imposing their own 'regimes of truth' to create their own reality of any problem. However Foucault was keen to point out that any government programme to for example, transforming rehabilitation and reduce recidivism can be taken at face value and isn't a cover for capitalism or elite interests or part of a longer term plan for the Minister of Justice to obtain highly paid directorships after his or her term of office. Nevertheless, such government programmes can be based on particular ideological assumptions about how the community justice field should be, what makes individuals lead law abiding lives, and how people should be rehabilitated are government constructs rather than some natural progression of thought. In addition government rhetoric or language should be considered active and performative. As Miller and Rose (1992:177) note any "analysis of political discourse helps us elucidate not only the systems of thought through which authorities have posed and specified the problems for government but also the systems of action through which they have given effect to government" (italics in original).

Governmentality and empirical research

In their editorial to a special edition of Theoretical Criminology Kelly Hannah Moffat and Mona Lynch (2012) unravel some key approaches and key questions as to how the boundaries of punishment have come to be theorised. Of particular relevance here is their claim that the penal field has been dominated by macro-level sociological approaches with respect to the shaping of research methodology. The authors outline how such approaches have been immensely valuable in charting the broad brush relationship between punishment and society whilst having less to say about how punishment is delivered on the ground or meso-level. This is important as such micro level empirical research in particular contexts and related fields such as the penal
voluntary sector can challenge traditional understandings of the penal realm. Indeed without such empirical and grounded research the marketised penal field is understood solely as how the government imagines. Similarly, the penal voluntary sector is reduced to either how it talks about itself or how we imagine charities to act without understanding how they actually operate (Armstrong 2002) The research on the penal voluntary sector is representative of analysis of the community justice field through micro level enquiry into the particular and specific new contexts where punishment may be delivered outside of formal legal structures and punitive institutions such as the prison or probation service. Hannah Moffatt and Lynch (2012:1) state,

*Grounded social analysis makes sense of the field as it actually operates and is experienced by those who inhabit it (or experience it). The story of penal policy is one of compromise and accommodation, of ambivalence and poorly implemented policy. It is necessary to look at the whole configuration of practices and not just the programmes outlined by government. Whilst Foucault understood government as a problem solving process, i.e. a way of programming the social world to correct problems which emerge there, one must also analyse and consider the non-instrumental or rational activities. In the penal sphere Foucault’s analysis tends to neglect the emotive or expressive currents which increasingly are key in the penal sphere. The expressive or symbolic is grounded in values rather than scientific knowledge.*

Consequently, research into how an individual penal voluntary sector organisation operates at the time of the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda contributes to a thicker analysis of the penal voluntary sector and ultimately the nature of state power. Furthermore, as Lever (2011) argues the analytic of governmentality offer important insights into how voluntary sector organisations are encouraged to shape their work and meld their outcomes to meet the government of the day’s agenda to reap financial advantage. However only a ‘grounded’ governmentality is able to capture the individuals and organisations involved and their outcomes and resistances to having their actions shaped in particular ways. Indeed, research ‘from below’ is able to capture not only the particular shades and contours of a single penal voluntary sector organisation but also the heretofore limited voice of its staff, volunteers and service users.

Miller and Rose (1992) discuss how any analysis of government needs to move beyond analyses of revenue, expenditure and strategy and incorporate the discursive field within which problems and identified and signified. They state “*Language is not merely contemplative or justificatory, it is performative*” (1992:177). An analysis of political discourse helps us identify the systems of though through which authorities have posed the problems for government but also the systems of action through which they have sought to give effect to government. As a result the empirical research here continue in the established tradition of governmentality scholarship by analysing
the successive government plans for reform of community justice and the foregrounding of the voluntary sector by an analysis of the way reform is shaped in government documents, consultations and the various textual government proclamations in this area. However, the work also reflects a critique of such ‘top down’ governmentality by emphasizing the benefits of empirical research with those who are the targets of governmental attempts to shape behaviour or conduct. Individual responses to government mentalities operate in oral discourses and social practices which can be uncovered and analysed by empirical research (Stenson 1999 p45). Shoshana (2011:771) notes how in detailing how governments act at a distance and shape the behaviour of population and individuals,

_These notable claims are usually discussed in the macro political-economic realm by means of various types of everyday discourse...This level of analysis therefore largely presents a 'view from the top'...The result is that we know much about the way governmentality operates through the shaping of forms of knowledge and mediation on the part of experts who moderate the administration of individuals and populations. Because this level of analysis focuses mainly on the deconstruction of orders of discourse, the subjectivity obtained from this analysis is a discursive subjectivity; that is to say the manner in which a specific discourse constructs diverse concepts of self. There is insufficient knowledge about the self-reflexive subject, or the personal self-understandings of individuals and the way individuals translate governmental rationality and the discursive order into specific awareness of subjectivity in everyday life._

The bridging of this apparent ‘governmentality gap’ by combining analysis of governmental mentalities with grounded empirical research with those who are ex-offender peer mentors, volunteers or employees is essential if research is to understand the nature, extent and impact of various techniques of power, some of which operate increasingly indirectly and from a distance. Indeed, Ettlinger (2011:538) notes as Foucault encapsulated power as deriving not only from mentalities and techniques directed at the population but also from the techniques or governance of the self. As a result Foucault’s work on governmentality is indeed offering the possibilities of agency, choice and resistance to the range of possibilities for individuals to shape their behaviour and reconstitute themselves in different ways. Consequently, a research methodology is required which is able to unearth and examine how individual subjective ideas of the penal voluntary sector and volunteer peer mentoring relate to the governmental imaginaries of them. The combination of the governmental macro-level and the subjective meso-levels of analysis enables us to learn how individuals have translated deliberate government agendas into specific self-understandings and in everyday life. A combination of the two approaches offers
understanding as to whether the self and the state create alliances in order to successfully govern at a distance or whether the individual adopts resistance to the shaping of the self

Research Methodology

The fieldwork research design has been influenced by the fluidity of the research area and by Minted and Semen’s (1998) simple yet crucial point,

‘The general principle is that the research strategy or strategies, and the methods or techniques employed, must be appropriate for the questions you want to answer.’

The research incorporated a qualitative methodology as the most effective way of addressing the key research questions. In designing the research it was considered that qualitative methodologies would get closer to the institutional and individual actor’s perspectives and will enable the analysis of the relationship between government penal reforms, a key organisation in the penal voluntary sector and peer mentors’ individual subjective understandings of their role in greater depth. In addition, qualitative methodology, such as the use of semi structured interviews or the analysis of organisational discourse, will provide a more nuanced and perhaps complex understanding of the voluntary sector in contemporary punishment than quantitative analysis could ever achieve. A crucial part of the research concerns itself with St Giles Trust ex-offender peer mentor delivery model and the individual peer mentor’s conceptualisation of their role. By using a qualitative methodology, the research aims to capture and analyse both shared and contradictory understandings as to how peer mentors conceptualised their work and shape their sense of selves (Silverman 2009).

My research design incorporates a collective case study design of a voluntary sector organisation which is actively engaged in the punishment and supervision of offenders. Importantly for me, a case study does not prescribe or prohibit any particular research methodology, making it popular and an effective way to go about researching the ‘real world’ (Robson 2002). Where individual service users were difficult to obtain access, the research utilised naturally forming focus groups where for example I could have time at a scheduled job club event, rather than attempt to interview each service user individually. Such an approach may be sensitive to the lives of such members and ultimately prove a better way of gaining access. The idea of a case study denotes research on a system or multiple systems bounded in space and time and embedded in a particular socio, economic, political and cultural context. Research methodologies can be diverse like observations, interviews, textual documents and audio-visual material (Mabry 2008).
St Giles Trust and Case Study design

Case study design is not a methodological choice but choice of an object to be studied (Prior 2008). In effect researchers identify the case to be studied, but the ‘case’ can be studied in many ways. In discussing the idea of a case study design a key question is what can be learnt by the single study of a case? The research into St Giles Trust is considered as an instrumental case (Stake 1998:88) in that the case study is examined to relate to and provide insight into other issues or theoretical positions. As such the case study plays a supportive role facilitating our understanding of something else (Prior 2008). The case of St Giles Trust is therefore chosen and examined as it offers insights into a penal voluntary sector organisation entering a new reconfigured field of activity in marketised rehabilitation services for offenders. In addition a key factor in terms of selecting my case study was indeed the position of St Giles Trust both in academic literature and governmental discourse. In order to analyse the potential impact of Neoliberal penal reforms it was important to research an important and high profile voluntary sector organisation. After learning about their unique peer mentor delivery model the idea of researching both institutional and individual voluntary actors took shape. Indeed, the references made by the Justice Minister Chris Grayling in 2012 when detailing the main components of the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda almost directly match the work of St Giles Trust when he stated,

"Often it will be the former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow, the former gang member best placed to prevent younger members from rushing straight back to re-join the gang on the streets. There are some really good examples out there of organisations making good use of the old lags in stopping the new ones. We need more of that for the future."

As a result St Giles Trust became both the most high profile and relevant possible case study and the research case study I wanted for my research. The charity had played and continues to play an important role in the marketization of probation, both in terms of offering additional services to the state such as peer mentor interventions in custodial and community settings and also, by competing to provide existing services which have traditionally been considered as the role of the state through the prison and probation services. St Giles Trust was also an important case study as it partnered with both private and statutory services to create several hybridised organisations which straddle and blur the traditional conceptual understandings and divides between the state, the market and the third sector. Subsequently, the charity was considered as an important actor and lobbyist in the government’s reforms under the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.
Finally as a case study, St Giles Trust offers further possibilities for theoretical and empirical research in its focus on the importance of volunteer peer mentor practices with offenders. Such practices have been referenced by academics who have also highlighted the importance and position of St Giles Trust. Whilst not researching the charity themselves, both Buck (2017) has made reference St Giles Trust peer mentor work and Tomczak (2017) analysed St Giles Trust as an exemplar of one of the large penal voluntary charities when conceptualising the emergent penal voluntary sector.

As a result St Giles Trust is considered as a high profile emblem of the potential of the penal voluntary sector. However Stake’s (1998:88) case study categories do not necessarily explain how the choice of case study was made in this research. By talking about how the case study can offer insights into other issues or theoretical insights Stakes (1998) places the actual case study itself as secondary and less important. Here the selection of a case study offers insights into the penal voluntary sector and volunteer peer mentoring in the rehabilitative field and additionally offers important understandings of the organisation, staff and volunteers of St Giles Trust itself. The research presented here attempts to combine both an intrinsic case study, where the case study offers specific particularity and interest and an instrumental case study where the case study facilitates more general understanding of phenomena such as leaving crime behind or power in the penal sphere (Byrne 2009). The insights developed into peer mentor practices or volunteers in rehabilitation are viewed as being situated, boundaried and developed in the context of the St Giles Trust charity. Case study research designs have particular strengths and are often chosen as the approach offer insights into the particular nature of the case and the contextual backdrop to the case including political and legal or economic considerations. As Mabry notes (2008:214) “the raison deter of case study is deep understanding of particular instances of phenomena”. This is especially important as case study design in social research ought to move beyond counting statistics or the demographics of a case and include the experiences and perceptions of participants (Mabry 2008:215). Yin (1984:23) defines the case study research method “as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.” For example, a case study of a charity in the penal voluntary sector needs to incorporate how volunteers operate in such a new sphere of activity, or grasp how ex-offenders undertake peer mentor roles in one of the big players in the sector. Furthermore, a detailed and thorough case study analysis may offer insights into how government agendas to foreground the penal voluntary sector work shape the practices of those who undertake such work. In the recent academic research the penal voluntary sector and its large and small scale actors have been considered as a broad, boundaried and sectorally defined case study (Tomczak 2017, Corcoran 2008) without making this explicit in the research design.
and analysis. However a single ethnographic case study design of St Giles Trust afford greater depth of analysis of a main players in the penal voluntary sector than has previously been achieved in the embryonic research to date. Indeed it was the absence of any significant research into the individual charities which ’make up’ the penal voluntary sector that underpinned the doctoral research as a whole. The use of case study design was developed as a new research approach to much of the academic scholarship thus far which has sought to scope or offer broad brush insights into the phenomena.

Case study design offers deep insights and meaning with respect to the relationship between government penal reform and the penal voluntary sector to sweeping and universal claims of isomorphism and co-option by the state and how such reform agendas play out in the everyday practices of staff members, volunteers and ex-offender peer mentors. A single case study design, grounded in the everyday practices of the individual actors, can also offer insights which are atypical or defy expectations or where greater complexity or nuance is found. As a result, the single case study design employed here is alert to the different patterns in St Giles Trust activities and the variety of meanings given to peer mentor work shaped as a result of the specific context of St Giles Trust (Mabry 2008:217). Relationships between St Giles Trust and their volunteer ex-offender peer mentors are intertwined as "case study researchers recognize that cases are shaped by their many contexts [and] relationships between contexts and cases are interdependent and reciprocal" (Mabry 2008:217).

Despite these advantages, case studies have received criticisms. Yin (1984) discusses three types of arguments against case study research. First, case studies are often accused of lack of rigour. Yin (1984:21) notes that "too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy, and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions". However if one attempts to uncover such biases and subjectivities and identifies them as such rather than as truth, then the limitations can be overcome. For example, in Chapter 7 an analysis of peer mentor discourses identified that the genuine empathy, underpinning values and experiential knowledge in the volunteer role contrast favourably than previous statutory professional practice is constructed and presented as evidence of peer mentors shaping their own subjective sense of expertise. It is not understood as evidence or truth that peer mentors are more effective than the professional as the data would be considered invalid for such an analysis. Second, case studies provide very little basis for scientific generalisation since they use a small number of subjects, some conducted with only a single case study. The question commonly raised is "How can you generalise from a single case?" (Yin, 1984:21). Where single case studies are less helpful are when research questions demand an ability to contrast research findings such as to
create typologies of charities and polarise large charities against smaller ones to unearth differences and similarities.

**St Giles Trust as emblem of the penal voluntary sector**

St Giles Trust was founded in 1962 in the ward of St Giles in Camberwell, South London. The charity's original aim was to help destitute people in South London; typically those who had fallen through the welfare net and were not in receipt of state assistance. St Giles Trust was originally known as The Camberwell Samaritans and were based in the crypt of St Giles church. It is noteworthy that St Giles Trust went on to eventually become the first day centre for homeless people in South London and that their first-ever recorded client was a young, male prison leaver who was suicidal and homeless (St Giles Trust 2012).

In the mid-1990s St Giles Trust relocated to their existing headquarters in Georgian House, Camberwell Church Street and started to work in local prisons offering housing casework support to serving prisoners. This was borne out of the charity’s own experience of demands for their services from large numbers of homeless prison leavers in need of support. This service was in high demand so in 2001, St Giles Trust took the pivotal step to start training serving prisoners to become volunteer “qualified caseworkers” known as peer advisors who could offer advice and guidance to their fellow inmates to meet this need (St Giles Trust 2012). St Giles Trust were aware that the use of ex offender peers as a solution to prisoner resettlement was innovative noting their approach as a "ground-breaking approach for this time" (St Giles Trust 2013).

By the mid 2000s, St Giles Trust’s foothold had extended further across the prison estate and their peer based programmes had developed community-based services in Kent and Ipswich, with further hubs outside the capital in Cardiff and Leeds to follow in subsequent years.

St Giles Trust is innovative and different by the charity’s belief that putting offenders at the heart of the solution helps turn lives around, evidenced by 42% of the staff and volunteers having previous criminal convictions and have experience of the criminal justice system (St Giles Trust 2016). Many peer mentor volunteers received their training while they were serving a prison sentence. As a result, St Giles Trust had enjoyed a significance presence in London prisons over many years. Most peer advisers have therefore been recruited and trained in the prison environment and continue to volunteer inside and through the prison gates into the St Giles Trust community programmes. St Giles Trust place great emphasis on the professionalism and qualities of their peer advisers detailing how they achieve a Level 3 Vocational award in Advice and guidance whilst in prison and demonstrate an extended range of competences in order to practice and naming them as uniquely credible rehabilitation experts.
St Giles Trust peer-led delivery model

St Giles Trust peer-led approach values the ex-prisoner or ex-offender as a key resource to resettlement rather than merely a risk to be managed. St Giles Trust further distinguishes its delivery model by focusing on entrenched problems with innovation and doing things differently. In the St Giles Trust Annual report for 2010, the charity refers to having a "concrete, radical solution to these problems and it has the potential to work on a national scale. It needs to be scaled up". Furthermore, the St Giles Trust Impact Report of 2012 spoke of how the charity "will continue to stick its neck out on behalf of some of society’s most disadvantaged forging bold new partnerships with anyone who shares our aim of tackling the reoffending rate". In doing so St Giles Trust gives clear indication of the charitable’s commitment to place itself as a leading charity aiming to reduce the recidivism rate and the bold and assertive way in which it would seek to achieve this aim. This is particularly significant against a backdrop of firstly, the aftermath of the London’s riots in the summer of 2011 which created a climate of intolerance or indifference to the most excluded and marginalised in society and secondly, the fact that by ‘sticking its neck out’ the charity may well be working against the vested interests of other actors in the criminal justice system who didn’t share its view that ex-service users or ‘those who have been there’ are the key resource to achieving any reduction in the rates of recidivism. In 2010 St Giles Trust made Harj Bansil, one of their former peer mentors, a trustee of the organisation illustrating the Trust’s confidence and faith in their delivery by ‘someone who has been there’.

St Giles Trust Programmes at the time of Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) reform agenda

At the time of the research St Giles Trust recorded that they had an average of 146 peer adviser staff and volunteers across the charity per month. The level of growth in activities was impressive with turnover rising from £4.7 million to £7.8 million over the previous three years. Such growth was seen by the charity to impact positively on its reputation. In the Report of the Board of Trustees in 2014 it stated "over the last three years we have continued to build a positive and high profile track record for delivering high quality and successful services in the criminal justice sector... We are one of only a handful of voluntary and community sector (VCS) agencies who have a positive reputation and expertise to deliver resettlement services within a custodial setting" (St Giles Trust 2014:6).

At the time of the research between 2012-2013 the number of St Giles Trust projects and interventions was extensive. However a significant number of projects were beginning and ending resulting in a state of flux for many staff members and volunteer peer mentors. This was
testament to the fact that even with respect to charitable organisations with the public profile of St Giles Trust, long term funding was difficult to secure. For example, each St Giles Trust Annual report makes reference to the number of services or interventions coming to an end as a result of funding cuts and the tireless way in which the St Giles Trust responded with new specifications for future projects and new avenues of funding. For example, in 2012 St Giles Trust celebrated its 50th anniversary with patronage from the Duke of Cambridge in the aftermath of the London riots in the summer of 2011 (St Giles Trust 2012). This huge accolade contrasted with the number of key services which offered bold new approaches to tackling disadvantage and exclusion losing their funding and coming to an end during this time. In July 2012 Rob Owen, the Chief Executive of St Giles Trust wrote that the long established intervention to support families of ex offenders in Kent came to a close after running for 6 years to be replaced “by statutory providers”. The “In here and out” project helping gay prisoners also lost its funding whilst award winning programmes such as the WIRE resettlement project for women prisoners returning to London also suffered funding uncertainties.

Whilst the funding predicaments for St Giles in 2012 were very real leading to cherished services ending, staff role changes and redeployments to new and different projects, St Giles did have one eye on the future direction of its provision. In particular St Giles Trust called the economic and funding scenario the “challenging and yet exciting times” as a result of the impending overhaul of the community justice field as a result of the Coalition government’s radical reshaping of the field in the Transforming Rehabilitation (2012) agenda. As a result St Giles Trust saw its future as having a “once in a lifetime opportunity to reap huge benefits and move confidently into becoming national charity broadening its footprint into many other areas of England and Wales delivering excellence by uniquely credible, uniquely passionate and uniquely successful staff and volunteers”. As a result in 2012, St Giles Trust Chair, Sir Anthony Greener looked forward commenting “we are facing similar opportunities and challenges. We are pleased to be in discussions with private sector providers with a view to influencing their approaches to criminal justice and

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12 St Giles Trust have won multiple awards for their peer led delivery model. The awards include high profile successes including The Charity Awards in 2007, 2010, 2014, The Centre for Social Justice Awards, The Longford Prize and a Butler Trust Award. Since 2008, St Giles Trust have ranked in the Times Top 100 Companies to Work For. In 2012 the organisation came 4th in the best non-profit category which was heralded as a major achievement for the organisation. The St Giles website Twitter and Facebook pages celebrate the achievement of a number of individual volunteer peer mentors who have won numerous prestigious awards for their work in the sector.

13 The high profile for St Giles Trust has been matched by a rise in income. In the last decade the charity has successfully moved beyond its South London heartlands into Pan-London gang and prison resettlement programmes and a burgeoning national profile. As a result it has increased income significantly from £5,413,129 in 2012 to £8,532,012 per annum in 2016.
employing ex-offenders, and providing our unique expertise in partnership with them” (St Giles Trust Impact Report 2012:11).

In 2012-2013 St Giles Trust was centrally placed to respond to the Coalition government’s mainstreaming of the voluntary sector by offering innovative peer led programmes which utilized those individuals with experience of the penal system as a utility for future prisoners. This opportunity however does not come without revised strategic thinking and as such the period during and immediately after the research was one where St Giles Trust was moving indelibly to being a charity more firmly based in the Penal voluntary sector. This was identified as where much of the charity's future growth and strategic ambitions would be in the maximisation of the opportunities that TR could bring and indeed the challenges and threats inherent in working in partnerships with others to continue to provide well established Through the Gates services in a newly constructed quasi-market of rehabilitation. St Giles Trust were well aware of the opportunities and the threats which would arise from competing in the market in rehabilitation. The Charity Commission lists St Giles Trust aims and activities as work to tackle homelessness and the alleviation of poverty at the fore. It states, its activities are “The provision of care and support for homeless people and those with multiple needs”. Within this St Giles has been focusing on the needs of current and ex-offenders with housing and employment problems”. In addition the groups listed as being helped by St Giles Trust include children and young people and the elderly and people with disabilities.

St Giles Trust and developing a penal mission

By the time of the publication of the Annual Report of 2012, St Giles Trust’s work to address criminal behaviour within the community justice sector was becoming increasingly prominent. This represented a subtle reshaping of its charitable mission in important ways. The charity spoke of its work as ‘breaking the cycle of offending’ chiming with the Coalition government's (2010) Breaking the Cycle penal reform agenda.

“To break the cycle of offending by putting offenders at the centre of the solution. This means we will base our work on our first-hand experience of what offenders tell us about the things that prevent people getting into or getting stuck in a cycle of offending and, in many cases, involving ex clients directly in the design and delivery of our services.”(St Giles Trust 2012)

By 2016, St Giles Trust had arguably moved even further into the penal realm as a voluntary sector organisation risking claims that the charity had allowed its mission to creep into the realm
of punishment and sold out it’s traditional raison d’etre. St Giles Trust Mission and Values (St Giles Trust 2016) state that their aim had developed noting “We are a charity helping ex-offenders and disadvantaged people to change their lives”. There is no longer any reference to the alleviation of poverty or services to the elderly and disabled. Rather, St Giles Trust refer to ‘changing offenders’ as being their core purpose in the criminal justice system.

“Our purpose. We believe strongly offenders have the power and will to change provided they are given the right support and that offenders themselves can be at the centre of that support. We want to see a society where an offender’s capacity to change is recognised and they and others facing complex barriers are given the opportunity and encouragement to turn their lives around. This kind of society will lead to safer communities and help to prevent the next generation from becoming involved in the criminal justice system.” (St Giles Trust 2016)

At the time of the research St Giles Trust’s peer mentor model was evident across many different interventions and projects. At the time of the research St Giles Trust in 2012 was experiencing a sense of liminality as a charity which had a honourable tradition working to address homelessness, worklessness and poverty in South London whilst simultaneously becoming centrally placed as a charity in the penal field. At the time of the research St Giles Trust was operating a number of localised projects including an extensive housing information and guidance services in South London Boroughs, a pan London anti gang project called SOS gangs, a number of peer mentor and several “Meet at the Gates” projects in London prisons centred around their peer mentor strategy and delivery mode. Notably, St Giles Trust also had developed a peer led women focused resettlement service called WIRE to assist women leaving Holloway prison and the female prison estate in the South East. Furthermore, the charity had begun to expand its footprint out of London and had a peer mentor presence in Ipswich (See Appendix 2 for a full description of the St Giles Trust programmes).

The charity’s move to deliver projects in a more formalised penal system had progressed by winning contracts to work in partnership with probation and police services on two Prolific and Priority offenders schemes called Integrated Offender Management Projects. Finally, since 2010 St Giles Trust were also the main delivery organisation for the Peterborough One Service which was the world’s first social impact bond project for reducing reoffending. The One Service was a high profile project launched by the then Justice Minister Kenneth Clarke as a payment by results pilot. The project was led and coordinated by a financial intermediary, Social Finance who were responsible for raising private capital of £5 million to undertake interventions with offenders leaving Peterborough Prison who had been sentenced to less than 12 months and would have normally have been released without support. Significantly, Social Finance raised private capital to tackle and address a social problem and specifically tackle the 60% recidivism rate of those
who served short term sentences. The project aims were to mentor 3,000 male prisoners leaving Peterborough prison who had served sentences of less than a year predating the similar government initiatives in the Breaking the Cycle and Transforming Rehabilitation strategies.

St Giles Trust enabled me to have full access to management, salaried staff members, volunteers and service users from my period of research from September 2011 through to the early part of 2013. The research design included semi structured interviews with St Giles Trust managers, paid employees, volunteer peer mentors, back stage staff such as members of administration, information technology and the marketing and fundraising teams. Overall 33 semi-structured interviews and two service user focus groups were completed and voice recorded and transcribed for analysis. I also spoke with one peer mentor volunteer in Ipswich who did not give consent to be recorded and I undertook two telephone calls with peer mentors in Ipswich who had heard about the research and wanted to take part but were not available on the two days of fieldwork in Ipswich. The interviews were conducted after information sheets and consent forms about the research study to members of staff and volunteers including peer mentors were circulated. In terms of sampling I adopted a purposive sampling methodology in terms of handpicking key St Giles Trust managers, and peer mentors from a range of peer mentoring interventions. However, the idea of a snowball sampling strategy best describes the interest the research received from other members of St Giles Trust staff and volunteers who all heard about the research from others who had been interviewed and wanted to become part of the project (Flick 2006:130). This was important as the volunteering group at St Giles was very fluid with new mentors being recruited on a weekly basis expanding the number of volunteers. The peer mentors interviewed included both established peer mentors and members of staff and very new mentors to the field. On some occasions during the early part of the research in St Giles HQ in London, I undertook four interviews in a single day due to the interest in the research. In addition this study incorporates a range of qualitative methodologies for the case study research with St Giles Trust.

- Non participant observational data spent at St Giles Trust from November 2011 for a period of 18 months including St Giles Trust staff conferences, informal office based observations including various team meetings and community based observations of work.

- Discourse analysis of key strategy and policy documents from Ministry of Justice, National Offender Management Service, CLINKS, third Sector umbrella organisation, and St Giles Trust organisation strategic reviews and impact reports.
• Two focus groups with service users and mentees of St Giles Trust
• Semi-structured interviews with St Giles Trust management
• Semi-structured interviews with frontline staff and peer mentors in the case study sites
  – St Giles Trust headquarter projects in Camberwell,
  – St Giles Trust SOS gang projects
  – St Giles Trust work in the Peterborough One Service.
  – St Giles Trust work in Ipswich and Norwich

Please see Appendix 2 for a full description of the projects included in the research

Research through relationships: Reflecting upon the research process at St Giles Trust.

Gaining access to St Giles Trust to undertake empirical research was a lengthy yet necessary process of building trust between the researcher, the institution and its volunteer peer mentors and staff. However, the process of gaining access and permission to undertake research with St Giles Trust did not involve extensive bureaucratic form filling exercises but rather the development of a ‘research relationship’ with the organisation (Lumsden and Winter 2013 p22). St Giles Trust spoke of a negative experience of research with academic institutions who engaged in research by visiting the charity on a single day, administered a questionnaire and left with their results. It was made clear to me in the first research meeting with a member of the Senior Management Team on 8th September 2011 that St Giles Trust were only interested in research which was participatory and which provided the organisation with some utility. This research was only given organisational consent when St Giles Trust could see some benefits for the organisation with respect to creating and establishing an on-going relationship with the Institute of Criminal Justice Studies at the University of Portsmouth. Whilst the research relationship did not amount to action research (Robson 2002:215), a meaningful research relationship was developed. I was keen to offer the St Giles Trust access to any knowledge, research or expertise which they would find interesting or useful. In order to do this time was spent with managers who wanted to speak to me about the nature and significance of the desistance research paradigm which was becoming increasingly important in the rehabilitation of offenders at the time. In addition, I discussed how my research into peer mentors and the penal voluntary sector would also be incorporated into my criminology teaching with a significant
number of future criminal justice practitioners being exposed to the work of St Giles Trust in the field of offender rehabilitation and gang prevention.

Whilst I was keen to develop a research relationship to avoid the less than positive accounts of St Giles Trust’s previous experiences of working with academic institutions, I would not wish to present an idealised or airbrushed account of the relationships between the research setting and researcher. During the phase of the research where I was attempting to gain access to St Giles Trust I was mindful of various intuitional pressures which impacted upon the empirical research. As Crewe (2009) notes any researcher undertaking empirical work within institutions in the penal sphere faces a number of risks inherent in the institution. Crewe (2009 p260) highlights how some researchers in new research fields can find themselves finding solace in only researching powerful ‘elites’ views and experiences within the organisation as representative as everyone’s views and experiences when he states

“The external researcher, disoriented in face of the unknown world of the prison, risks instinctively seeking reassurance by relying on those who run the institution, their considerations and representations of that reality (Crewe 2009 p260).

As a result I was keen to ensure that those on the front line of St Giles Trust’s delivery were an essential part of the research including volunteers, peer mentors and service users. It was with these pressures in mind that I attempted to gain access to undertake empirical research on St Giles Trust by openly communicating my research questions to the charity and stating that the research would involve a methodology which encapsulated interviews and conversations with peer mentors, observations of practice and the everyday life in St Giles Trust headquarters without interrupting the work of the charity and its staff.

When interviewing peer mentors who would often ask me about my current role and my life as an academic outside of the research. At the core of this concern around access was undoubtedly the fact that St Giles Trust were working in an increasingly politically sensitive environment and were becoming ever more so high profile and at the forefront of helping to design and engage with the emergent Transforming Rehabilitation agenda. Similarly, I had a significant challenge to overcome in order to become accepted or tolerated by the peer mentors who were under no compulsion at all to have a modicum of interest or involvement in the research.

During the fieldwork at St Giles Trust I became an accepted face on the days I visited on one or two days a week in London and over three days in Peterborough when researching the Peterborough One Service. Whilst I was an ‘outsider’ and always remained so, people did state that they had heard about the ‘researcher from Portsmouth’ or had wondered when I was going to ask to speak to them. I also discovered that I had indeed taught one of the members of staff and
former peer mentor’s children whilst at University. As the students had found this a positive and successful experience, this assisted with me becoming accepted and trusted by her father. I found that I gained some level of acceptance by the way I was able to participate in both formalised and informal research opportunities. I had an office provided for me in order to undertake semi-structured interviews and I was able to observe and become part of different team meetings. In addition I was able to observe practice with service users or to sit and watch what was going on in reception. On sunny days the St Giles Trust roof terrace was a superb place to have informal conversations with peer mentors and staff. I also attended various “stop–start–continue” review meetings for different St Giles Projects such as Through the Gates projects and SOS Gangs Project and I made field notes during and after the meetings. More formally still, I took a full part in the group activities at the St Giles Trust annual meeting which also enabled me to gain acceptance and I attended the joint St Giles Trust and Koestler award celebrations with peer mentors where I also spoke on desistance.

During the research process a degree of acceptance was afforded to me as I never asked for any special considerations with respect to my research. As I always kept my voice recorder with me for data security purposes I never asked for my office to be locked or for my work bag to be placed in a secure environment. I felt this was welcomed amongst the ex-offenders peer mentor group who were animated in insisting that St Giles Trust HQ was a secure environment and that I would not be the victim of theft. Indeed the only person who ever discussed security in a negative sense at St Giles Trust was a visiting professional social worker who noticed that my leather bag was in an office and the door was unlocked and reminded me to keep my belongings safe in St Giles Trust (St Giles Trust Camberwell field notes).

Furthermore, I made it very clear with St Giles Trust and every research participant that I was not going to ask anyone about the nature of their criminal behaviour but I did acknowledge that I was aware that most peer mentors had been recruited to the role whilst serving a custodial sentence. I made everyone aware that part of my research interests surrounded how volunteer peer mentors had begun to move away from crime and hence discussing the nature of offending behaviour in a voyeuristic way was not part of the research study. However, this did not mean that the research participants could not speak voluntarily about their previous criminality and a significant number of participants gave me obvious clues as to their previous offending behaviour whether it be drug supply, robbery or extreme violence. This enabled the research participant to feel involved in setting the agenda for discussion in the semi structured interviews and allowed them considerable autonomy as to how they wished to respond to my open ended questions such as “tell me how you came to be a peer mentor at St Giles Trust”. Rubin and Rubin
(2005) called this co-construction of research as a 'conversational partnership' around a broad theme or topic area.

Despite the development of a research relationship with St Giles Trust that involved observations and interviews and focus groups with staff, volunteer peer mentors and service users, I never considered myself as an insider. I remained outside the organisation as an academic member of staff and researcher in a field which I had had significant personal commitment and investment in. At the time of the research field work I was employed as a Senior Lecturer in Penology at the University of Portsmouth and so was well placed to both research and indeed teach curriculum related to the marketization and privatisation of the penal sector in England and Wales. However, after undertaking the field work and during the time I was writing and analysing the data for my thesis, my academic role changed and I became Director of Community Justice at the University of Portsmouth and responsible for leading a team delivering the educational component to Probation Officer training. As a result, I was in the difficult position of being both involved in adding value to the statutory aspects to probation field whilst being intellectually interested in the marketized field of probation. As a result my academic life during the Transforming Rehabilitation tender was to teach probation officers who were experiencing the uncertainty and pain of aspects of their work being contracted out to private and voluntary sector providers. During this time my knowledge of the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda and how the community justice sector was transforming as I also met and advised a number of potential private sector and charitable providers who were planning their bids to successfully run Community Rehabilitation Companies. This led to many public and private ethical dilemmas and reflections on my part in terms of navigating my way through these potential conflicts and pitfalls to the research which could lead to bias and involve ‘research mission drift’ to focus upon normative research questions such as should the penal voluntary sector be involved in Transforming Rehabilitation? As such some colleagues continued to ask me based upon my research would the reform agenda work? Similarly other colleagues who were ex practitioners asked other normative questions such as based upon my research should peer mentors be involved or will it all end in disaster? In short during this turbulent time there was a real pressure to declare sides and assume a partisan role. For some colleagues my PhD was obviously implicated in this and couldn't be neatly separated from my broader academic work. Indeed, for some colleagues who were ex probation staff, the fact that I was researching peer mentors at a high profile penal voluntary sector organisation was indicative of me welcoming the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda and effectively signalled me 'nailing my colours to the mast'.

My response to such normative questions was to always state that these were not questions which formed the basis of my research or would be discussed in my thesis. In order to have
legitimacy in both my academic work and my research study and be able to work effectively with all the different actors in the community justice field, I adopted a position that I would attempt to add quality where I could in terms of education and the training of practitioners in the new and emergent field of rehabilitation whomever the provider was and irrespective of sector. This stance enabled me to remain relatively independent with respect to the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda. I was able to continue to provide the educational component of probation officer training for the Ministry of Justice whilst have numerous meetings with potential new providers on the importance of and design of education and training arrangements for their organisations. With respect to my doctorial research this stance enabled me to avoid questions about the effectiveness, morality or ethics of marketization of the Probation Trusts which were emerging as dominant themes in both political and academic circles. My approach to add quality irrespective of the provider enabled my research to both remain independent or 'decontaminated' by the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda. Consequently this enabled a sense of freedom and neutrality in a highly politicised field when analysing my data which I felt was far removed from the levels of anxiety heard from and academic colleagues and professional practitioners.

Semi-structured interviews
The research setting included some of society’s most vulnerable individuals in that most of the volunteer peer mentors and paid employees of St Giles Trust had recently been released from prison. In a great number of cases some peer mentors actually remained on Prison licence and were still under the statutory supervision of the Probation Trust having served significant prison sentences.

The 33 semi-structured interviews were undertaken between March 2012 through to September 2012 on a weekly basis. Appendix 3 includes details of the dates of interviews and the specific projects and role of each respondent. The semi-structured interviews involved a number of ‘back stage’ staff. For example, four members of St Giles Trust management including a member of the Senior Management team and the Head of the Peterborough One Service were interviewed as were two members of St Giles Trust communications and fundraising. With respect to ‘front stage staff’ who were directly involved in service delivery the research included all five members of the Peterborough One service paid caseworkers along with an ex-offender peer mentor. With respect to other key penal projects two paid ex-prisoners were interviewed as part of local Integrated Offender Management projects.

Nineteen voluntary and paid peer mentors were interviewed from across the community based peer led programmes such as the SOS gangs project, the WIRE project and these advising with the Brief Intervention Housing intervention and Meet at the Gate projects. All peer mentors had
served custodial sentences whilst gaining their Vocational Qualification in Advice and Guidance before working or volunteering at St Giles Trust upon release. On two instances a research interview was undertaken on the telephone in another part of England and Wales. This occurred when the researcher visited the particular area but was not able to interview the participant and so asked for a telephone interview. On this occasion the interview subject was a peer mentor who had previously been deemed as a risk of committing serious harm and was subject to level 3 of the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). As a result the research was conducted with individuals who could be described or assessed as socially excluded and vulnerable and with individuals previously assessed as an immanent risk of committing serious harm. The 33 semi-structured interviews with St Giles Trust staff and volunteers focused on their journey to St Giles Trust, where relevant the discovery of the role of the peer mentor whilst in the prison environment or in the community, the nature and extent of their role, their understanding and conceptualisation of what they did with those newly released from prison and how the process had impacted on themselves as individuals.

There is a wealth of academic literature on researching those deemed hard to reach or with little power (Stewart 2015). However, the notion of hard to reach or socially excluded sometimes lends itself to act a description for the individuals concerned rather than reflect the paucity of attempts to engage individuals in research or policy formation. For the researcher his previous research into restorative justice with looked after children (Hayden and Gough (2010) had a significant influence as to the ethical research agenda I attempted to engender and the relationships between researcher and subject. Both research projects placed the safety and wellbeing of the participants to the core of the research process. In addition I was able to use my previous skills as a qualified social worker to engage with peer mentors, communicate respect and genuine interest in the individuals. At times my research involved sitting in reception capturing the informalities of the role, listening to and joining in conversations or gaining insights and asking questions whilst actively participating in team building activities in the St Giles annual conference. The use of more naturalistic research methods such as the semi structured interview or semi structured conversation was met favourably with a number of peer mentors who stated they were not prepared to fill in questionnaires but would sit and talk to me. My desire to create a conversational style rather than a research interview enabled me to encourage respondents to speak in a naturalistic way with the interviewer.

The research questions designed for the semi-structured interviews varied slightly depending upon whether the research participant was a peer mentor or employed to deliver St Giles Trust interventions. Semi-structured interviews with senior management, the fundraising and finance teams were more specific about their respective areas of expertise. For example, the interviews
with fundraising team were designed around how St Giles Trust managed its communications and fundraising strategies, the use of social media, private finance and relationships with national and local government.

The general interview questions to those at the forefront of delivery were structured around four key areas which linked to the aims and key research questions.

The first set of questions were designed to introduce the research and capture the diversity of roles and interventions funded at the time of the research. However, the questions below were often used by the respondents to bring in other variables which were not anticipated by the researcher. As a result, peer mentors would often speak about their journey from custody to peer mentoring roles or indeed their journey from criminality to a law abiding sense of self.

- How did you hear about the charity St Giles trust?
- How did you come to volunteer/work at St Giles Trust?
- Can you describe your role and what you do here?
- Why do you work/volunteer at St Giles Trust rather than other organisations/charities

The second set of questions focused upon the construction of the peer mentor delivery model. B

- Can you tell me about St Giles Trust peer mentor model?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the peer mentor model?
- What are the successes or problems with the peer mentor model?
- What does St Giles Trust expect of peer mentors like you?
- Can you tell me about the specific contributions that ex-offender/ex-gang member peer mentor volunteers make?
- How has the funding of St Giles Trust impacted on projects you have been involved with?

The third set of questions were framed around issues associated with multi-agency working with other organisations. This led to a lot of discussion regarding power and agency with other more powerful statutory or private actors and the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda and Peterborough One project.

- You have spoken about the project [name of project] which you volunteer/work with in the housing/employment/criminal justice field involving other organisations, what are the strengths or problems when working with the other organisations you have mentioned?
- How do you work with other organisations?
Can you say how each organisation

The fourth set of interview questions sought to explore the relationship between working/peer mentoring at St Giles Trust and a sense of self. These questions often returned the peer mentor to elaborate on the journey to St Giles Trust mentioned earlier and how their practices related to the person.

- What has working/volunteering at St Giles Trust meant for you?
- How do you feel about working/volunteering at St Giles Trust?
- In what ways has working/volunteering at St Giles Trust impacted upon you as an ex-gang member/offender/prisoner?

The research questions were used as prompts to keep the conversation focused whilst offering the interviewee the opportunity to also raise important new areas for discussion. My technique was to ask questions in a naturalistic way and non-hierarchical way, based around a detailed knowledge of the four subject areas rather than refer to any visible or cognitive standardised set of questions (Docet and Mauthner 2008:329).

The research into St Giles Trust involved a number of interviews with those who had just been released from prison and were undertaking their first volunteering or paid role since serving their prison sentence. Others were in such positions whilst still subject to statutory penal controls. However in my research I was mindful that in terms of governmental discourse and in the experiences and perceptions of the peer mentors themselves, peer mentors had particular knowledge and expertise which moved them away from a position of powerlessness to one of greater power in the interview. The peer mentors in St Giles trust were often aware of the fact that the peer mentor role and associated core characteristics were becoming important innovations for the future of rehabilitative and supervisory relationships with prisoners in the future reforms of the penal system. As a result the approach to the research considered the research participants as simultaneously imbuing powerlessness and expertise in the ethical and methodological considerations.

This played out in methodological considerations by the researcher undertaking research interviewed in a semi-structured way in an attempt to make the interviews both relaxing and allowing the powerless to, for example, express their journeys to becoming a peer mentor in their own time or construct their time incarcerated in their own way. However, the research interviews were designed to be enabling by prior to the interview acknowledging that the peer mentor is an important and valuable role in the future of offender rehabilitative services and that I wanted through my empirical research to capture the skills, attributes and problematics of the role. Overall the aim was to create a research culture which was enabling, relaxing and as far
as could be achieved a positive experience for the interviewees. I was particularly mindful to allow every participant to shape the agenda or include different research topics than those themes existent in the academic literature. I was also mindful of the case studies previous experience with university researchers which was constructed in less than positive terms.

This enabled me to have a response to the challenge set by a peer mentor who said

“You come here (to St Giles Trust HQ) with your preppy college look and want to ask us questions about our lives. Why do you want to do that and what do you want to find out?” Or reassert and have clarity about my role as a researcher when asked to look at the personal case of an ex-prisoner who said he had been the victim of a miscarriage of justice after the researcher has spoken on desistance at the joint Koestler awards and St Giles Trust 50 year celebrations.

The notion of the researcher as the research instrument requires some reflexive comments about the doing of the research (Stevens 2013 p31). Whilst it is important to allow the research subject to have a voice in the research process, it is important to remember and accept that the researcher has gatekept the findings and shaped, edited, filtered, analysed and foregrounded some of the themes from the research interviews and discussions with members of the penal voluntary sector organisation and the peer mentors themselves. This reflected what Goodey (2000 p482) states with research being a “balanced assessment of subject-led revelation and researcher-based interpretation”

**Documentary analysis**

In addition to semi structured interviews and non-participant observation of everyday work and practice at St Giles Trust, the research study also made extensive use of government, Third sector and St Giles Trust documents. In detailing the various ways in which the government of others and the government of oneself are created, documents and textual discourses are valuable resources.

Documents and readable matter are a well-established methodology in the social sciences. Whilst documents have traditionally been seen as written "containers of information or content" (Prior 2008:479). However more recently, the notion of using documents in an active sense, as objects and actors in a web of activity enables broader questions to be asked such as what do documents do rather than merely what do they say. Documents such as government strategies can therefore shape and be used and interpreted by actors in particular ways. Indeed the document only has meaning when analysed through its particular reader, through whether the audience orders particular aspects of the document or emphasizes particular aspects of it. As Flick (2006:246) notes documentary analysis can be used as a companion to other qualitative research methodologies such as interviews or ethnographic and observational methods. Indeed it is
important that any ethnographic or observational methods realise that the social world is also constructed in written texts. However, it is important that in using documents in conjunction with other research methodologies the researcher does not use documents as factual reality as opposed to the subjective views in interviews and observational methods. Written organisational policies or internet postings are not the actual practices of individuals. “Documents represent a specific version of realities constructed for specific purposes” (Flick 2008:249). Similarly, Atkinson and Coffey (2011: 77) note how "documents are not neutral, transparent reflections of organisational or occupational life. They actively construct the very organisations they purport to describe". Documents can also ‘do things’ in that they create and shape particular kinds of reality. Documents and texts can shape a particular constructions and understandings of the service user or the charity. This may lead to particular types of action in that it could mean that readers cycle, run or donate to the charity or alternatively actively do not.

As such, when purposive sampling the Labour and Coalition strategy documents it is inevitable that I have been also played an active role in the selection and in my analysis of them. I have been conscious in determining what content is in the contents which is of interest to me and indeed the use and function of the document. My focus on the voluntary sector and the relationship to the penal state has meant that certain aspects regarding the foregrounding of the penal voluntary sector and the marginalisation of the statutory sector have been at the forefront of my analysis. There may well be other facets of the government strategy which have not been of interest to the researcher and have remained silent but are important for other research networks and readers. For example, the Coalition government's (2010) Breaking the Cycle documents focus on real work in prison and the establishment of an active 7 hour work day. This is particularly important in the government's reform of the prison estate and the building of new prison architectures and cultures but has less centrality in my research.

As such, documents have words, phrases, sentences which can be counted and analysed but they also represent things and structure our ideas and views in an interactive manner. It is important to note the words of Prior (2008:491) when she states that “given such omnipresence it remains puzzling why social science relies so heavily on “talk” rather than “text” as the key source of research data”. In terms of sampling recent government penal strategies I had been tracing the marketization of probation since 2003 when I took up an academic post. As a result I had previously collated and analysed a range of government documents prior to beginning the research as a result of following and teaching this emerging agenda in my academic role. I therefore traced the development of marketized penal reform and the links between government words, writing and actions as it happened via analysis of the following documents. As I began to
collate and consider documents in the penal field I became aware of broader government reviews of public sector practices.


*MOJ (2011) Breaking the Cycle, Government Response*

*HM Government (2011) Open Public Services.*

*MOJ (2013) Transforming Rehabilitation. A revolution in the ways we manage offenders.*


Another important set of documents analysed in the research was what I termed the “voice of the penal voluntary sector” and “the voice of Giles Trust”. In order to do so, each St Giles Trust Annual Impact Report from 2009 to 2016 were thematically coded and analysed. Included in each Impact report were firstly a range of case studies of the specific interventions provided by St Giles Trust which contained texts on how St Giles Trust themselves discussed their work inside and outside of the penal voluntary sector. Secondly, each Impact Report had a review of the year from both the Chief Executive Officer, Rob Owen and the Chairman, Sir Anthony Greener which detailed the nature of the charity’s journey in the previous year. In addition the research also made use of documents which were relevant to specific time periods. For example, each of St Giles Trust Annual Statement of Finances and Report of the Board of Trustees submitted to the Charity Commission 2011-2015 were analysed and consistent and divergent themes and messages noted and analysed. Finally, I reviewed and analysed the ways in which St Giles Trust discussed itself as a charity, its interventions and projects and its fundraising activities on an adhoc basis through its website. This final use of documents which detailed the voice of St Giles Trust was receiving St Giles Trust’s Gateway newsletter via email.

Finally, using documents as a research methodology can lead to the identification and use of associated documents which relate to one another. As a result I analysed the National Vocational Award documentation for Advice and Guidance as the key document shaping the actions of a competent peer mentor in St Giles Trust as a way of understanding how documents can actually
structure human interaction. Overall my approach to the use of documents was that I attempted to uncover government policy analysis, the narrative of the Penal Voluntary sector and the documentary narrative of St Giles Trust themselves.

Ethical issues in research

"The practice of research is a messy and untidy business which rarely conforms to the models set down in methodology text books" (Brannen 1992 p3).

The experience of considering ethical issues in the research amounted to two aspects of the research. The first was relatively straightforward in terms of obtaining ethical approval from the University of Portsmouth. This involved submitting the relative University of Portsmouth paperwork and making sure that information sheets and consent forms were prepared, ensuring that the researcher was doing no harm, not discussing the specifics of criminality in any length and would not be subject to harm in the research fieldwork. This was relative straightforward apart from a lengthy delay when the research email with all the relevant details was unfortunately deleted from the research ethics email account and I resubmitted after realising that something was wrong. An unplanned effect of this delay was that it gave me a valuable piece of time to speak with St Giles Trust, get to know the organisation and for the organisation to develop trust in me and meet the key individuals in the charity prior to the fieldwork commencing.

The second aspect of ethical considerations in the research was more significant and related to issues of power. The issue of power asymmetries is a prescient issue relating to the academic discipline of criminology. Perhaps more so than other areas of sociology researchers can become implicated in the further labelling and stigmatization of those subject to penal control. Researching the excluded and the subjected in the criminal justice system can involve both the wielding of power and simultaneously feeling powerless to change individual’s situations. In my empirical work with volunteer mentors I was aware that this was an intensively political field. Whilst I had a significant amount of freedom in interviewing key individuals in the St Giles Trust organisation I was aware that the charity also had a vast amount of potential research material which I was not given access to. At the time St Giles Trust were engaging in commercially sensitive and problematical discussions with a number of private prime providers as part of the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda. I was aware that I was not going to have access to this data, nor did I ask to have access to this extremely sensitive information.

The field work phase of the research involved day to day ethical considerations which had to be negotiated and dealt with at time they arose. As a relatively privileged white, male academic
member of staff researching some of the most vulnerable and at times ‘risky’ members of the community (Israel and Hay 2006) the research needed to proceed ethically with sensitivity. This the research was keen to ensure that interview respondents participated voluntarily, information was secured on a password protected voice recorder and interview respondents were anonymised by using interview codes rather than the individuals name. Munro and Bragaglia (2012) note that when researching the voluntary sector in the broader sense ethical considerations must be central to the research process in view of the responsibility such organisations have to their service users. They also note that the sector has traditionally been slow to implement ethically sound research. In accordance with the principles of voluntarism and self-determination and agency, I circulated my introduction and information sheet to all peer mentors and members of staff every three months during the period of fieldwork to reflect the fact that the peer mentor group changed regularly and were fluid in terms of new peer mentors being recruited from prison. Furthermore, it was common to interview peer mentors who began their work at St Giles as volunteer peer mentor, obtained paid employment with a particular intervention moved on to new funding streams or new volunteering opportunities as a result of funding stream ending or new streams opening up. The individual subjectivities in these roles were fluid and volatile moving from receiving peer mentoring, volunteering as a trained peer mentor, a paid member of staff and maybe experiencing a return back to the status of volunteer. As such I was mindful that any analysis of identity and sense of self was far removed from a fixed essence. I had a conversation with St Giles management about some of the surprises I had encountered when interviewing respondents which had meant that I needed to be responsive to what the respondent wanted to include in the semi-structured interviews. For example, a St Giles Trust Volunteer discussed his role in the finance team and his long prison sentence and a paid staff member of management discussed their time in prison. St Giles Trust noted the subjective fluidity inherent in their organisation,

_They move here, there are, you know, quite a few members of staff and even, sort of, more...not senior management team yet, but certainly in management here people who were clients at one point, so people go from being prisoners, clients, peer advisors, volunteers, you know, paid staff and even into some management posts as well._ (14_06_12_01 manager)

_But I would say we need more management, which is why [person’s name] is great, because he’s a volunteer, but he’s a, sort of, manager volunteer, it’s a new role we’ve created, you know, a breaking role, volunteer managers._ (14_06_12_01 manager)

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Similarly, to add to the fluidity inherent in the roles and identities of research respondents it was common for peer mentors to be simultaneously volunteering in the role or being paid as a peer mentor depending upon which project they were on and how long they had been undertaking such roles at St Giles Trust. Finally, the need to be reflexive and try to move away from interviewing participants as fixed essences gained further complexity with respect to understanding the use of offender, ex-offender or peer mentor in the research. A number of volunteer peer mentors and indeed paid members of staff were also still subject to statutory supervision via a prison licence with the local Probation Trust.

Participants therefore selected themselves to be interviewed and booked themselves in on a diary sheet. In addition they identified themselves as a volunteer of paid member of staff. However others telephoned me via my University of Portsmouth office number when they had heard about the research I was undertaking expressing a wish to become involved. I was aware that a kind of snowball sampling effect was taking place when new participants would refer to the fact that a friend or colleague had told them about the research and encouraged them to participate after talking of their experience of being interviewed. As such whilst the peer mentors continued to find themselves on the outside of the employment market and to some extent on the margins of communities having recently being released from prison with all that entails in terms of a physical and psychological sense of exclusion, in fact those that chose or did not choose to participate in the research made the decision from an informed position or the fact that it was beneficial for their career to do so or a professional task that might have been the case with paid professionals. I was confident that the peer mentors selected themselves voluntarily to be part of the research. Importantly, I also had no exclusion criteria which enabled me to capture important and unexpected data on peer mentoring work and the impact on imprisonment with a paid member of staff in the finance department. My ‘internal’ code of ethics which attempted to make the research process both a respectful and an interesting experience really attempted to avoid at all costs what Munro and Bragaglia (2012) terms the experience of ‘feeling like a leech’ whereby the academic’s research (and potentially their career) is sometimes related to the unhappiness of the research subject whether it relates to their experiences of prison, their problems with substance misuse and mental health issues or their decisions to undertake efforts to change the life they have. As a result my interviewing technique were participatory, designed to develop an open conversational style in which the interviewee took an active role. I also asked each of the interviewees if they had anything else they would like to say or contribute and whether I was asking the most appropriate and relevant questions in relation to my research questions.
Identifying the challenges of doing research with those who have been lawbreakers, or are marginalised and powerless in society has been a constant theme in critical criminological research. Lumsden and Winter (2014) highlight how it is imperative that the researcher does not become implicitly involved in the systems of oppression and mechanisms of power and further perpetuate labels and objectification. My research into peer mentors attempted to recast those who have experienced the criminal justice system not as ‘offenders’ on statutory licence or subject to penal restrictions but as active volunteers with knowledge (Donohue and Moore 2009 p319). Those experiencing the criminal justice system are often conceptualised as being the passive objects of punishment, thought of as hopeless and risky inmates or prisoners, and subject to hostile and punitive rhetoric as offenders first and foremost. However, in my research the focus is not on the nature and extent of individual’s criminal behaviour but rather other identities as helpers or supervisors or clients of the criminal justice system. As a result the empirical research constructed interview subjects not as ‘ex-offenders’ of ‘ex-prisoner’ nor as general volunteers with lots of time on their hands but as peer mentors and as such with views and experiences to hear, important skills to capture and valuable knowledge to unearth. Whilst the reframing of ex-offenders to peer mentors could be seen to be a positive move which avoids the labelling and othering aspects of being an object of the criminal justice system, I was aware that this involved at creating ‘new regimes of truth’ about the research subjects which is linked to and echoed successive governmental agendas to foreground the peer mentor in penal policy. I was never “comfortable” or complacent in the research process that the ubiquitous power relationships were resolved and my practice continually attempted to stay engaged and aware of them (Kumsa et al 2015:436). I made sure that I communicated the fact that each person I interviewed would be anonymised by differentiating my interview transcripts by using the date and number of interview that particular day. For example an interview transcript would read 23_03_12_02, rather than have any identifiers. I then included an information sheet on the particular interview noting descriptors such as gender and ethnicity and the length of time they had been working at St Giles Trust.

‘Making sense after seeing things’: Thematic Coding and data analysis using qualitative data analysis software

A total of 33 semi structured interviews with staff and volunteer peer mentors were undertaken with a range of St Giles Trust staff and peer mentor volunteers. In addition two focus groups were held with service users who had attended the St Giles Trust Job Club in Camberwell. Each of the formal semi-structured interviews were transcribed using a professional transcription service. After each interview was transcribed, I would revisit the voice recorder audio file to make sense
of any areas of the recording where the transcriber had not understood what was being said. This also enabled me to get close to the actual data. In addition, informal conversations with service users and volunteers individuals in the reception area or on the outside roof terrace were written up as field notes as soon as possible after the conversation had occurred. Finally I used the train journey back to Portsmouth to reflect upon the day’s research at St Giles Trust and the issues and research themes which had been identified. With respect to data analysis, I utilised the NVivo qualitative data analysis package after attendance at a two day training event at the University of Surrey and further training at the University of Portsmouth. The NVivo package is described as “software that supports qualitative and mixed methods research. It’s designed to help you organize, analyse and find insights in unstructured, or qualitative data like: interviews, open-ended survey responses, articles, social media and web content” (Bazeley and Jackson 2013:2).

I was able to conduct thematic analysis of my data using the computer assisted software package which quickly became essential to both code and review themes both inductively and deductively. The NVivo package is therefore able to assist with highlighting themes from the literature on the penal voluntary sector and assisting the researcher to ‘listen to’ and record systematically the themes which emerged from the transcripts themselves. As Boyatzis (1998) states, the researcher requires the ability to recognise an ‘important moment’ in order to encode it and see it ‘as something’ akin to a pattern or occurrence. For example, in my research ‘the impact of St Giles Trust’s organisational values as important for peer mentors’ to move away from crime. Rather than see data coding as merely a labelling exercise, NVivo is an excellent resource to enable the researcher to systematically observe, listen and to organise data, review codes, recode and reinterpret information quickly and orderly. Using NVivo enabled the researcher to incorporate a wider range of information as ‘data’. For example, NVivo facilitates the coding of transcribed interviews, policy documents, data from websites and other ‘documentary realities’ (Atkinson and Coffey 2011 p77). The research utilized Boyatzis’s work (1998) in relation to the approach to thematic data coding. For Boyatzis (1998), a good thematic code is one which captures the richness of any phenomenon and includes the following five elements. Firstly, a good thematic code has a name, secondly, a clear definition of what the theme concerns, thirdly, a description to know when the theme occurs, fourthly, a description of any exclusions or themes which the code does not capture and fifthly, contains positive and negative examples to eliminate confusion when looking for the code. To illustrate, the code (or node in NVivo) named ‘impact of the prison’ related to when ex-offender volunteer or peer mentors themselves made reference to the prison environment as being important in some way. This code was then reviewed and the research gained a greater depth of analysis by recoding my original code to a new code named ‘impact of prison on desistance from crime’ to distinguish it from another code ‘impact of prison on meeting St Giles Trust’. In addition, a further level of analytical depth was achieved by the recoding
of ‘impact of the prison’ into ‘positive accounts of the prison’ and alternatively ‘the pains of imprisonment’ with respect to data which detailed any negative accounts of the prison. My research analysis also used theory driven coding methods which link to the existing literature about the voluntary sector and the penal sphere. To illustrate, the codes named ‘desistance from crime’ or ‘responsibilisation’ were created as they were important theoretical terms emerging from the original literature review which centred upon penal reform and the role and function of the penal voluntary sector and peer mentor volunteers. However, my research questions concerning the influence of peer mentoring to achieving desistance from crime and peer mentor’s subjective understandings of the role necessitated an inductive or data driven coding practice (Boyatzis 1998 p41) as many of the respondents would talk of their journey from criminal behaviour, through their experiences of prison to becoming a peer mentor volunteer when I asked an opening question “how did you come to hear about St Giles Trust”.

The systematic use of coding is the ability to see and to make sense of data consistently in order to reduce and negate the personal idiosyncrasies of the researcher. NVivo is not designed to supplant the researcher’s own ability to interrogate qualitative data but rather the software provides the researcher with a set of tools with which to collate, sort, match and link data and ideas efficiently (Bazeley and Jackson 2015 p2). Additional rigour to the data analysis of research is also afforded by NVivo by its ability to capture each and every code which is created and allow the researcher the ability to find and analyse every instance of an identified theme. NVivo also offers the researcher the ability to get close to the research data by coding and then recoding on a detailed level and the ability to develop oversight of their overall research themes for abstraction and theory building. The software also has a number of tools which enable the researcher to visualise the strength of every word in the data set.

Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis model was utilised to provide a rigorous structured thematic coding method throughout the data analysis phase of the research process. The authors argue for an explicit understanding of how codes and themes are named and analysed from the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the active role of the researcher in the process as they ultimately reject any notion that themes or codes have a life of their own and make themselves known to the research or become revealed in the process. Neither do researcher’s merely ‘give voice’ to the issues raised by those they interview. Rather, it is the explicit actions of the researcher and analyst in the research process who constructs, interprets, and analyses the meaning of the data. Rarely do researchers actually identify how and why certain research themes or categories are discussed and why others are not. As such Bazeley (2013) argues that the process of selection and coding of themes from the data occurs as an active participatory process based on the knowledge of the broader area to be researched. Often emergent themes
are the ones selected as they are often remarkably similar to the themes in the broader literature. It is therefore important to remain open to the importance of listening for themes which run counter to established knowledge or for example have different nuances or meanings which were not understood after the literature review. For example, in the research regarding the theme of peer mentors ‘paying back’, I was able to hear how paid staff and managers often spoke of how peer mentoring enabled offenders to repay to society for the harm they had caused. However, by listening to and analysing what was and wasn’t being said I was able to highlight the absence of and resistance to paying back from the peer mentors themselves. The thematic analysis of data also included the development and utilisation of Thematic Networks (Attride-Stirling 2001). In detailing further the “how” of data analysis, the thesis was constructed using the device of thematic networks, which can be understood as “web-like illustrations that summarise the main themes. enabling methodical systematization of textual data. and aids the organisation of analysis” (Attride-Stirling 2001:386). Thematic networks seek to unearth the salient themes in data at different levels, enabling the structuring and depiction of the eventual construction of superordinate themes from descriptive text. Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7 detail the networked structures for the thematic analyses contained in Chapters 5, 6, 7, whereby the construction of each superordinate or global theme is represented using the various basic and organising themes created by the researcher during the data analysis process. Each thematic network produced for the thesis offers insight into the researcher’s explicit thoughts and actions to extract from the data firstly, the lowest order or basic descriptive codes in the text, secondly, the creation of categories of basic themes which were grouped together and thirdly, global or super-ordinate themes which detail the global themes or principal metaphors for understanding (Attride-Stirling 2001:386). The network map for the research finding chapters offers considerable insight into how basic themes, understood as simple, descriptive codes are read and rearranged, both intellectually and how they are represented, into a middle order organising themes understood as clusters of similar issues or signification. The groups of organising themes, dissecting the data as a whole, were then read and analysed together into a global or superordinate theme. It is important to note that meaning and understanding does not move in a unilateral direction in the network from simple descriptive codes through to global themes. Rather, the identification of a global theme can also create important meaning to the previously descriptive basic codes. To illustrate the analytical process, the basic descriptive code from St Giles Trust peer mentors of ‘having been there’ was a descriptive segment of text at the beginning of the data analysis. However, this commonly used text excerpt with other basis codes such as knowledge, experience of custody and peer mentor skills. As a result of this analytical process, the data analysis finally developed into a global theme regarding positioning the peer mentor as embodying new knowledge and expertise in the penal system. Once this global theme of making
up the peer mentor as rehabilitation expert had been constructed, the basic textual except of 'having been there' no longer had descriptive connotations but rather becomes more meaningful by transforming into an important way the peer mentor's discourse, used to communicate to others the importance of lived experience in developing a genuine knowledge of rehabilitation and resettlement.

Global or superordinate themes present the key arguments or positions about a given issue, making sense and giving analytical significance to clusters of middle order themes or basic descriptive codes. For each of the research finding chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7 of the thesis), the specific process of analysis will be introduced at the beginning of each chapter to provide an understanding of the basic descriptive coding in the data and the process of classification and assemblages of clusters leading to higher level interpretation.

In order to get closer to the data and be confident that nuanced resistances or alternative meanings were being captured, I deliberately did not use any auto coding functions to code automatically through NVivo. Instead, all recorded interviews and focus groups, government documents and the publications of the St Giles Trust were subjected to intensive line by line data coding. The 'node' or code was always heard and understood through being embedded in the document or conversation rather than searched for in isolation for by example a text search for 'repay' or 'give back'.

The data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2009) model for thematic analysis. Thematic analysis here was understood as a foundational method for data analysis in that the identifying, naming and 'thematizing of meanings' is a tool utilised across a wide spectrum of qualitative research methods from discourse analysis to grounded theory. Table 4.1 outlines the 6 phases of the Braun and Clarke (2009) model and the use of thematic networks (Attride-Stirling 2001) and relates as to how the analysis of the empirical research was shaped in this respect.

In phase one all interviews and focus group data were read in order to refresh the broader themes in the subjective understandings of peer mentors and my knowledge of government agendas in the mainstreaming of the penal voluntary sector under Labour and Coalition governments. This enabled me to immerse myself in the data and immediately consider themes from my broader reading of academic literature. I took heed of Braun and Clarke's (2009) warning over the extensive time required to perform this task and did not either skip this stage or use technological short cuts such as the text search tools in NVivo as I wanted to ensure that I was open and willing to think about contradictions and omissions between the literature base and the data.

In Phase 2, I reminded myself about what were some of the key features of the interviews and focus groups and what had been paritucurlry interesting about each interview. As a result I made
notes such as to note this peer mentor discussed being a Level 3 MAPPA offender. Similarly, I attempted to link together my codes at the most basic segments of data and moving them together to create meaningful groups. Model 4.1 illustrates how I coded the ways in which peer mentors talked about how St Giles had helped them or what they had gained from working or volunteering at the charity. The nodes such as family, trust, respect, and delabelling were analysed and grouped together in an NVivo collection to create the theme of a ‘contextual desistance from crime’ which incorporated how a sense of self was created in particular ways in St Giles Trust. I eventually created a superordinate theme for discussion around the significance of place to leaving crime behind which was named ‘organisational desistance’.

Model 4.1

The analytical move to consider how codes create meaning together to shape broader themes is part of Braun and Clarke’s (2009) third stage of analysis. Searching for similar themes enabled the exciting work to begin to create meaning by combining nodes such as ‘having been there’ for peer mentors with ‘peer mentor skills’ to create a theme around new knowledge.

Phase 4 of Braun and Clarke’s model is an important phase whereby the main themes for discussion are constructed by the researcher and several themes are merged together to create a larger theme. Subsequently, other codes became smaller and were relegated to a sub theme. Here I read selections of the coded transcripts to ensure the data represented the meta theme I had created. In Phase 5 of Braun and Clarke’s model I labelled the essence of each theme to be discussed in my research findings although this phase was undertaken simultaneously with Phase 5 where I began to create meta themes and indeed refine them and re-name them.
Phase 6 involves the final write up phase of the work. It was understood as a task “to tell the complicated story of your data in a way which convinces the reader of the merit and validity of your data” (Braun and Clarke 2006:93). Here I ensured that any vivid data used must be written with and embedded within an analytical narrative rather than stand alone in an attempt to be self-explaintory. In summary the entire process of analysis and a comparison with Braun and Clarke’s (2006) model is below.

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description of Braun and Clarke (2006) process</th>
<th>New Actors in Corrections process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Familialization with the data</td>
<td>Transcribing data, reading and re-reading noting down initial codes</td>
<td>Transcription was professionally undertaken. Read every interview transcript whilst listening to the audio to fill in omissions or mistakes in the transcription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Generating Initial Codes</td>
<td>Coding interesting features across all data in systematic fashion</td>
<td>Interviews, focus groups, Third sector reports, Government strategy all coded line by line using Nvivo11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Searching for Themes</td>
<td>Collating codes and constructing themes</td>
<td>Using illustrations to highlight links between codes to enable themes to be discussed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 Reviewing Themes  
Check themes and coded extracts and entire data set  
Created two overarching maps about the voluntary sector and peer mentor as new actors

5 Defining and Naming Themes  
Ongoing analysis of themes to refine specifics and communicates overall story  
Contrasted and compared two maps to data set and research questions.

6 Producing the report or product  
Final opportunity for analysis. Selecting vivid, compelling extracts relating back to the research questions and literature review  
Viewing and using the most used codes in Nvivo data set. Comparing with academic literature to contrast omissions in data set.
Chapter 5: Crime Controlled? Responsibilisation and agency in the penal voluntary sector

Introduction
The next three chapters focus upon three superordinate themes from the empirical research into St Giles Trust. The three chapters attempt to communicate the research findings and provide an analytical and nuanced understanding of an important charity involved in the penal voluntary sector. In doing so, the work aims to move our understanding of the relationship between charity and punishment on from a descriptive entity or merely an imagination of what charities working in the penal voluntary sector actually do. Firstly, the important issue of the penal voluntary sector's relationships with government will be analysed in respect to the impact upon independence and distinctiveness will be addressed particularly noting research findings where St Giles Trust is seen to bridge the analytical and practice gap between coercive penal practice and creating significant positive outcomes for service users (Tomczak 2017:164). Secondly, the governmental and subjective constructions of ex-offender volunteer peer mentoring will be addressed and related to recent attempts to govern rehabilitation at a distance through the peer mentor (Simon 2007). In doing so, the research highlights areas where the volunteer peer mentors subjective understandings of their work correlate with and are divergent from government notions of peer mentoring practices. Finally, the most important and dominant construction of the ex-offender peer mentor is the extent to which they are imbued with knowledge and expertise (Rose 1993) and as such the knowledges of the ‘professionalised-ex’ forms the subject of the third research chapter.

A key research question and superordinate theme for exploration and analysis in this research was to analyse the ways by which Neoliberal penal reforms impact upon a penal voluntary sector organisation such as St Giles Trust. This chapter therefore presents research finding relating to two key research questions.

- How can we understand the nature and impact of government’s neoliberal penal reforms particularly in relation to the penal voluntary sector and the governance of the peer mentor?
- What are the effects of Neoliberal penal reforms on St Giles Trust’s ability to maintain agency and control over its mission and values?
When such organisations enter into contractual relations with government to deliver rehabilitative activities or supervision, a key question has been to assess any impact of institutionalisation or isomorphism which impacts upon the charity's agency and distinctiveness. A key consideration therefore in the research is to what extent could St Giles Trust be true to its charitable mission and continue to operate in ways which are integral to its values as it became more entrenched in the rehabilitation marketplace. Such considerations take us to the core of the thesis with respect to what extent the penal voluntary sector can be conceptualised as “crime controlled”, or subject to “(in) voluntary control” (Tomczak 2017:127).

This chapter attempts to develop Tomczak’s (2017:170) and Corcoran’s (2011) work by analysing issues of power, agency and distinctiveness in the penal voluntary sector. It attempts to achieve this by considering how recent academic studies have emphasised the diversity and heterogeneity within the penal voluntary sector itself and by analysing the diversity and differentiation inherent within a single penal voluntary organisation namely St Giles Trust. It aims to provide a nuanced account of the ways in which a single charity can bridge the divide between the penal and civil spheres and deliver interventions from within the penal marketplace and construct and deliver a range of services for the marginalised and excluded. It aims to develop further complexity to an understanding of the penal voluntary sector by challenging the notion that charities are monolithic and uniform, with their level of agency and distinctiveness determined by the relative dependency they have on government funding. Any analysis of the heterogeneity within the penal voluntary sector and amongst different charitable organisations has to include how these relationships differentially impact upon the individual penal voluntary organisation itself. The research here outlines how the impact of government marketization is not experienced or felt uniformly across an individual penal voluntary sector charity such as St Giles Trust. Contractual and funding arrangements are an important consideration for charities in the penal voluntary sector but they interplay with significant agency in the charity’s mission and strategy, the legitimacy of the charity in the eyes of its trustees and other potential fundraisers and importantly amongst service users themselves. Through empirical, grounded research, the thesis attempts, albeit on a small scale, to address Tomczak’s (2017:176) identification of a theoretical gap in the separateness of the control and emancipatory literature on the penal voluntary sector.

Relatedly, this thesis posits that as an ‘government emblem’ of the penal voluntary sector, St Giles Trust is internally heterogeneous and differentiated and is able to respond both to the government’s call for new actors in the supervision of prison licences for those under 12 months
under the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda and simultaneously provide innovative, humanistic and uniquely legitimate peer mentor and mentee programmes to assist those leaving crime behind. Furthermore, the thesis argues that if St Giles Trust uncritically accepted a role to only increase spatial and temporal penal power, it would soon cease to exist as a peer mentor led charity, losing both its identity and the very innovative characteristics which affords it so much political and commercial legitimacy. If St Giles Trust was to only value and act upon its punitive credentials, volunteer peer mentors would use their freedom to resist such penal thinking in their practice or ultimately abandon the charity.

**Constructing the Thematic Network**

The thematic coding for power and agency in the penal voluntary sector was undertaken deductively as this theme as implied by the chapter title and original title of the thesis. Both the complex and detailed thematic networks in Appendix 4 and 5 construct the analysis of how contracting with the state impacted upon maintaining independence and distinctiveness in uneven and contradictory ways. St Giles Trust demonstrated a sense of liminality with respect to experiencing creeping control and co-option by the state in its Integrated Offender Management and payment by results work. However at the same time as this, the charity continued to enjoy significant agency and distinctiveness in developing other peer mentors projects, gang related activities and the housing and employment interventions. This debate over isomorphism was in response to the weight of academic literature which has placed issues of independence and distinctiveness against the threats of state co-option at the centre of analysis of the penal voluntary sector (Corcoran 2011, Benson and Hedge 2009). In addition academic literature around the notions of governing at a distance and responsibilisation agendas (Garland 2001) also add to the significance of this analytical theme. The thematic network depicted in Appendix 4 is entitled “crime controlled” as it details the increasing penalisation, correctionalism and marketization of St Giles Trust work. However, such findings of co-option in the research findings should be considered against significant evidence of enduring independence and distinctiveness in St Giles Trust work. Appendix 5 entitled “Controlling the charitable mission” offers insights into how research findings which highlighted how the charity continued to practice creatively and innovatively to meet service needs and wishes, advocate on behalf of ex-offenders in the delivery of rehabilitation work. Furthermore, the Thematic network entitled “controlling the charitable mission” offers insights into the ways in which service users and peer mentors considered the charity to offer a sense of familial belonging and connectedness or alternatively as offering an organisational environment from which to ‘go straight’ and leave crime behind.
In light of this academic interest codes were derived from the recurrent issues regarding St Giles Trusts contractual and funding relationships with central and local government. In particular, to begin coding was undertaken of the descriptive ways respondents spoke of their practice and the values which underpinned them. In order to illustrate, enforcement of licences and community orders was coded on 20 such occasions and other occasions where respondents moved away from meeting client need were coded as conditionality in service delivery which was coded on 43 occasions. Similarly, the respondents spoke of how the logic of risk increasingly became an organising framework for practice rather than traditional notions of meeting service needs and desires. In addition to the new values identified as underpinning contractual work, the diverse multi-agency relationships between St Giles Trust and other criminal justice organisations were coded highlighting 29 codes where St Giles Trust referred to themselves as replacing the statutory organisation. These basic codes were then rearranged and considered together and two themes were apparent. Firstly, the new values underpinning contractual arrangements with government were constructed to link to established ‘correctional values and practice’ in the penal system. Secondly, the pressures on St Giles Trust to play an active part to increase supervisory resources and share information were considered together and became a theme related to tensions and pressures inherent in becoming involved in multi-agency working in a joined up penal.

A similar structured analytical process was undertaken after creating basic codes such as ‘meeting targets’ or ‘working through risk’ were identified in relation to commercial pressures to practice in particular ways. In addition respondents made recurring referencing to using resources in order to maximise financial return in a payment by result payment mechanism especially in relation to viewing their work through the logic of risk. These basic codes describing textual examples of risk or meeting targets were then related to how in payment by results and social Impact Bond work the reduction of recidivism and using risk to shape caseload management were reconstructed to encompass the ways in which private capital and commercial interests had shaped practice. Finally, both the impact of statutory funding and the impact of private capital funding were combined in a next step to identify and construct the global or super-ordinate theme of the penal voluntary sector becoming “crime controlled,” losing a sense of its charitable origins, moving away from its peer mentor delivery model and taking on board new correctional and punitive values and mission.

An openness to hear findings contrary to those identified in the established literature on the penal voluntary sector is an important feature of the thesis. The thematic network outlined above represents only a partial and one dimensional understanding of a complex member of an increasingly complex sector. Incorporating the thematic network in Appendix 5 entitled
'Controlling and reconstructing the charitable mission' serves to highlight the multiplicity of ways St Giles Trust, despite contracting with government, attempted to keep faith with its charitable origins and core characteristics which places opportunities for volunteer ex-offenders to the fore. The data analysis process documented in Appendix 5 demonstrates a complex network of basic through to superordinate themes which run counter to any conceptualisation of the charity as simply becoming institutionalised, serving only penal ends or being co-opted by a retreating state.

The basic coding began with the identification of recurring textual excepts such as sentences which referred to funding arrangements outside of government, private capital and payment by results mechanism. Similarly, the stage one coding identified a range of counter resistances to the correctional and commercial values which were coded and highlighted the increasingly crime reduction ethos of St Giles Trust activities in Appendix 4. The basic codings were related and clustered to construct 6 thematic groupings. The first cluster related to the resistances to commissioning with the state involving fundraising and encouraging donor contributions to enable greater agency in decision making. A second cluster was named ‘multiple faces’ of St Giles Trust where funding was linked to marketing and fundraising activities to emphasise St Giles Trust’s interventions in the housing, employment and civil sphere. A Third middle order cluster related to how St Giles Trust contracted with government but sought to preserve its core peer mentor practice and a fourth thematic network related to the extent to which St Giles Trust continued to advocate for marginalised and excluded ex-prisoners in the professionalised penal sphere.

A final 5th middle order thematic issue relating to the extent to which St Giles Trust can more beyond exclusionary control and offer service users creative and innovate activities. The basic coding was organised the different values and environment created by St Giles Trust including values often missing in the penal field. As such codes were made when recurring references were made to ’trust’, ‘de-labelling’, ‘rapport and empathy’ ‘acceptance of making mistakes and previous criminality’ by respondents. In addition a further code was made and utilised 26 occasions to St Giles Trust and a sense of belonging akin to the family emphasising further analytical references to the notion of a positive place and environment. These basic codes were considered together to emphasise positive values and kindness and care by the charity towards the law breaker. Finally, both middle order themes were re-read and analysed and a superordinate theme of St Giles Trust considered as a "desistogenic place" was created. This global theme was important as it then created meaning to the values and sense of familial bonding which peer mentors consistently referred to in the semi structured interviews and in relation to contributing further to how St Giles Trust were able to contract with the state whilst controlling and safeguarding its own charitable mission.
The research findings suggest that St Giles Trust is protean in the sense that it adapts it’s message, choice of contracts and delivery mechanisms in order to maximise its social inclusionary and charitable ethics whilst continuing to deliver government contracts. St Giles Trust is able to deliver real benefits for its service users and volunteers across different spheres and interventions. This is achieved firstly, by successfully engaging in commercial and government contracts, and secondly, by successfully fundraising in innovative ways the charity continues to place the peer mentor at the centre of many of its services. These institutionalising and agentic features should not be considered mutually exclusive but rather the characteristics of a penal voluntary organisation which is internally hybridised. The empirical research detailed here suggests that St Giles Trust is able to contract with government and offer supervision via an expanded and coercive supervisory network for prison licences. These practices involve having power over the service users and provide housing advice and support, gang prevention and support for families and the marginalised. Furthermore, the thesis argues that St Giles Trust charity can also be conceptualised as a powerful physical and cognitive place where desistance from crime can be begun and where ex offender peer mentor’s knowledge and expertise can act as a power to help and support.

The research attempts to demonstrate that St Giles Trust makes adaptations to its mission and delivery mechanisms to resource it’s peer mentor model and to deal with the economic realities of austerity Britain. As it does so it is important not to resort to a type of economic determinism in reducing St Giles Trust to merely an aspect of a shadow penal state as a result of receiving state funding. Central and local government contractual arrangements can result, not in slavish and uncritical delivery, but rather by adaptation to meet the values of the charity in many respects. Throughout the research senior managers and peer mentors stated that where adaptations could not be made, St Giles Trust and their peer mentors have the power to ‘just walk away’. In addition researchers need to appreciate the fact that charities cannot be reduced to a single project or intervention but must recognise the plurality of projects which the penal voluntary sector delivers. For example, working to reduce recidivism via an involvement in a government payments by results mechanism can co-exist with an innovative self-funded programme to help provide support for gay and lesbian prisoners. Much research into the penal voluntary sector at present would posit that by engagement in the former contract the latter programme would be more unlikely.

Chapter 2 traced the emergent academic literature which has cast doubts as to the penal voluntary sector’s ability to remain independent, distinctive and free from powerful
governmental and private sector penal interests. There is obviously significant disquiet and disagreement within the voluntary sector itself with respect to charity’s independence and critical voice. Teasdale, Buckingham and Rees (2013) cite William Shawcross, Chair of the Charity Commission who warned that “My personal view is that some charities have become dependent upon the state. And I think that most members of the public, when asked, would say a charity is an organisation funded from private donation, not public funds”. Similarly Dame Anne Owers (Baring Foundation 2011) noted as government’s increasingly contract with the voluntary sector “there is the risk that voluntary bodies become mere delivery agents, lacking independence of action or voice and being diverted from their purpose. This requires a sustained commitment to independence when contracts are tendered and funding is offered and accepted.” However, Sir Stephen Bubb, CEO of the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary organisations (ACEVO) has taken a different view noting that “Delivering public services for beneficiaries on contract does not make charities dependent, not need it mean mission drift... the notion that these organisations are dependent little satrapies is ludicrous” (Teasdale, Buckingham and Rees 2013)

The Baring Foundation’s (2011) barometer of voluntary sector independence is important to consider with respect to any discussions of institutional independence or co-option. The panel defined three characteristics which form their barometer of independence. Firstly, independence of purpose relates to the charity’s ability to set and review its own purpose to address the changing needs of the causes they represented. A second characteristic of independence as that of independence of voice to protest, campaign and negotiate without fear of retribution. Thirdly, independence of action relates to a charity’s ability to design and deliver activities that meet client needs and to respond to needs in innovative, and creative ways.

Crime Controlled: governing crime reduction through the penal voluntary sector

Tomczak (2014) details the considerable amount of academic attention which has highlighted the level of heterogeneity on a macro-sectoral level with little attention given to how individual charities working with prisoners of offenders and their families are internally differentiated within the penal voluntary sector. She notes that large scale charities, such as St Giles Trust, represent an expansion of the carceral net via their payments by results work to supervise and control those leaving Peterborough prison who previously would have enjoyed unconditional release. This was clearly part of a strategic first step to position St Giles Trust centrally in the new Transforming Rehabilitation penal reform agenda which positions charities as new actors in the penal field. Tomczak (2014) demonstrates how St Giles Trust actively cooperated with both private finance and central government to enable governmental ambitions for reform involving
devolution of delivery and cost savings to come to fruition. By doing so, the supervision requirement for all those leaving Peterborough prison increased the scale and depth of punishment, moving the power to punish further away from statutory actors. As Tomczak (2017) notes the process “expanded the spatial and temporal reach of carceral power and control” through the 12 month period of supervision for prisoners serving less than 12 months. The Prison Reform Trust (2011) estimated that the expansion of punishment and penal control could result in expanding the carceral net with an extra 13,000 offenders being recalled to prison. As a result, Tomczak (2017) echoes the warning of Corcoran (2011) and Benson and Hedges (2009) and Miller and Purifoye (2016:195) that the penal voluntary sector can become co-opted by powerful penal interests and act as agents of expanded social and penal control as exemplified by the expansion of supervision inherent in the Peterborough One Service.

The empirical research of St Giles Trust central involvement in delivering the Peterborough One Service echoes Tomczak’s (2017) view of St Giles Trust and their staff members becoming ‘networked in’ or responsibilised (Garland 2001, Hinds and Grabosky 2008) into delivering government penal reform agendas. As Hinds and Grabosky (2008:1) state “non-government agencies and individuals are expected to step into the shoes of a retreating state and accept greater ownership” of the task of offender reform and the reduction of crime. This government call to accept responsibility has been also used to encourage the individual offender to become responsible for their own actions and communities to become important actors in the reintegration of offenders. Furthermore, following the Peterborough One Service pathfinder, the government proposals for private and voluntary organisation involvement in Community Rehabilitation Company’s role to supervise all low and medium risk offenders in the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) strategy is a clear example of non-state delivery of punishment filling the vacuum left by a retreating state. Here the private and voluntary sectors are responsibilised by a government strategy of abdication where the state withdraws from crime control functions and shifts them to market mechanisms (Hinds and Grabosky 2008:3). However, to enable St Giles Trust to deliver supervision to those on licence from Peterborough prison a delivery model was developed whereby the vast majority of caseworker staff undertaking the Peterborough One service were actually salaried professionals from other criminal justice organisations and from the private sector. Therefore, whilst the Peterborough One Service was clearly a high profile and innovative funding arrangement to deliver post custody supervision, it is highly debatable as to whether the Peterborough One Service is representative of the true ethical standpoint and delivery model of St Giles Trust as ex-offender peer mentor practice was not a core part to the specific intervention. As the staff team involved caseworkers who had been prison officers, housing advisers and some who had previously been employed in
the private sector, the focus on the strengths and skills of "someone who has been there" was not apparent or explicitly made. Resultantly, the extent to which the Peterborough One Service is emblematic of St Giles Trust programmes is highly debatable. Firstly, the charity made a decision that dealing with non-compliance of post custody licences was a task ill-suited to the work of ex-offender peer mentors in view of its coercive power relations over the service user. Secondly, the Peterborough One Service was constructed as an innovative Social Impact Bond, and was managed not by St Giles Trust but by a non-governmental financial intermediary called Social Finance who raised the £5 million funding from 17 investors for the project. As a result the project had externally imposed sophisticated practice standards and data management recording processes which were new and challenging for the charity. The power and influence of external interests in shaping of the delivery mechanism of the One Service was therefore imposed on St Giles Trust and something they had little power or involvement to shape. Similarly, as the project was for a ‘through the gates’ service, Peterborough prison, operated by the private company Sodexo, was also an important powerful influence. This enabled St Giles to operate inside the prison but did little to improve their agency to shape their own peer led delivery. Thirdly, and the One Service employed St Giles Trust as the principal service provider in a project where success was deemed to be a reduction in recorded recidivism both with respect to the governmental ambitions and the investors in the service. As one senior member of staff stated, the Peterborough One service represented St Giles Trust’s involvement in a governmental crime reduction agenda which could be interpreted as a fundamental shift away from the charity’s traditional aims to reduce poverty, social exclusion and be guided by meeting the client’s needs and desires.

*Well to be honest I think a lot of the innovation is less around the service delivery but more about funding thing that leads to it in terms of actually not coming from public funds but being funded through social finance and investors. Obviously, as I say, I’ve never worked in any other part of St Giles. I’m not sure how different we are in terms of service delivery from other parts, but we do meet at the gates and we work with people for up to a year. I suppose we are more interested in reducing reoffending than perhaps some of the other projects where it’s more just general help to people rather than focusing on reducing reoffending. (13_09_12_01one service manager)*

Similarly, the Peterborough One Service had other characteristics similar to statutory sector arrangements such as the emphasis on managerialism and the way that externally imposed contractual targets and data shaped practice. Below the senior manager leading the Peterborough one service states how the Peterborough One Service delivery was characterised
by standardisation, data recording and case management and not innovation. St Giles Trust practice was undoubtedly shaped by the One Service payment by results mechanism and was not therefore similar to other St Giles Trust projects. The emphasis given to the recording of practice usually by computer case management systems was constructed as being detrimental to the face to face practice which St Giles Trust has always put to the forefront of their delivery model.

*I think here [one service] we’re a bit different because we are almost driven by Social Finance and they produce the data and the performance data. I think we’re moving towards standardisation within the team because that external pressure requirement. And we’re not there yet, and obviously things are done a bit differently within different teams, and some we’re trying to address, and some people are better than recording than others, but I think we’re gradually getting there. Trouble is you want people to be good at recording, and you want people to make sure the records are fine and all wonderful, but you don’t want them to do that at the expense of their time elsewhere.*

I: computer work?

P: *That’s right. You want people to be out and about doing things, not sitting there slaving over a computer all the time. So we’re trying to make sure that at least people do the minimal requirement to satisfy social finance and the needs of the clients, but the bulk of the time should be out and about dealing with people, seeing people in the office.*

(12_09_12 one service manager)

With respect to the problematics of translating St Giles Trust mission, values and core delivery model the Peterborough One Service is again highlighted as different to core St Giles Trust practice in staff member’s own view of the service. The creation and implementation of practice standards and data collection are again alluded to as key in shaping the practice subjectivities of caseworker staff members. Below, the staff member talked about a lack of structure in translating St Giles Trust into Peterborough but also alluded to problems with culture with respect to the One Service.

*I think it initially I think that’s what they wanted, I think that’s what social finance wanted, but because it’s all about figures and statistics, it changes the whole, it changes the project completely from anything that they are doing in Camberwell [St Giles Trust HQ] and I think this project started with the idea that it was going to be like Camberwell, but without, again without the structure because when we started we didn’t have an*
office, there were so many things that were missing, that it kind of evolved sort of quite oddly really and there wasn’t enough structure, there just wasn’t the structure that made it work properly and then since then we’ve had more structure but again we, I don’t think we are anything like Camberwell at all, I think it’s different, but then I think it needs to be because it’s Peterborough and it’s nothing like London (13_09_12 one service case worker)

This view of the employed case worker does raise important issues for St Giles Trust. Firstly, it bears witness to the fact that St Giles Trust were engaging in penal projects and delivery which were deemed be significantly different to their own traditional ex-offender peer mentor based approaches. The staff members in the One Service all noted how the service was different to London, and different to the rest of St Giles Trust highlighting the extent of internal heterogeneity of charities in the penal voluntary sector. As such the following areas highlight the main subordinate themes around the superordinate theme of responsibilisation (Garland 2001, see thesis chapter one) and correctional values and practice in St Giles Trust contracted projects.

St Giles Trust contracting with the state: Mission drift or the fine tuning of purpose

The link between St Giles Trust and a specific governmental policy to reduce crime was created by a clear and powerful rationale for practice to be linked to payment by results. Indeed, the empirical research highlighted how a new charitable crime reduction rationale was becoming more apparent with St Giles Trust’s involvement in penal projects such as the Peterborough One Service and Integrated Offender Management programmes in a number of London boroughs. The research findings highlight how the incorporation of governmental mentalities and agendas shaped the charitable mission and impacted upon independence and distinctiveness of the penal voluntary sector. In the empirical research the code of reducing recidivism as a rationale for practice was used on 20 occasions in the fieldwork interviews. This subjective understanding of St Giles Trust salaried employees reflected the charity’s developing position as a significant crime reduction charity at the forefront of government reforms to the penal field. The code of ‘identical to state provision’ was also used on 7 occasions in the empirical research to reflect occasions where respondents conceptualised the charities work through the government agenda. For example, interview respondents at the Peterborough One Service relayed how external influences, represented by the financial intermediary Social Finance, had shaped the mission of the project. The primacy of reducing reoffending is reflected in the caseworker’s understanding of their practice and relatedly how this may have differed from other St Giles Trust projects which did not have such an explicit crime reduction aim.
I do think social finance have a specific idea and obviously because they are being funded, the money that they are getting is to reduce reoffending by seven per cent and we are, you know paid by them, and if they don’t succeed then obviously we are going to be hauled over the coals (13_09_12 one service case worker)

Obviously, as I say, I’ve never worked in any other part of St Giles. I’m not sure how different we are in terms of service delivery from other parts, but we do meet at the gates and we work with people for up to a year. I suppose we are more interested in reducing reoffending than perhaps some of the other projects where it’s more just general help to people rather than focusing on reducing reoffending. (13_09_12_one service manager)

The move in strategic focus and mission to embed St Giles Trust as a crime reduction organisation as opposed to an ex-offender peer mentor charity also enabled St Giles Trust to access other corporate fundraising and charitable giving. The crime reduction focus was used to advantageously position St Giles Trust as a charity with a mission to reduce crime and victimisation thereby harnessing much public and political legitimacy. This crime reduction focus was especially significant when the charity attempted to target members of the public for fundraising and needed a palatable message to potential fundraisers or donators.

And the other thing with corporates - and it’s the same with any, I mean, this is just people who would give to charity anyway - so you’ll write as a member of the general public. St Giles is really divisive, like Marmite; you either love us or loathe us. The minute you say...if we say crime reduction charity, which is something what we try to do, it sounds more palatable, but unfortunately, it’s media-led and people read the Daily Mail and they read all those, and most people have been victims of crime at some point. (12_07_12 staff fundraising)

Similarly, as some of St Giles Trust projects became more embedded in crime reduction agendas the innovative aspects of St Giles Trust programmes became less pronounced whereby peer mentoring was not constructed at the forefront of their delivery model. The innovative aspects of the Peterborough One Service to supervise those leaving Peterborough prison ordinarily without a licence were reduced to the newness of the government’s payment by results funding mechanism via a social impact bond. As Cave et al (2012) note the Peterborough One service was the first such approach to financing interventions to reduce recidivism in offenders. As a result the contractual obligations of the project were seen as limiting the innovative use of volunteers and ex-offender peer mentors as the project involved salaried criminal justice professionals
including ex-probation and prison officers and the enforcement of prison licences which was deemed to be far from being innovative practice.

Well to be honest I think a lot of the innovation is less around the service delivery but more about funding thing that leads to it in terms of actually not coming from public funds but being funded through social finance and investors. (13_09_12 one service case manager)

The Peterborough One Service utilised a single peer mentor at the time of the research. He also recognised the ethical challenges implicit in the work and indeed how this had shaped the rationale and actualities of practice.

I mean I’m quite happy if my job was simply to support people who needed help, that would suit me better, the fact that we are supposed to be reducing reoffending makes it that much more stressful, because you’ve always got to think hang on a minute, will this help you to stop reoffending? You end up questioning everything you are doing because you are not really sure because it’s all about stopping reoffending, you then question what you are doing, so, you know, you think well if I do that will that make any difference, or am I just wasting my time? (12_09_12 one service peer mentor)

‘Charitable and correctional’: targeting risk and criminogenic need and the end of universalism.

As St Giles Trust contracted with government brought an explicit crime reduction ethic to underpin what it did, the central role in punitive activities such as the Peterborough One Service or Integrated Offender Management Projects (IOM), was also seen to mould the conduct, practice and aspirations of those actors taking part. Consequently, St Giles Trust delivery in the Peterborough One Service and IOM mimicked those of traditional statutory correctional provision and witnessed a change in the values and practices of St Giles Trust as a penal voluntary sector organisation. In the empirical research, the staff and peer mentors involved in mainstream penal projects noted how St Giles delivery model had been adapted under contract to included mentalities around considerations of risk as an organising concept. This was extremely prescient in thinking around how the shape and intensity of practice should be determined not by the level of service user need or desires but rather the level of risk the service user posed. As a result the adoption of the “risk” principle reflects a key aspect of effective correctional practice established over the past 20 years (McGuire 1999, Andrews and Bonta 2007, Blackburn 2008). The professional assessment of the level of risk of recidivism and of serious harm have shaped the
nature and extent of correctional practice in that those who are assessed as a higher risk receive greater resources to ensure control or change.

Such risk based mentalities which focus upon the relative propensity of harm committed are far removed from mentalities based upon client need, welfare and assistance which has been the basis of voluntary sector practice delivery. A focus on risk introduces a new ethic of conditionality in St Giles Trust service delivery whereby the charity's work would cease should the offender be recalled to prison resulting from non-compliance with the conditions of licences or the service user's risk of harm was assessed as too high. As such the research demonstrates how co-option by the state in organisational and strategic terms is translated and replicated in individual practice. As a result St Giles Trust are utilised by other powerful penal agents to replace the responsibilities and activities of the statutory sector in order to maximise the reach of coercive penal power (O'Malley 2000, Miller and Purifoyle 2016). The manager of the Peterborough One Service noted how considerations of risk would move charitable practices from universalism and need to one based on selection and considerations of risk.

"But if we're going to be business like about it we would almost say we pick the top 50 people likely to reoffend and we chuck everything at them, and the others realistically we say well we can't really do a lot for you, but we concentrate our resources on those high risk people." (13_09_12 one service manager)

The gradual erosion of the traditional voluntary sector’s ethic of universalism in its delivery model as a result of resourcing caseload through the analytical lens of risk is also replicated by an employed caseworker with the Peterborough One Service who espouses the centrality of understanding risk in order to shape practice with respect to personal safety. In a similar way to the criminal justice professional has transferred their employment over to working for St Giles Trust, the risk based value and ethics underpinning the old correctional occupational culture are also transferred.

I think it’s knowing and understanding risk and I still do it now. Every person I go and see and I get in the car with on my own I do my own little risk assessment and you do it in your head and you don’t even think about it out loud but you automatically do it. And I’m never shy to say actually I have an issue with taking him on my own and I won’t do it. And we still do risk assessments for our volunteers and so doing Offender Assessment System assessments previously and risk assessments helps me in that respect. (12_09_12 one service caseworker 3)
The analytical lens of risk (O’Malley 2010) also shaped St Giles Trust’s practice in other ways. Here an employed respondent noted how he experiences an ethical tension shaping St Giles Trust practice with respect to working commensurately to meet client need, working to lower risk and to achieve a payment for results. The One service caseworker notes how practice is shaped towards targets around recidivism and not necessarily meeting client need as a positive outcome.

“So we don’t know if people are likely to reoffend until they’ve reoffended. we’ve still got to try and target those people at high risk of reoffending if we’re going to have an impact and reduce reoffending, because otherwise we are led by client demand and client need, not by their risk of reoffending. So it’s one of those constant battles to work with client need or reduce reoffending (13_09_12 one service caseworker)”

A senior member of staff at St Giles Trust noted the primacy given to risk in the Peterborough One Service and critiques it in a disparaging way. He notes how the lens of risk moves the assessment away from seeing ex-service users as holistic with agency to shape their own life to being conceptualised solely through the lens of risk. Conceptualising service user through the lens of risk,

“is all about measuring their risk and it’s as if they’re, like, walking, ticking time bombs waiting to offend again at any given moment.” (14_06_12_01 manager community projects)

In the research the language of risk is also used as a strategy to motivate service users to reflect on their own needs and desires. Here a peer mentor in an Integrated Offender Management programme uses risk to create responsibilised (Hinds and Grabosky 2008 :3) service users who are encouraged to take responsibility to assess their own risk of recidivism and to strive to take action to lower their own level. As O’Malley (1992) notes this “privatised prudentialism” is troubling as it affords personal responsibility upon the individual to assess and reduce their own risk of recidivism with concomitant repercussions if this isn’t successful achieved.

“And it’s the best thing I ever done for myself, and I tell all my young people, the best thing you can do is start assessing yourself, so when I work with them, I’ll sit and I’ll do a risk assessment on them, but I will get them to sit with me and write a risk assessment on themselves and when they write it down, they’re, like, no, that’s wrong! I’m, like, don’t lie, it’s right, because you wrote it down, yeah, but you can’t know that. I’m, like, okay, lift the piece of paper up, write it down, fold it up, put it in your pocket, take it home and read it and see what you think about what you’re doing on paper and most of them are
amazed, absolutely amazed and say, I want to change, I want to do this, but I don’t know how” (26_04_12_02 peer paid)

Conditionality and acceptable enforcement in service delivery

Perhaps the most striking illustration of the penal voluntary sector losing its charitable mission and distinctiveness is the extent to which organisations occupy roles and develop relationships with service users based upon coercive power. As the thesis discussed in Chapter 2, the penal system contains powerful organisations and professional values which form around the notion of punishment and the delivery of pain to offenders as a result of their law breaking (Brooks 2016). Whilst the charities in the penal voluntary sector have been keen to highlight how their activities can be clearly demarcated from the coercive punitive attributes of supervision or punishment, here this thesis charts how St Giles Trust’s traditional altruistic and welfarist value base was reshaped by becoming increasingly central to government’s programmes to supervise those with custodial sentences under 12 months. In the semi structured interviews, conditionality in service delivery including enforcement and breach of licences and community orders were coded on 40 occasions to emphasize the interrelationship between government contracts, acceptable behaviour and enforcement.

As Tomczak (2017: 127) notes the penal voluntary sector can “expand the spatial and temporal reach of carceral power” if it accepts or replaces previously statutory roles to supervise. Whilst this research was conducted prior to the twelve month mandatory statutory supervision for all those serving less than 12 months, it is clear that employed staff and volunteer peer mentors began to incorporate new ethics and values into their practice which involved the conditionality and ending of relationships with service users, the use of deterrent messages in order to gain compliance and as a result the use of enforcement action or breach where non-compliance was evident. The following conversation illustrates how St Giles Trust delivery could involve deterrence based warnings of the negative consequences for those ex-prisoners who did not comply with supervision in the One Service. One salaried member of the One Service also made reference to the importance of using deterrence and encouraging consequential thinking to shape the behaviour of the ex-prisoner, particularly where this offenders was a high risk of recidivism. The approach in the One Service and Integrated Offender Management work for Prolific and Priority offenders (PPOs) is described as more directive in character, echoing the approach in much of the penal system to ensure offenders are encouraged to become consequential thinkers for themselves and others.
"As I mentioned, there are rare occasions where the targeted clients are actually prolific offenders, and when it comes to that there’s a more directive approach, more direct. It has to be much more forceful and the conversation very open. The consequences for not complying are there. You always mention the consequences, should this not occur.

I: And what would those be for a PPO then? What are the consequences?

P: The consequences could be going back to prison. You could lose your position within a certain organisation, you could be evicted, you could go back to drinking more alcohol which your body won’t like (12_09_12 One service case manager)

Indeed, conditionality in delivery was extended by one case manager who spoke about how a longer period of incarceration would be beneficial to the service user rather than the extensive amount of effort the case worker would have to undertake to achieve a similar outcome. The underpinning values for the view are far removed from meeting service user needs, the provision of care and altruism which St Giles Trust would wish to emphasize.

“So you are ending up putting an awful lot of effort into somebody that you are thinking actually they would probably be better off if they just did a longer sentence in prison and by you keeping them out of prison, how much are you helping them because ultimately they are going to be safer and more supported in prison than out (13_09_12 One service case manager)”

Responsibilisation and replacing the statutory sector

A final finding in the research indicative of a relative decline in independence and distinctiveness for the penal voluntary sector is the extent to which each charity’s independence of purpose, voice and action is maintained when working closely with other statutory sector penal organisations. Corcoran in particular (2011) has warned of the dangers of becoming institutionalised by working so closely with the state in an increasingly joined up penal sector. Subsequently, a key issue for the penal voluntary sector is the extent to which the voluntary sector’s activities can be separated from and not contaminated by, established statutory penal strategies. The clear risk here is that the penal voluntary sector isomorphs into becoming merely the image of the state. Whilst the research has indicated how correctional and penal values had permeated St Giles Trust working cultures, here the research turns its attention to the policies
and practices which indicate governmental co-option of the charity and it becomes a shadow to the state (Wolch 1990).

A One Service case manager noted how close working relationships between St Giles Trust and other penal organisations were welcomed, despite the fact that St Giles Trust’s delivery in the programmes had actually replaced statutory agencies work and become statutory delivery. To add to the development of closer working relationships, St Giles Trust staff had moved to be co-located with the Probation Service and St Giles Trust’s work with service users was used as statutory reporting requirements. As the case worker noted this enabled the Probation Trust at the time to ration its resources and deploy them elsewhere. This had therefore expanded the number of agencies involved in statutory reporting of community orders.

“Yeah, who either had an existing community requirement which was allowed to continue because it was such a short sentence, or they get a new community requirement on release... we might well be the lead agency with that person. We’ll be able to see the person on behalf of probation. So [person’s name] is our lead on that and she’s going to be based in probation. We don’t know yet how long. A day or two a week I think, to see people there. I think we’re both interested in developing this, and for probation obviously it saves them resources and is a bit of partnership work (13_08_12 one service case manager”)

In addition, Peterborough One Service case workers noted how the notion of having a “single point of contact” meant St Giles Trust became centrally involved and implicated in both government reducing recidivism and public protection agendas blurring elements of charity distinctiveness and mission through access to shared information and tasks. St Giles Trust is therefore co-opted and responsibilised to become an actor in these agendas through the influence of multi-agency practice which positions St Giles Trust into a network of penal actors (Gough 2010).

We do certainly work closely with the police, and particularly integrated offender management, so sharing information is important. We’re starting to do some work with probation. We’ve got shared cases, so having a single point of contact for each, and each having access to the other’s data. So I think we’re getting more on board with this reducing reoffending agenda, but also the protecting the public through interagency work (13_09_12 one service case manager)
Whilst St Giles Trust was obviously becoming an important aspect of multi-agency arrangements in the Peterborough one Service and the Integrated offender Management work, this did not lead to an uncritical acceptance that this was a universally positive move. The pressure on practitioners to resist and remain true to St Giles Trust ethics and practice was a key research finding relating to the extent and depth of responsibilisation agendas. For example, the following case worker problematizes how charitable funding by involvement in interagency working can result in pressures and resulting resistances to become an arm of the state.

Participant: But talking about probation, for instance, their major ethos is to punish in the community, and if you went round saying right, what we are is a punishment agency you’d have people leaving in droves wouldn’t you on a voluntary basis...nobody volunteers to punish.

Interviewer: So do you find that you’re trying to shift your work to incorporate it into their punishment framework or...?

Participant: Sometimes it gets a bit fuzzy. It can get bad because you then become part of their arm. You’re part of their department. But I think it’s the strength of the resettlement broker who has to say look, I’m working with this client, he will abide by your rules, but if the client refuses I can’t force him.(13_09_12_One Service caseworker)

It is clear from an empirical research findings provided here of the development of the Peterborough One Service and Integrated Offender Management work that St Giles Trust could be understood as a penal voluntary sector delivery agent in the payment by results programmes under the Breaking the Cycle penal reform agenda. This was evident both in respect to how the government saw the penal voluntary sector, that is valorising its delivery function and minimising its advocacy or critical voice, and with respect to the individual volunteers and paid St Giles Trust actors themselves. Consequently, it could be argued that in these penal projects, St Giles Trust moved away from its traditional mission and key peer mentor delivery model which centred on support from ‘someone who has been there’ to delivering a programme that utilized housing professionals, ex-prison officers, ex-probation officers and caseworkers from the private sector as salaried staff. As a result the charity’s value base changed with crime reduction, compulsory rehabilitation activities, conditionality of service and risk based correctional thinking increasingly becoming evident in its work in these fields.
St Giles Trust had therefore sought to adapt their delivery model to successfully take commercial advantage from contracting with the state. Here the more mainstream penal projects such as the Peterborough One Service and Integrated Offender Management Projects involve the employment of key professionals where practice is conditional and involves coercion by the ending of working relationships and the enforcement of licences and community orders. This can be understood as a co-option of the charity by governmental interests or an example of offloading of the power to punish to community based actors and the development of a shadow carceral state (Beckett and Murayama 2012, Miller 2014). In addition, as an influential and successful government emblem of the penal voluntary sector, a narrow view of St Giles Trust's contracts with the state could be understood as the charity isomorphically becomes intertwined with the penal system and becomes divorced from its charitable origins.

However, this thesis moves on to argue that perspectives which equate government funding with loss of agency and distinctiveness represent only a partial and incomplete analysis of St Giles Trust and the penal voluntary sector. The focus on particular atypical projects, such as the Peterborough One Service, at the expense of a holistic analysis of the charity’s activities gives an incomplete picture with respect to the possibilities for distinctiveness and maintaining agency in the penal voluntary sector. Indeed, the penal voluntary sector has become an increasingly diversified sector, the thesis moves on to develop a more nuanced and fuller analysis of heterogeneity in a single penal voluntary sector charity, involving the analysis of empirical research from a range of St Giles Trust practices.

The Penal Voluntary sector: Controlling the charitable mission

Armstrong (2002) offers an important critique as to whether the core characteristics of a non-profit organisation are any different to a for profit business. She cautions against unquestioning attitudes and assumptions towards charitable endeavours which accept that they represent altruism and always put their service users' interests to the centre of their work. As a result Armstrong (2002) cautions against an uncritical acceptance that charities will always or only do what they say they do. To illustrate in March 2017, St Mungo’s help and assistance for homeless people was reported as including working alongside the Home Office’s Immigration, Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) teams by handing over the details of foreign born rough sleepers to government authorities charged with deporting such vulnerable individuals. (https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/mar/07/charities-giving-home-office-details-of-rough-sleepers-says-report.)
However, it is also equally an imaginary that penal voluntary sector charities who partner business or contract with the state automatically transform to become the image of the state or begin espousing private sector values and behaviours (Tomczak 2014). One should not expect either penal voluntary sector organisations or individual volunteers themselves to universally and uncritically accept responsibility for crime control agendas and give up their original missions. Indeed some citizens, and especially tax payers, may consider this is a key function of the police force. Consequently, there is nothing inevitable about a lack of distinctness of abandonment of mission when the penal voluntary sector engages in contracts with government or is paid by results. Charities and their volunteers may simply not be open to inducement or exhortation to become involved or they may accept responsibility under particular circumstances or with particular limitations and boundaries. (Hinds and Grabosky 2008:4).

Successive government’s reforms to the penal sector have valorised the expertise and skills in the penal voluntary sector, highlighting how it’s innovative approach to service delivery, it’s focus on the service user and achieving outcomes affords huge potential to reduce recidivism. Indeed, the penal voluntary sector is noted as a key sector to break the revolving cycle of crime and imprisonment by their supervision of all prisoners sentenced to under 12 months custody and those assessed as low or medium risk. Similarly, Maruna’s notion of St Giles Trust as representative of “desistance in action” serves to highlight the reformist potential of the penal voluntary sector, and specifically St Giles Trust to enable ex-offenders to desist from crime. However research into the penal voluntary sector often fails to include research into the subjectivities and actions of their volunteers and staff members. Indeed academic studies of volunteering and the voluntary sector are often without any analysis of the organisational habitus in which they operate (Corcoran and Grotz 2016:93). This chapter therefore moves on to highlight the ways in which other St Giles Trust peer mentor interventions can be understood as offering increased levels of social capital for service users, particularly in relation to housing and employment and provide powerful peer mentor roles and subjectivities, valued by those undertaking them to demonstrate their own move away from criminality.

In addition the research findings offer greater insights into how a penal voluntary sector charity can undertake activities which can be characterised as controlling and supervisory and indeed simultaneously position ex-offenders at the forefront of assistance to, and advocacy for, those leaving prison. The research findings attempt to make sense of the notion that despite it’s contractual relationships with government, St Giles Trust can act as a ‘desistogenic place’ which increases the likelihood that offenders and service users move away from crime and “go straight by taking on and receiving ex–offender peer mentor interventions”. As a result the chapter charts the relationship between the penal voluntary sector’s work to enable desistance from crime and
the formal organisational arrangements within which the process of leaving crime behind is deeply embedded.

Tomczak (2017:173) notes how some academic commentators have been fixated on the big players in the penal voluntary sector without focusing adequately enough on the smaller, localised charities which are seen more likely to bring “added value” to their work with offenders particularly in relation to building social cohesion or social capital. She states that “perhaps scholars have neglected to analyse the most worthful organisations in the sector” (Tomczak 2017:173) and in doing so have favoured the big hitters who may have let their charitable mission be overshadowed by punitive concerns. However, the empirical research presented here highlights how St Giles Trust is able to contract with the state and concurrently, possess innovative and altruistic qualities. The empirical research findings seek to highlight how St Giles Trust could act as a delivery agent and advocator for the value of ex-offenders, as both a penal intermediary and a penal mediator. St Giles Trust provides a valuable role in terms of challenging the existing professionalised penal status quo whilst creating strong empathic relationships with ex-offenders to create a heightened sense of social capital and an enriched life (Tomczak 2017:154). Indeed the research ultimately seeks to shed light on St Giles Trust as an organisation which has a significant ability to deliver effective interventions to improve the lives of service users whilst it seeks to shape peer mentor subjectivities in particular ways to effect desistance from criminal behaviour.

Whilst it is undeniable that those penal voluntary sector charities who contract with the state through payment by results mechanisms can make those involved at a risk of institutionalisation or becoming commercially driven, much depends upon the actual strategies and programmes of charities. Neilson (2009) is correct to state that Neoliberal penal reform may raise “troubling issues” for the penal voluntary sector and Corcoran (2011:32) asserts the difficulties in separating altruism, care and assistance from powerful penal interests to shape practice in different ways. However, a key consideration is whether these concerns and warnings are reflected uniformly on the front line in terms of service delivery. This thesis argues that we need to move away from an understanding of charities in the penal voluntary sector as monolithic and homogenous and in its place construct a nuanced understanding of charitable organisations as being internally heterogeneous and contested. This may well lead to a view that those large scale charities in the penal field who contract with the state as being controlled by crime reduction agendas and responsibilised by powerful interests with marked changes to their mission and value base. However, by conceptualising individual charities in the penal voluntary sector as heterogeneous and differentiated, it offers up the possibility of charities continuing to enjoy considerable agency, enduring independence and distinctiveness, whilst responding to
government agendas with adaptation or resistance. Indeed, it offers up the possibility that however difficult to achieve, contracting with government can lead to a continuation to practice in time honoured ways. Indeed, Tomcak (2014:471) notes that new research needs to extend beyond the impact of neoliberal reforms and examines the agency, innovation and heterogeneity found among PVOs arguing that "Neoliberal penal reforms are neither monolithic nor cohesive forces and to portray them as such is reductionist and politically disabling".

The empirical research findings analysed here highlight the diversity and heterogeneity within a single penal voluntary sector organisation. Whilst St Giles Trust were actively involved in negotiations for entering contractual arrangements with private sector prime providers in the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda in 2012, this thesis raises the reality that the co-option apparent in core penal programmes was not found to shape the entirety of St Giles Trust practice in the penal and civil spheres. St Giles Trust, as a diverse organisation, served many different groups of service users and was not uniformly or wholly involved in extending the supervisory aspects of penal power but rather constructed interventions which represented the continuation of it’s charitable mission. St Giles Trust thereby demonstrated significant organisational resilience by continuing to develop its peer led programmes. As a result it is important to note that it is not only the small scale actors in the penal voluntary sector, underneath the scope of government marketization agendas who enjoy a sense of agency. Here the empirical research highlights the ability of one of the big players to shape its own mission whilst contracting with national and local government. It identifies how St Giles Trust made strenuous efforts to adapt its practices in order to remain independent in voice and delivery, to continue to provide added value to its client group and where necessary resist co-option by the state.

The empirical research findings stress St Giles Trust’s desire to maintain independence of voice, delivery and purpose and themes relating to independence was a superordinate theme in the research. As a result the empirical research findings demonstrate occasions where the charity asserted it’s own voice, it’s advocatory role and it’s independence in delivery. A reoccurring theme was in respect to St Giles Trust creativity and innovation in provision which was coded on 23 occasions. Similarly, where St Giles Trust demonstrated a rationale and ability to meet individual service user need was coded on 25 occasions.

St Giles Trust: “Sticking our necks out” and keeping a critical voice

A significant barometer of voluntary sector independence is the freedom of having a voice, to protest, to campaign and negotiate without fear and to be assertive about independence. (Voluntary sector independence panel 2011:22). Whilst the penal voluntary sector has been a
particularly powerful arena for critiquing government policy, the fact that St Giles Trust contracted with government on many levels did not mean that their critical voice had been silenced. In some respects whilst St Giles Trust enjoyed significant government legitimacy, they charity did not find that their articulation for an ex-offender led peer mentor delivery model was met with universal support. In articulating a role for ex-offenders and ex-prisoners, St Giles Trust made pronouncements which indicated a critical engagement with the existing knowledge and expertise in the penal system. The charity was involved in considerable lobbying and organisational advocacy of the efficacy of their ex-offender led model which offered an alternative approach to ideas of offenders requiring specific professionalised retraining or treatment in order to leave crime behind. After one of the most challenging years for St Giles Trust against a backdrop of public sector authority cuts, the Chief Executive Officer, Rob Owen (St Giles Trust 2012:4), stated that “I'm extremely grateful to those individuals who put their neck above the parapet to make sure St Giles Trust continued to feature in criminal justice spending priorities”. Similarly, in the aftermath of the London riots of 2011 and contained in the Impact report of 2012 he also reiterated “we will continue to stick our necks out on behalf of society’s most disadvantaged (St Giles Trust 2012:9)

Further critical comments were made after St Giles Trust appeared at the Justice Select Committee’s review of Transforming Rehabilitation. The charity’s representative voiced considerable criticism with respect to how the funding mechanisms and overall marketization of the penal field had been handled by central government. St Giles Trust criticised the payment by results mechanism which had meant that the charity’s Community Rehabilitation Company involvement had only been able to offer a “bare bones service” which did not resemble the quality case management delivery which St Giles Trust had previously prided itself on. The result was that St Giles Trust’s peer mentor practices had been reduced to offering an administrative and managerialist service which resulted in the ticking of boxes and a significant lack of innovation in interventions. St Giles Trust also proffered information that their prime contractor, Ingeus, was risk averse in their decision to bar peer mentors who continued to remain on statutory licence from becoming part of the delivery model. Whilst St Giles Trust had successfully bid for Transforming Rehabilitation contracts, the contractual relationship with government had not silenced their independence of voice as they publically criticised the nature of the marketization process and the deleterious impact it was having on their interventions for service users. (https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/justice-committee/news-parliament-20151/transforming-rehabilitation-launch-16-17/)

However, during the period of fieldwork when the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda was announced, St Giles Trust's critical voice was muted regarding the marketization and
fragmentation (Robinson 2018) in the penal system. Any sense of St Giles Trust holding the government to account over the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) penal reform agenda should not be overstated. This was hardly surprising in that St Giles Trust’s vision of reform in community justice actually concurred with successive government agendas and the charity stood to benefit significantly from attempts to create a market in probation and rehabilitation services. As both the government and St Giles Trust foregrounded the penal voluntary sector and the skills and qualities of ex-offender peer mentors, any critique of the existing system and the need for radical marketised reform actually resonated with and strengthened St Giles Trust’s position to maintain its core mission, values and delivery with ex-offenders at the fore.

Whilst St Giles Trust spoke of sticking its neck out for the ex–offender delivery model, the critical tone was in fact more reduced from the 2009 St Giles Trust Impact Report which afforded a more prominent responsibility for crime and disorder onto prevailing economic circumstances. For example, in 2009 St Giles Trust spoke of the economic downturn, a concomitant rise in poverty and the impact this has had on some of the most disadvantaged people in society. Indeed St Giles Trust hints at structural inequality when they say that ”even in times of economic buoyancy issues such as getting and keeping a good home - things the rest of us take for granted are a real challenge.” Similarly, St Giles make reference to structural inequality in the 2010 Annual Report when Rob Owen states that in Camberwell, London “the homeless, addicted and desperate rub shoulders on the streets with the wealthy professionals who inhabit the million pound properties in the plush part of Camberwell”. However, as the Transforming Rehabilitation reform agenda began to take shape, St Giles Trust’s critique of the economic downturn and government response was in marked contrast in the Annual Report in 2011 when St Giles Trust spoke of the government’s austerity strategy to address the impact of the economic downturn as “inevitable cuts to the public sector budget” minimising any hint of criticism of government policy and giving further fiscal justification for a plan to marketise the field of probation and rehabilitation.

"We will just walk away": St Giles Trust agency and resistance to co-option by the state

As Jurik etal (2000:294) note attempts to promote organisational change are a complex and interactive process amongst the actors involved. Organisations may inhabit more than one sphere of practice and so their organisational position or place may be a barrier to wholesale governmental responsibilisation. A significant research finding was related to the extent to which St Giles Trust defined and redefined the terms of their engagement with government in order to preserve their cherished unique peer mentor delivery model (Milbourne and Cushman 2015). A primary strategy which St Giles Trust employed to maintain independence of purpose, voice and action is in respect to selecting fields of activity and responding to invitations to tender with great
care to preserve their charitable mission. The fact that St Giles Trust represented just the type of innovative peer led activity promoted by the Coalition government, meant St Giles Trust could negotiate with and choose to partner a number of private sector prime providers in the negotiations prior to the marketization of probation. As a result the research findings detailed a number of occasions when St Giles Trust management discussions with private sector interests and government did not progress. For example, St Giles Trust had ended commercial discussions to deliver unpaid work in London as a result of the ethical challenge such work presented with the direct nature of coercion apparent in the contract specification. The importance of preserving a sense of self determination, empowerment and altruistic practice were seen to be compromised in contracts to deliver community punishment. Whilst St Giles Trust had employed criminal justice professionals in the Peterborough One Service in order to carry out duties involving compulsion and coercive power, they were able to turn down such opportunities to engage in such approaches with ex-offender peer mentors.

we’ve kind of stood by this for the last few years is that we won’t be involved in anything that involves compulsion. So yeah we will support the agencies who do because obviously otherwise we wouldn’t work in the prisons and it’s funny actually because I think it was something [staff member name] was saying recently that they were introduced to somebody and this guy said oh yeah you’re the agency that works with the police. And it’s like well there’s an irony there that you’re kind of missing because yes we are, but look at who most of those people are on the team, they’re ex-offenders and what they’re actually doing is they’re working with the police to prevent the guys getting into trouble. So...in that sense that’s something we’ve always said that’s an acceptable part of the work, if we want to be the carrot then that’s great but what we won’t do, as you say, we won’t take the punishment role. (20_11_12_1 smt)

St Giles Trust demonstrated significant independence to negotiate the type of roles and functions they would undertake when partnering with other agencies. Here the member of the senior management team illustrates how St Giles Trust actually resisted opportunities to take on roles involving coercion, thereby holding firm to their value base.

it’s funny because we had this conversation with Stonham Housing and just exploring partnership with them at the moment and we were talking about this whole Chris Grayling stuff [Transforming Rehabilitation agenda] and if some of the probation work got wrapped up in all this clearly there’s going to be elements of compulsion involved. Now we were saying to them that’s an area we’re not going to get involved in but where do you stand on
that? do we need to bring somebody in to do that? And their response was we [Stonham] will do it...and they were explaining we’ll deal with it, so fine, you feel you can do it, it’s not for us to pass judgement on as long as you understand that we won’t (20_11_12_1 smt).

As a result of their desire to adopt a highly selective approach to contracting with government, St Giles Trust discussed how in comparison to other charities in the penal voluntary sector, their strategy to scale up and grow had been frustrated by the importance they had given to their ethical stance regarding the use of ex-offenders as peer mentors who should act altruistically towards their peers.

“Yeah [other charities] get some business on the books and it keeps the trustees happy because the balance sheet looks good and we’re growing and...yeah you’re growing because you’re taking on anything that you can get your hands on that’s...and so I think as much as we’re frustrated that we haven’t been able to grow and scale up as quickly as we wanted to, certainly the CEO when he first came was very ambitious about doing that, I think part of the reason for that is that we haven’t been prepared to compromise our values, we have a model but we’re not stuck with the model in the sense that it’s very rigid, we’re constantly developing it and trying to improve it but we don’t want to lose the essence of it.” (20_11_12_01 senior management team)

The extent of St Giles Trust institutional power and agency during the Transforming Rehabilitation reform of the community justice field was also a feature of the empirical research. Senior staff members were keen to emphasise when negotiating with private prime providers St Giles Trust did everything they could to ensure that they would be on an equal footing with any primes in the negotiations. St Giles Trust were well aware of the fact that charities in the penal voluntary sector could be used as “bid candy” with little power or role except to make the actual bid more interesting to government. As a result in their negotiations they ensured that they had as much power and influence as they could with those they chose to partner. Below a senior manager notes how they developed an assertive and proactive stance to sharing their own delivery model with the prime contractors rather than being told what to do. Indeed the power and independence of delivery and voice demonstrated here was translated into the fact that St Giles Trust secured a place on the board of governors of the Reducing Reoffending Partnership with Ingeus rather than merely be a part of any supply chain.

*And this is the argument or discussion we’re having is that if you look at the work programme, there’s a very much there’s an us and them, us and them as it were and you’ve*
got the big primes and then there’s a supply chain who are effectively given a contract to go away, do as you’re told, deliver on the contract or we’ll do stuff to you, we’ll hold your money, we’ll claw it back, get rid of you, what have you and there’s no real sense of collaboration there. And what we’ve always made clear to the private companies or big charities is if want to partner with us then there’s got to be a relationship, we don’t want to be part of your supply chain. So for instance last year, it was actually after last year’s conference...before last year’s conference I had a meeting with Ingeus. Ingeus is desperate to break into the criminal justice sector and they were saying they wanted to talk to St Giles as they were looking at bringing in a few partners to work with them and I said to them we’d be happy but we want to be sitting at the table with you designing your proposals with you and not talking about equal status but actually having a meaningful role and if you can’t offer that then we’re not going to be the right partner for you. (20_11_12_01 Senior Management team)

Multiple funding and ‘multiple faces’ of the penal voluntary sector.

A crucial element to maintaining independence of action and voice is the funding of St Giles Trust’s activities. Billis (2011:15) highlights the centrality of funding arrangements when he notes how voluntary sector organisations can experience significant problems holding onto traditional altruistic values and client centred delivery when they accept funding from government or business. He states that charities are seen to have entered a “Faustian pact” whereby the Third sector gain resources, influence and the opportunity to deliver more in return for abandoning traditional attributes such as its mission, values and altruism. The research findings here highlight how in the face of major funding opportunities with the state and business, St Giles Trust has been able to maintain its independence of voice and action by adapting a malleable multi-faceted identity rather than presenting itself solely as a crime reduction or ex-offender charity.

At the time of the research St Giles Trust noted how the key to their future growth and security was to develop an effective response to the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda whilst preserving its ability to independently fundraise and partner with private capital funding. The empirical research incorporated semi-structured interviews with key back stage staff involved in fundraising and communications.

St Giles has always had a sensible policy in terms of income, it’s policy is don’t rely on sort of single sources of income, diversify your portfolio of income. And that holds us in good stead with especially voluntary funders, you can’t over rely on certain charitable trusts or
certain major donors or, I mean, you know, Southwark Council of whatever, if they have no money, they can stop like tomorrow giving you money. I think a lot of charities have suffered hugely because it's incredible, they've just got one major source, they rely on this £1 million grant every year and, of course, that's gone and they've gone. So, I mean, that's always been our policy and I think it's a good one. (12_07_12 staff fundraising and communications)

One of the important issues for funding for St Giles Trust has been their ability to creatively fundraise and resource their own initiatives outside of statutory contractual relationships. For example, at the time of the research the St Giles Trust Choices project was a homeless programme for young people which was funded by a charitable gift from Minton Trust, a charity set up by the Chairman of St Giles Trust, Sir Anthony Greener. As a result this project was very much part of the charities mission and key interests with Sir Anthony Greener wanting to support “the idea of supporting young people that really haven't been given a fair chance, and need that support to enter training or employment”. The employed youth worker who headed the programme noted how “its very much not an offender's project... and very separate from that part of St Giles Trust” (26_04_12_03 paid worker) She went on to say that because the project was funded by the Minton Trust, she felt very lucky as,

“I'm not paid by results, no I have complete freedom in terms of how I organise my caseload, how I develop my interactions with young people. And I very much designed this project from its inception, I very much designed it exactly how I wanted it to be and what I knew, from experience that worked with young people. ...I adjust and adapt it all the time and it's a very flexible model... I absolutely make a make a judgement call on every young person and create an individual plan around their needs. It's amazing, it's absolutely amazing. It's a real privilege to be able to work that way.” (26_04_12_03 paid staff)

The notion that St Giles Trust attract a broad portfolio of funding for service users was attributed to two factors. Firstly, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) brought with him a wealth of contacts and knowledge with respect to corporate fundraising opportunities and secondly, the ways in which St Giles Trust adopted numerous identities and “faces” with which to gain public and private fundraising donations. As a result, the Chief Executive Officer was an important conduit to the future funding of the charity, as he was formally employed in the banking industry before moving to St Giles Trust.

Corporates are quite interesting for us, because Rob [CEO] joined about a year before I did and his background obviously was the City. And so he's really brought a new perspective...he's taken St Giles on a new avenue really, which I think's probably good, and he's opened us up to a totally new audience that are historically new and we never have
appealed to. I think he bridges that gap between the City or the private sector and St Giles especially really, really well, and I don’t think we would have the successes we’ve got with corporates today without him being there, because he understands how to communicate with them, which I think for voluntary sector organisations is often a problem. (12_07_12 staff communications and fundraisings)

The empirical research findings demonstrate that a wide repertoire of funding enabled flexibility in provision. St Giles Trust had maintained a wide portfolio of funding avenues for programmes both inside and outside of the penal system enabling them to have independence of delivery. For example, the 2014 St Giles Trust impact report noted the extent of the relationships being developed with Nomura, Barclays and Liberium private finance. This enabled the charity to fund a range of projects outside of government arrangements and maintain its unique peer mentor delivery model and powerful sense of agency. The extensive relationships between St Giles Trust and private finance which enabled award winning gang prevention work was best summarised below in the Impact Report 2012. Indeed the charity made a deliberate point to emphasise how the charity had enjoyed a growth in funding which remained outside any future growth from participation in a successful Community Rehabilitation Company under the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) reforms.

“Nomura’s incredible support under their Charity Partnership has seen their staff tirelessly fundraising to help young people leave behind the deadly vortex of gang crime and train them to help other young people do the same. Liberum’s loyal support prevents young people at risk from becoming our future clients through helping us reach young people in schools. Barclays have helped us assist hundreds of disadvantaged families in the criminal justice system to lift their lives out of the poverty trap. PwC and Lancashire Insurance have helped us with unrestricted funds and essential pro bono support – as a charity spending 95p in every £1 on the front line this is life-changing for us. Alongside any growth realised under Transforming Rehabilitation we will always be looking for ways to further develop our voluntary income. It allows us to be who we are – dynamic, innovative and flexible enough to take the road less travelled in our approach. (St Giles Trust 2012).

In addition St Giles Trust played an active role with respect to accessing funding from corporate and private capital and via individual donations. In order to ensure that funding and donations came through a number of avenues, the charity played great emphasis on expertise in effective marketing and fundraising thereby shaping its identity and key messages to meet different potential funding sources. When contracting with government, the charity was keen to demonstrate its ability to scale up and deliver what was previously statutory activity. However, it’s non-penal activities were also at the forefront of its identity in order to maximise the number
of donations from private individuals and private sector companies who would not want to be associated with projects involving stigmatized offenders who had previously harmed others. As a result St Giles Trust demonstrated significant autonomy in shaping how it’s projects and services to those in the criminal justice system were communicated. For example, its work with offenders in the penal system would often be humanised, by emphasising their previous stories of hardship of misfortune. Alternatively, service users were given a different “face” with housing problems, family hardship or gender being emphasized in order to generate sympathy for the service user and encourage donations. The semi-structured interviews with the fundraising teams made reference to the multifarious ‘faces’ of St Giles Trust. On one level the charity was marketed as a crime reduction charity in order to attract government funding linked to the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda. However, in other campaigns, St Giles Trust present themselves as a charity who continues to address homelessness, or provide interventions for excluded families and children or seeks to deliver innovative interventions to female members of society for a non-government fundraiser. The fact that behind all the different faces may be a link to the criminal justice system and criminality isn’t always made explicit.

“We put different faces on for different audiences sometimes and that’s nothing unique, that’s nothing sneaky or cheeky to do that, everyone nowadays must do that. Yeah, so we can change our aim. St Giles Trust is a homelessness charity and we can play that up when we’re trying to kind of engage with certain audiences, so maybe kind of the local community around here who kind of like see on a daily basis some of the effects of kind of rough sleeping and homelessness. (12_07_12 staff communications and fundraisings)”

Women who have been in the criminal justice system, vulnerable women, Yeah, certain audiences would be much more sympathetic with that, the Radio Four listener, more kind of engaged with that. And we work with children and families. Again, children, we can actually say we work with children because we’ve got family support services as well and, you know, a new one’s just opened up in East London now, so there are many boxes we tick. (12_07_12 staff communications and fundraisings)

The level of consideration given to St Giles Trust identity as a charity operating simultaneously inside the penal system and in civil society to maximise donations is best illustrated by the following construction of a marketing campaign which focused on an older women in order to make the message and potential beneficiary more palatable for those living in a post-riot London. As a result the gender, age and singular nature of her criminal behaviour is deliberately
constructed and emphasised in order to generate sympathy from potential donors as demonstrated in the following conversation.

P1  At Christmas, we did just a local fundraising door drop, and we’ve never really done it before and we were at pains to work out how to do this. And again, we did choose a woman because they are slightly more sympathetic, and we deliberately didn’t set up or we didn’t go for the younger offender because the riots were quite close to here and we just thought that might be a little bit too close to home. I think we might have actually got away with it but we were a bit nervous about that, so we deliberately did choose…and this lady actually has fallen into mortgage arrears, and that was why she committed the one and only crime she’s ever committed. Granted, it was a big full scale crime really but…and she got caught, and that was it.

I:  Yeah. So why choose that person then?

P2: Because she made one mistake. But she’d gone into mortgage arrears. Well, how many other people out there have. And granted, you know, we don’t all commit a crime but she was desperate and up until that point she was a law abiding citizen who paid her taxes. And we just thought, you know, that’s the sort of scenario that is happening to people now and that can happen to anybody, and people make desperate decisions. (12_07_12 staff communications and fundraisings)

In their marketing and fundraising St Giles Trust often provided case studies and individual stories of transformation and change. In doing so, the charity actively constructs criminal justice service users in a humanising way, who are actively involved in maintaining changes to their lives or constructed as individuals with positive qualities who had made a singular mistake. Subsequently, criminal activity and any previous history of the criminal justice system is constructed as being in the past with a positive aspirational future propagated ready to be released by further donations.

And she’s [fundraising colleague] not saying you cannot refer to crime but people want to hear about transformation, they want to know that their money or their time or their support or their attention is going towards making things better. So if I put out a message in our reports that people were just kind of, you know, lost causes or potentially lost causes, who’s going to engage with that, why are you going to support that, you know. And when
you...actually, again, when you get people's personal stories, what they tend to give you is what their hopes for the future are. (12_07_12 staff communications and fundraisings)

Resistance and adaptation to working with penal agendas

Resistance is often understood as any practice which stands against the direction of change (Barnes and Prior 2009:3). Resistance to governmental agendas can be conceptualised as negation or the refusal to take part. However, this research demonstrates that resistance to government power to become a ‘networked in’ crime control agency can be considered in multi-dimensional ways. Resistance to crime control agendas be understood as a challenge to the total domination of an organisation by the state, involving a shaping or adaptation to practice. A multi-dimensional notion of resistance offers the possibility of St Giles Trust maintaining independence, not only by walking away from contract negotiations, but also by taking up certain positions and drawing lines in the sand in order to resist becoming an image of the state. As a consequence, the idea of resistance in the research findings demonstrates the presence of a number of resistant subjectivities which can be understood on a continuum from being unwilling to contract with government through to accepting the contractual arrangements but adapting and reshaping practice in order to align practice to the charitable mission.

The empirical research has noted the ways in which St Giles Trust adapted their delivery model in order to maximise the differential impact of the charity’s salaried professionals and volunteer ex-offender peer mentors. For example, in the Peterborough One Service the delivery model was adapted whereby the paid professionals were employed in the supervisory roles, and to carry out the punitive aspects of the role. This enabled the peer mentors to develop supportive and helping relationships with service user from "someone who has been there" which were free from ethical tensions and dilemmas. Peer mentors were able to engage service users and used appropriate yet innovative methods in order to do so. For example, licence supervision coexisted with more innovative and pleasurable activities.

Oh yeah, we’ve got posters for guerrilla gardening and art work and fishing. That’s always a good one. People like getting involved with that. And there’s a music one, ‘Beat It’ I think it’s called, the clients come to, and football. Yeah. Purposeful activity, so they’re using their time wisely. (13_09_12 one service case worker)

The empirical research identified resistance to penal responsibilisation on an organisational level where St Giles Trust ensured that they had independence of action to design and deliver
activities with considerable agency. For example, the manager of community projects noted that the large size, high profile and considerable influence of St Giles Trust had led not to dependency on statutory funding but rather to a considerable degree of agency and independence. Here the manager of community projects demonstrates how St Giles Trust was able to remain true to its peer mentor delivery model which emphasised the utility, creativity and expertise of ex-service users despite pressure from other penal actors to change their approach on a Housing Information and Advice contract. In the example given the Probation Trust wanted to have an influence in the selection of peer mentors undertaking the Housing Advice programme and vet each peer mentor’s suitability. As the Probation Trust only partially funded the project, St Giles Trust resisted pressure to change their delivery model and informed the Probation Trust that they would no longer undertake housing advice for the Probation Service unless they accepted the work of the peer mentor allocated to the project. Being a ‘big player’ in the penal voluntary sector was identified by the respondent as a considerable source of strength to ensure independence of action and mission.

And the bigger we get and the more work we get, the more power we have to do that, we’re able to, sort of, make a moral stand, you know, or an ethical stand and just say if we’ve got the work we want and we’re getting more of it, we feel a little bit more able to turn stuff down that isn’t really us and there’s a good example of some probation service interference going on at the moment, which is about security vetting for our peer mentors and then the London Probation service suddenly...turned the peer mentor down and said, no, he can’t work on the project anymore and I said, well, we can’t work with your clients and they said, well, can’t you put someone else in? And we said, well, we haven’t got anyone else at the moment and, you know, he was doing a very good job ...it doesn’t specify we have to work solely with probation clients, so tell you what, you try and sort out your own client’s housing problems and we’ll carry on working with none probation clients. So I just said, look, Probation, this is the way it’s going to work, we are recruiting our staff, they’re going to do the job, I’m happy to tell probation who they are, if you’re not happy with who they are, we won’t work with your clients and he just went, oh, yeah, I see your point, you know, but back a few years ago, we would have said, oh, shit, right, we’ll have to re-recruit, but now we’re at the point of saying no. (14_06_12_01 manager)

The research findings also contained a subordinate theme which was maintaining independence within multi agency working with other criminal justice organisations. This was a particularly strong finding when discussing St Giles Trust work with the police and probation services in
interventions such as the Integrated Offender Management Projects supervising prolific and priority offender projects. The empirical research demonstrated how multi agency working did not preclude resistance to uncritical cooperation with statutory agencies. In particular, resistance was voiced to any attempts at the creeping penalisation of practice when the possibility of peer mentors enforcing orders and licences was raised. Such resistance was evidenced in the actions and thoughts of the peer mentor involved in the One service.

I thought that’s a terrible thing to do to integrate the two [statutory and voluntary sectors] because we are the One service and we’re a totally different service from what they are. I think it’s a pain working behind closed doors and the client not knowing that we’re here, but I think once you start mixing the two together and the charity becomes police enforced or probation enforced I don’t think it would work at all, because you wouldn’t get the trust that you get. You’ve got to remember, a lot of these people have got resentment towards the police, towards probation, you’ve sent me to prison, it’s your fault. They don’t look at the fact that they’ve probably done something to be sent to prison, they think it’s your fault, you’ve sent them to prison. They don’t like the courts, they don’t like the police, so if you start standing there making us [St Giles Trust peer mentors] like we’re part of that, I think that would affect the way it’s run. (13_09_12_02pm)

On an individual subjective level an ex-offender peer mentor in the Peterborough One Project constructed his work with prisoners leaving Peterborough prison as being independent and separated from the formalised criminal justice practice which accompanied the project. He relayed several practices whereby information on those he was working with who were “doing really, really well” was not communicated as it could have been used detrimentally and meant a possible return to custody. The respondent presented a clear indication of a mentor who can create a clear line of demarcation from the work of the formalised penal system. As a result the continuation of the working relationship between peer mentor and mentee takes precedence over any contractual arrangements which detail information sharing.

Yes, I feel that there are some things that I’ve built a trust up with a client that I don’t really want to pass on to the other agencies. So there are some things that I feel sometimes I don’t really want to pass on to them. They might have told me something and then for prolific offenders we have to do an update every month and that means one of our caseworkers goes to the meeting. Sometimes I think well, I don’t really want
to put that in there, because I know he’s been doing really, really well and he’s had one little downfall. If the prolific and priority offender (PPO) team knew about that then that would totally affect his order etcetera, he’d end up going back to prison and I don’t feel that that would probably be the right move for him. So sometimes I just don’t. I don’t lie or anything but I just turn my head from it and just imagine that that hasn’t happened. I think that helps us in a way to build that trust and build that relationship. (12_09_12 one service peer mentor)

“St Giles Trust are not the prison but they are in the prison”: Reforming the penal system from the inside

Whilst a great deal of policy discussion and academic literature has emphasized the impact on the penal voluntary sector from moving centre stage in a marketised penal system, very little research or comment has been made with respect to the possibilities of the penal voluntary sector’s ability to shape the subjective experiences of prisoners they undertake work with. As such power and influence have only been conceptualised as flowing in a unidirectional way with the penal voluntary sector usually deemed the recipient of more powerful external influences. In analysing whether the penal voluntary sector has become increasingly ‘crime controlled’ by the State, there has been little appreciation of the influential voice of the sector itself to change penal institutions or the subjective experience of prison itself. The empirical research findings here gives credibility to the notion that the prison and penal system is rather more permeable and subject to outside expertise and influence than many give credit to. At best the penal voluntary sector has been seen to ‘resist’ or adapt to state power and has rarely been conceptualised as an actor able to shape or influence the prison environment. In the empirical research findings, a subordinate code was used for ‘influencing penal agendas’. Whilst it is important not to overstate the extent to which St Giles Trust peer mentor interventions could completely transform the experience of incarceration, the subjective understandings of staff and ex-offender peer mentors spoke of an ability to influence, shape or transform other penal sector organisations and influence penal agendas.

Firstly, on an organisational level, St Giles Trust was understood to be able to shape the penal system as well as the opportunities and outlook of prisoners within it. By training peer mentors inside the prison and to be positioned as “being in the prison but not part of it”, St Giles Trust is able to offer opportunities to enable prisoners to take control of their lives. The charity’s work acts to challenge prisoners to consider the possibility to become peer mentors in the future and obtain the Vocational Qualification in the custodial environment noted for limited opportunities
for demonstrating personal agency. As a result, in the research findings St Giles Trust talk of their ability to influence both the nature of the custodial environment and the experience of incarceration. A number of peer mentors contrasted their dehumanising and harmful experiences of prison whereby they spoke of “falling apart” and were able to contrast this with the aspirational and agentic opportunities on offer from St Giles Trust. Peer mentors talk of St Giles Trust’s influence inside the prison able to ‘make individuals think rather than follow the rules and timetable, it was my first experience of being treated like a proper human being again and that, sort of, drew me’ (19_04_12_03 peer mentor). Similarly another peer mentor made reference to his experience of incarceration and how St Giles Trust changed his emotional and cognitive view of the experience when he stated “I would speak for the 100’s of peer advisors that, basically, engage with St Giles inside the prisons, it just gave me something to clutch at which was something else to the prison regime, which, obviously, you look forward to and make the best of” (21_06_12_01). As a result, St Giles Trust are discussed by ex-prisoners as being highly influential in transforming the experience of incarceration from one of despair and inactivity to an active and positive new start upon release. For St Giles Trust this meant that the ex-prisoner became a useful resource upon release.

“by the time that they’re released it’s then about how do you harness that energy and that commitment and that passion because that’s what’s happened by the time they’re released, that’s what they want to do (20_11_12_01)”

The fact that St Giles Trust operated within prisons and were considered as a positive influence to shape the prison regime has significant advantages for the charity. It enables the charity to have influence and particular legitimacy to prisoners and potential mentees as the mentor practice takes the form of a positive ‘insider’ influence. The senior manager below notes how the fact that trained peer mentors were also serving prisoners when they undertake their vocational award enabled the charity to have a unique presence in the penal system. Importantly, St Giles Trust peer mentors are therefore seen by prisoners as intrinsically part of the experience of incarceration rather than being a charity who operate from outside of the prison and only visit those who are serving a sentence. This is important legitimization in the eyes of prisoners as it enables the charity to understand and meet any obstacles to their practice when operating within the prison regime.

There are very few agencies who work in the prisons ...who actually have teams based in the prisons and therefore it’s not just about working with the offenders but it’s working within the system. And I think through our housing contracts that’s what we’ve been able to do
really, really, really well. And there aren’t that many agencies out there that can work effectively in prisons because actually to negotiate with wing officers and governors and be aware of the whims that they have and the power plays that go on and then just the sheer stubbornness sometimes of the way they work you’ve got to have...you’ve got to be prepared to work with it because otherwise you just bang your head against the wall and you might as well just come out. And I think it’s that...our ability to do that that has therefore contributes to the way in which then prisoners redefine their experience in a prison, because actually whereas we are part of the prison rather than somebody that comes in once in a blue moon (20_11_12_01 smt).

The finding detailed below also bears witness to St Giles Trust’s power and ability to influence the penal system from the inside as a big player in the penal voluntary sector. An individual peer mentor identified an unmet need in prison whilst he served his prison sentence. He subsequently convinced St Giles Trust to meet an unmet need and fund a project for gay prisoners called Inside and Out. This innovative support project developed and was taken up by the prison estate as a key area for development in order to improve the custodial experiences of gay prisoners. In the empirical research the respondent recalls the level of influence he enjoyed by his innovative and agenda setting work. Not only was the project able to offer support to those gay prisoners serving custodial sentences, but his influence spread to advising on broader prison regime change and the identification of homophobic hate crime and oppression in the prison estate.

So again, a huge, huge amount of experience in the last nine months really. You know, it’s been absolutely amazing and I’ve mastered the social media, I know, you know, what’s hot and what’s not hot, and how it’s done; and funding applications; creating file paperwork; doing presentations, even to the bit that I’ve done presentations to prison officers in a prison, up to 100 prison officers. I’d been asked to come and do a presentation to their officers. So me being an ex-offender, I have actually gone into the prison to do a presentation and shocked them that actually, you know, I’m an ex-offender and ex-offender with a custodial sentence behind me as well. But I’ve been involved with the inspectorate of the prisons, which is amazing, because...I’ve managed to, hopefully in the long run, make a difference how prisons will eventually change, so what’s required from them. So the inspectors, I’ve been involved with their sort of workshop and I’m trying to get them to come up with what they should be looking at and what sort of recommendations they should be making when, you know, they see that the LGBT side is not done correctly. And I’ve been involved with obviously -- what’s the other one -- oh,
Rather than becoming mere delivery agents, a project like 'Inside and Out' bears witness to the ability of some charities in the penal voluntary sector to become agenda setters in the penal sector. This also raises the notion of the charity acting with specific and uniquely positioned expertise in such matters. As a result of creating a range of funding arrangements, St Giles Trust were able to maintain a critical voice which was attuned to service user need. St Giles Trust were able to respond independently and innovatively to meet an unmet need and create a peer led intervention as the 'Inside and Out' project. Subsequently, the charity was able to act and advise independently and add significant value to their peer mentor support work in a number of London prisons at the very same time as the charity was undertaking payment by results work in Peterborough prison and becoming more centrally involved in the penal sector.

Another research finding identified in the empirical research related to St Giles Trust’s ability to have influence other criminal justice organisations and shape overall penal practice in more humane and altruistic ways. A code was used to represent the charity's ability to 'influence other organisations.' For example, the peer mentors on a multi-agency Integrated Offender Management project noted how the employment of those 'who have been there' had influenced other statutory sector organisation's practice. As a result of exposure to the values and practices of ex-offender peer mentors, Probation professionals were seen to demonstrate greater levels of empathy and understanding of the service users they worked with.

"So in some respects you're getting something like probation a little closer to the realities of people's lives by working with them.” (26_04_12_02 paid peer mentor)

In addition, despite working as part of a multi-agency team with powerful criminal justice agencies this peer mentor respondent noted how he was able to maintain a strong ethical stance to his practice which prioritised the needs of service users above other correctional tasks.

"my own manager told me from the start he said, you know, you decide how much you want to be told what to do and such like. You decide because he told me at the end of the day our organisation is all about the client, and provide support for the client. When it starts veering away from that, that's when you should take a step back and focus more.” (26_04_12_02 paid peer mentor)
With respect to the how power and influence can move multi-directionally, the peer mentor respondents spoke of using their knowledge to advise other criminal justice professionals to access social capital. For example, the peer mentor’s own experiences of accessing rare housing resources was used to benefit their own service users. Notably, peer mentor knowledge regarding accessing housing support, was deemed valuable and communicated to other probation professionals. As a result for the peer mentor respondent below, rather than consider himself in a subsidiary role to the Probation officer, the statutory professionals were constructed as being part of the peer mentor’s extended team as the Probation professionals became involved in the mentor’s agenda and actually contributed to the securing of his housing outcomes.

“I’ll tell probation what to say to access housing. So they [probation staff] will then become—not just my colleague- but like a worker of mine, so to speak. So I say I’ll tell you what to do. This is what you do. You phone here and this is what you say (26_04_12_02 paid peer mentor)

St Giles Trust: A ‘desistogenic’ place to ‘go straight’

A final superordinate theme offering significant insight into the extent to which St Giles Trust and the penal voluntary sector can provide humane, altruistic and caring services to service users whilst contracting with the state was the conceptualisation of St Giles Trust as a ‘desistogenic place’. This important research finding stems from the construction of St Giles Trust as a ‘redemptive space’ by ex-prisoners who undertake peer mentor roles, outside of the contractual arrangements with the state. Here the research turns its attention to the notion that St Giles Trust embodies a certain symbolism around its history, reputation and peer mentor delivery model which effectively represents St Giles Trust as a ‘desistogenic space’ offering a culture, value base and peer mentor role from which to create a new sense of self and leave crime behind. The notion of a “desistogenic space” or the importance of transformational environments has been largely absent in either penal policy or academic scholarship (Akerman, Needs and Bainbridge 2018:1, however see Stevens (2013) for an analysis of place in prison based therapeutic communities). It is constructed here as antonymic to the more commonly used notion of spatial analysis of “criminogenic places” (Hayward 2012) or high crime hot spots (Sherman etal 1989) characterised as areas of low socio-economic conditions and spots of high levels of policing activity.

As Rose (1990: 4) notes these assumptions about places “are embodied in the design of institutional space, the arrangements of institutional time and activity, procedures of reward and punishment, and the operation of systems of norms and judgements”. In the desistance from crime
research agenda, surprising little scholarship has been grounded in the specific organisational or special variables for successful desistance from crime. As such, Flynn (2007:181) notes how “the effect of place to further embed criminal behaviour; to reinforce its continuity, or help bring about its cessation has not been assessed to a significant extent”. Miller and Purifoye (2014:196) note the reliance on the non-profit sector to manage ex-prisoners’ individual and social problems and ensure successful offender re-entry. They argue that the context for resettlement is inescapable yet ubiquitous, the “prison re-entry organisation is a salient, yet clearly under examined urban organization”.

The notion of a ‘desistogenic place’ in the empirical research findings represents firstly, a geographically boundaried place. At the time of the fieldwork, St Giles Trust undertook most of its activities from its Headquarters in Camberwell in South London despite ambitions to develop a national footprint. St Giles Trust is understood rather differently in its traditional spatial locality by local citizens of South London than the government’s conceptualisation of St Giles Trust as a national penal voluntary sector charity able to scale up its delivery. However, a second notion of a ‘desistogenic place’ is the creation of a cognitive or emotional sense of belonging to the charity which may traverse geographical boundaries. For example, this service user, accessing the St Giles Trust Job club, reflected upon the history and reputation of the charity in Camberwell,

“when everywhere is shut and it’s cold, St Giles provided clothes to keep you warm. So this place goes way back and I used to recommend this place, even in jail, to lots of people, I’d meet guys sometimes and we’d talk about this place a lot, you know, people used to come back here sometimes, not for the facilities, but just to socialise, because a lot of their mates were here, it is a very addictive place and I do think it’s that past, as well as the place now, that makes this place good, do you know what I mean?” (service user in focus group 2)

When discussing the successful elements to the creation and adoption of professional ex-offender roles, Brown (1991:227) notes “Central to [the professional ex] is that a redemptive community provides a reference group whose moral and social standards are internalised. Professional ex-statuses are generated as individuals intentionally integrate and embrace rather than abandon their deviant biographies as a specific occupational strategy”. The research findings presented here, positions the values and elements of daily life with St Giles Trust as a specific reference group to ex-prisoners who take the first steps towards successful resettlement and for others who to go on and practice as a peer mentor, to assist others leave crime behind based on the premise that they are uniquely placed as someone ‘who has been there’.

The sense of St Giles Trust as a desistogenic place is actively constructed everyday when, as a result of St Giles work, individuals develop a renewed sense of self and place after leaving prison,
become housed or gain new skills and employment. In addition, the research findings presented below indicate how such a “desistogenic place” develops social capital underpinned by the values of kindness and care, the communication of trust and the active de-labelling of the ex-prisoner to which peer mentors attribute to developing a sense of belonging akin to that provided by family. The dual benefit for mentor and mentee is a “win–win” scenario as St Giles Trust creates both volunteer and paid roles for the service users who demonstrate an appetite to share their experiences and work with others. The unique position of an employer actively seeking ex-offenders is best exemplified by this service user at a focus group of service users who were accessing an ex-prisoner job club.

And this place is also not just here to help people but it’s also created the jobs for people, as well, there are people who used to use this place, who are using it in a different way, or they’re using it as...they’re staff here, they actually work here. Here now, but they came here from prison, as a user, but now they’re actually staff members, so this place has created jobs for people (23_05_12 job club participant focus group)

St Giles Trust and Institutional Generativity and mutual aid

Eleven codes in the research findings were specifically made to the importance of help and assistance, particularly in relation to helping others and helping oneself. This theme is obviously linked to the notion of generativity, the philosophy and various practices of caring in non-violent and durable ways for oneself, for others and for the future (Halsey and Harris 2011:74, Maruna 2001:117). Rather than being excluded from pro-social opportunities and self-narratives (LeBel et al 2008:134), St Giles Trust purposively offers ex-prisoners a range of volunteer and paid peer mentor roles and emphasises their skills and personal attributes which makes this work effective. As a result, St Giles Trust provides a ‘place’ where the kindness and positive qualities of individuals involved in the criminal justice system are emphasized and become valorised. As a result peer mentors assist others and simultaneously accept the common purpose of the group which is for all to engage in anti-criminal behaviour. This “retroflexive reformation” (Cressey in LeBel 2007:2) is at the core of St Giles Trust peer mentoring interventions including the “Meet at the Gates”, housing information and advice and gang related projects. As a result rather than being understood as an emblem of the shadow penal state, St Giles Trust represented a new and vitalised reformatory self-help institution in the penal voluntary sector which contrasted sharply with the rest of the largely retributive penal system in England and Wales. By practicing in a generative way, individuals became connected to others addressing their previous criminality.
and problems in their lives in an environment which nurtures and rewards such behaviour. The following research findings speak of the impact of St Giles Trust’s practice “from someone who has been there”. Here peer mentors talk of the sense of fulfilment (Maruna 2001:119) from practicing in a generative way towards others whilst benefitting from the experience themselves,

I think, you know, there is an undeniable good feeling about helping other people and giving something back and, you know, some of these people that have been in prison for quite a long time and they’ve probably suffered quite a lot and their families have been ripped apart and all that kind of stuff, to come at the end of that, but managed to then make that into something positive and say, oh, you know, despite the fact all that’s happened to me, that’s now...it’s not just bad experience, it’s experience and I can now use that to the good and some positive.(19_04_12_03 peer mentor wire)

I believe, sincerely, that I am making a positive contribution to their lives, which if they hadn’t engaged with me, you know, it wouldn’t have happened, so in some respects has made me a lot of friends, but it’s helped a lot of people, which, in turn, has also helped me. I’ve had an awakening in life that, actually, doing good is better than doing bad and you can be a much better person, more fulfilled and all the positive adjectives which you can apply to that and get the benefits from the satisfaction that that brings about and, I think, that we’ve all, kind of, shared that experience and, I think, that’s really, in essence, in a small statement, you know, that sums it all up, I think, they just understand that to do good is better than to do bad and not only are you a better person, but you feel a better person also. (17_05_12 paid peer)

The virtue of care for one’s own future self and others is at the core to acts of generativity (Maruna 2001:123). From the research findings, a peer mentor notes how the importance of care for others potentially involved a detrimental impact for herself. This aspect of generativity which prioritised care for others at the expense of oneself was a common thread in the semi-structured interview with peer mentors. Peer mentors spoke of working with individuals in need despite their ineligibility for services as specific funding arrangements were for citizens in a particular London borough. Peer mentors also spoke of getting home very late in the evening after spending the day assisting mentees with benefits and housing and ‘going the extra mile’ to care.

“Most definitely, not at all, if we had 10 young people sat around this table and you had the power to say to me, I’m going to put all of these 10 people in housing, I’m going to give them jobs for life and the training to go with it for them to have a positive future,
that they will stick at, but you've got to give up your salary, I would do that tomorrow”.
(19_04_12_02 paid peer mentor)

In addition to the importance of the ethic of care and generativity, the centrality of “having been there” was also discussed with respect to an organic and empathic understanding of the world of the mentee. As a result the genuine demonstration of empathy was attributed by respondents to the generative opportunities provided by St Giles Trust in peer mentor projects which accepted ex-offenders as skilled and knowledgeable individuals through making sense of their own experiences.

I've developed a lot of knowledge and, to a degree, ashamed to say this really, but a, kind of, personally, generally a better attitude towards other people, more appreciation of those that are given a less fortunate start in life and hopefully it's made me a bit of a better person. And, you know, I can endorse that by saying, although I was financially a lot more successful in my past life, with legitimate businesses, and I would underline legitimate, you know, I'm not a career criminal, I actually get more job satisfaction out of doing this, because of that change in attitude that the whole environment has brought about. (17_5_12 paid staff)

The reputation of St Giles Trust as a genuine “desistogenic place” was contrasted with other charities in the penal voluntary sector who were not underpinned by the requisite values and ethics required to recruit ex-prisoners as experts in rehabilitation work.

Yeah and as I say it just makes me laugh because all of them will be out there now thinking of how they're going to go out there and employ tons of ex-offenders in order to win these contracts. And as Rob said on the radio you can't do it on peanuts, these guys aren't just going to go and do it, they need to be trained, they need to be motivated and they need to be working within an organisation that accepts them. This is the thing we're constantly keep coming back to and it's wrong but other organisations find it really hard to just employ ex-offenders, it just seems to be really difficult for them to make that leap of trust and acceptance. (20_11_12_01 senior management team)

The underpinning values of a “desistogenic place” - Acceptance, De-Labelling and unconditional trust

In constructing St Giles Trust as an altruistic and generative “desistogenic place” within the penal voluntary sector, respondents often spoke of the central importance of St Giles Trust's
underpinning value base and specific cultural environment to begin the journey to desistance from crime. The analysis of the research findings highlighted how a sense of acceptance, the de-labelling of negative attributes and a new found sense of being trusted were critical features of a place where crime could be left behind.

I one of the few desistance from crime studies which moved on from solely attributing individual factors to going straight and ascribing real influence to the social. Maruna, LeBel, Naples and Mitchell (2009:30) note how in the usual course of events, ex-offenders and ex-prisoners are often more likely to be treated with fear and suspicion despite years and years of conformity and positive behaviour. They state that sometimes a single act of deviance may outweigh hundreds of non-deviant acts in how society views the law breaker. Leaving crime behind can be seen to involve an alternative element of the looking glass self-concept whereby another’s high expectations of individuals can lead to greater self-belief in the offenders themselves. This is often a process diametrically opposed to many experiences of custodial environments and the penal system (Maruna, LeBel, Naples and Mitchell 2004). By foregrounding the value of the volunteer ex offender peer mentor role as core to St Giles Trust identity and mission, the charity presents as a looking glass for positive behavioural change and the ability of a law abiding sense of self. It may be that St Giles Trust’s construction of peer mentors as embodying important knowledge and skills, actually relabels individuals in a positive sense as a desister from past criminal behaviours.

Similarly, Needs and Adair-Stantiall (2018:30) note that the interconnected factors of firstly, the shaping of identity, secondly, the construction of meaning in actions, thirdly, a sense of personal agency and control and finally a sense of belonging and connectedness are crucial to the creation of enabling, transformational or growth milieus. These four areas related to successful transitions can “can cast new light on facets such as identity and narrative that figure prominently in the literature on desistance from offending and on some aspects that have figured less prominently” (Needs and Adair-Stantiall 2018:35).

The peer mentor’s undertaking of generative acts are then recognized and valorized by the charity and reflected back to the mentor in a de-labelling process. The ex-prisoner becomes the peer mentor when he/she demonstrates a motivation to change their previous criminality and then becomes ‘trained’ by the successful completion of the Vocational Qualification in Advice and Guidance and engages in peer mentoring work. By successfully demonstrating competence in the vocational qualification, the ex-prisoner is relabelled as an adviser and guider of others. The graduation ceremonies, witnessed as part of the field work, involved narrative accounts of personalised journeys from involvement in criminality and gang activity to St Giles Trust peer mentors roles. For those who have successfully completed the vocational qualification and
received certification, such ceremonies had a deeply held significance as status elevation ceremonies whereby the individual becomes something more worthwhile than the negative connotation of 'offender' (Maruna 2011).

In the research findings the centrality of unconditional organisational trust was made 13 times and on 16 occasions St Giles Trust’s role in the shedding of stigmatized, risky or criminal labels was made reflecting an organisational acceptance and tolerance of law breakers and ex-prisoners. The absence of stigma attached to previous law breaking for peer mentors and service users is beautifully illustrated by the service user at the Job Club. A discussion of previous behaviour without shame allows for an open discussion.

So many of the volunteers here are themselves ex-offenders, it’s good that you can sit down and say this has happened, or I’ve got a bit of a problem with this, or that and they can help point you in the right direction, and you’re not muttering under your breath...you can quite easily discuss what your issue is without feeling that you’re begin judged, or anything. So you don’t need to keep all those problems to yourself, like, somebody else said to me most organisations, you can’t go in and talk about those sort of problems, because you’re supposed to be hiding all of that, the fact that you’ve been involved in crime...You know, whereas here, it’s not a problem, is it? (23_05_12 service user)

Similarly, the importance of the acceptance without judgement of past criminal behaviour is embedded in the following words of the manager of community projects and the fundraising and marketing team who attempt to communicate the everyday culture of St Giles Trust.

it’s funny, isn’t it, it’s, like, you spend years working in various organisations where if you’ve got a criminal record, you, sort of, like, live in dread that will it ever somehow come out into the open and then at St Giles Trust, it’s almost, like, the reverse, sort of, like, oh, by the way, I’m an ex offender! You know. Don’t worry, I’ve been in prison as well! It’s almost...it’s not a badge of honour, but it’s so part of the culture here that it’s normal” (14_06_12_01 manager community)

I mean, and that’s the other beautiful thing with St Giles is that you don’t get...well, certainly with my experience, is, you know, there’s clients, there’s volunteers, there’s former service users and you can’t tell who is who. I mean, like there’s no...you know,
offenders or ex-offenders or what have you, they don’t have something slapped across their forehead. (12_07_12 communicating and fundraising)

The power behind St Giles Trust’s acceptance and positive welcome to ex-prisoners and ex-offenders is also constructed by a community projects manager when he notes the extent to which St Giles Trust attempts to wipe the slate clean and construct a coherent sense of peer mentors as positive and socially useful members of the community. Here, St Giles Trust is conceptualised by the peer mentors and service users as an organisational embodiment of those interactions between individuals which can build supportive relationships ultimately bringing about a renewed sense of personal identity and personal growth. For him the key to St Giles Trust as a charity (Akerman, Needs and Bainbridge 2018:3).

is that complete non-judgmental atmosphere, isn't it, where if you were an ex-offender, even the most liberal organisation, you would still probably be in an extreme minority and it would still be something that you just keep completely under wraps and you’d be living with it day to day thinking, you know... Yeah, whereas, here, no matter how, you know, even if you’ve served, like, 30 sentences, you know, we’ve got guys who have done 25 years of custody, you know, life sentences, so nothing you could have done would be shocking in this environment, in a way....So no matter where you come from, what your background, what your past is, you know, people who somewhere else would be completely vilified, would go unnoticed here (14_06_12_01 manager community)

However in the empirical research it was clear that St Giles Trust were indeed interested in shaping individual behaviour in particular acceptable ways. The charity’s core delivery model of placing ex-offenders at the core of practice had certain commercial and reputational risks. As a result, whilst past criminality might be accepted and individuals encouraged to learn or make utility from it, an individual’s future law abiding behaviour was very much a central concern of the charity. St Giles Trust demanded that peer mentors remained resilient and law abiding in the face of any future adversity. Peer mentors were to be active in creating and accepting opportunities for self-improvement and to accept personal responsibility for behavioural change as key considerations for the peer mentor to demonstrate in order to comply with the St Giles Trust way of doing things.
that's definitely how it is and really it's just this ethos of what has gone before doesn't matter, you know, you have to acknowledge it but no-one is going to judge you on that, what they're going to judge you on is what you do when you get here (12_09_12 one service peer mentor).

In prison peer mentors are doing the Vocational Qualification in half the time but where it works particularly well is where we have teams in the prison. So we're immediately drawing them in to the St Giles Trust way of doing things, they're part of the team, they're treated differently at St Giles to the way they're treated before they leave. When they're not on the peer mentor job in the prison then obviously the people they are interacting with are prison staff, so again they're back to being prisoners. While they've got that St Giles Trust shirt on they're treated with respect both by our staff and by other prisoners. So you can see that we are starting the process of elevating them back again into human beings. So you can see why they want to come and work for St Giles when they leave because actually it feels the right place to be (20_111_12_01smt).

St Giles Trust as a family: Intersectionality, belonging and the importance of familial bonds

In the empirical research findings 24 coding occasions from 12 sources were made linking St Giles Trust to the notion of belonging and the family. The majority of these references made links between firstly, the ways in which the ex-prisoners, acting as peer mentors, and mentees had a difficult or non-existent family support network to use in their attempts to resettle into the community and leave crime behind. Secondly, and related to the above, were respondents who emphasised the various ways in which St Giles Trust acted to fill any missing sense of family bonds. These research findings can very much be attributed to the service users and peer mentor volunteers subjective understandings of St Giles Trust rather than as how the charity attempted to talk about itself in marketing or commercial dealings. Whilst St Giles Trust often made reference to offering ex-prisoners and service users advice and guidance, housing interventions and anti-gang related activities, at no time did it present itself as a ‘family’.

The importance of a subjective construction of a sense of belonging and socially structured family relationships link to a key aspect of social capital and has been referred in numerous studies regarding desistance from crime (Farrall 2002, 2004). Similarly, Akerman, Needs and Bainbridge (2018:3) note that penal environments often create individuals with a sense of being marooned or isolated from others, “conditions that foster a sense of connectedness may be necessary both for openness to change and ultimately for reintegration. The environment ...can play a significant part
in their recovery and rehabilitation". Whilst the connections to family have been highlighted as significant underpinning social conditions in order to leave crime behind for many offenders, more recently desistance scholars have begun to highlight the particular importance of family to the heterogeneous community of Black ex-prisoners (Calverley 2012:110). Calverley (2012) notes how the dispersed, diverse and informal formation of families of Black and dual heritage members of the community provided fewer opportunities to improve social capital to make the successful transition away from crime. For Calverley (2010:113), the insecurities of bonds which can arise from the diversity of family structures in Black communities is compounded by the other social and economic disadvantages such as a lack of secure employment, secure housing and limited educational achievement experienced by the group (Strickland 2016:130, McDonald and Day 2010:532).

The absence of strong family bonds is seen to deteriorate the reforming of role and identity opportunities necessary for going straight such as those of the traditional 'father' role and the resultant feeling of heightened self-esteem for would-be desisters. In addition, for Calverley (2010:112) the bonds that tied family members together become much weaker and less coherent adding to the impediments to poor, male, Black and dual heritage desisters. Whereas the existing criminal justice system is seen as containing various institutional bureaucratic obstacles for Black desisters from crime (Glynn 2016:27), in the research findings St Giles Trust was referred to many times as embodying a family. The notion of St Giles Trust as representing a family therefore relates to the absence of such symbolic arrangements in peer mentors lives and their resultant desire and emotional need to have family, relationships, create strong and enduring bonds and develop a sense of belonging. The One service case manager highlighted the importance of family;

*Well the thing is that eventually they [ex-prisoners] do want ties with their family, unless it's been broken or there's a client of mine who's gone through the care system, foster parents and so on, but that doesn't meant to say he can't start a relationship, start building for yourself now. You're an adult now so you can move forward. So many hearts have been broken in the past, you don't feel confident to move on, whatever the issues are, there's always a positive. I hate to use the word clichés and so on, but yeah, there are positives. Of course there are, because there are people out there who do care. We are humans. We need love. And eventually that will come, providing that you stabilise their life (13_09_12 one service case worker).*
Whereas the existing criminal justice system is seen as containing various institutional bureaucratic obstacles for Black desisters (Glynn 2016:27) St Giles Trust are understood as standing to oppose discrimination and attempting to break these obstacles down. At times respondents spoke of the opposition to peer mentors entering into the prison or community justice field when they undertook roles which involved advocating for mentees to obtain resources for their clients. Where peer mentors had advocated to demand housing, it was often construed as being rude to professionals. The manager here notes the introduction of Black and excluded peer mentors into the field was often resisted by others.

Because I know that they wouldn’t deliberately just go and be rude to someone, you know, for no reason, that wouldn’t happen, I...you know, maybe this is going a bit too far, sometimes I get the impression that there’s a slight anti ex offender, even potentially classist, racist element to some of the professionals that don’t want what they clearly perceive as rowdy, black ex offender, working class guy coming in and quoting housing laws to them, you know, and they’ll say, hang on a minute, I’m a white middle class professional person, I’m not going to be spoken to by this guy.

In contrast to the lack of stability around family relationships noted in the peer mentors lives, St Giles Trust was constructed as a counter to such problematic arrangements. The references to family were used with respect to providing a sense of belonging and bonding to ex-prisoners which was absent in other aspects of the peer mentor and mentees lives.

whereas here, you know, you do, you get people who literally say things like, if you cut me I’ll bleed St Giles Trust. It’s, like, the passion is almost frightening sometimes. So it is that, and maybe it’s slightly self congratulatory, you know, but that everyone’s feeling good about themselves that they’re here, they’re not in a prison, they’re doing something fantastic, they’re part of some quite...a, kind of, unique phenomenon and they can sense it and even, like you say, even the guys that just come in and do the Job Club who haven’t really joined the family in that way pick up on the atmosphere. (14_06_12_01 manager community)

Yeah, well, I agree with that, I think there is a really strong culture and it may be slightly, sort of a pro-social gang culture and I’m currently reading stuff about gangs and talking
to people through SOS and they talk about how people have this sense of belonging and it’s, like, a, sort of, it’s, like another version of a family. This is like a positive version of that and there’s this real feel of a family, very close knit, everyone wants to be here, a lot of people have started their journey with St Giles as sitting in a prison cell and the first they’ve ever heard of St Giles is someone has come around and said, do you need some help with your housing and then, you know, five, six years later, they’re still here and they’re still saying, I’ll never forget the day I first heard about St Giles Trust, so that’s incredibly powerful, isn’t it? (14_06_12_01 manager community)

The emotional bonds which develop between mentors, service users and staff was also made reference to in the empirical research. The idea of family was accompanied by the notion of an emotional sense of home constructed here with all the accompanying sense of bond and safe place to build up confidence and abilities.

And so what we do as an organisation we provide them with a home if you like with which to continue to build up their confidence and their abilities but give them a meaningful job at the same time, whether it’s paid or unpaid almost initially is irrelevant because actually it’s the job itself, that we give them responsibility and we treat them...we don’t treat them as old lags, we treat them as individuals who’ve got skills and expertise if you like to offer. So all of a sudden they’re in a working environment that is...they feel comfortable in. So that’s where it’s excelled, where our services have really, really worked it’s because we’ve been able to harness all that (20_11_12_01smt)

Finally, the superordinate research finding that St Giles Trust offers a generative and transformational environment, services to assist ex service users, and roles to develop a new sense of self are encapsulated by the peer mentor below who contrasts the St Giles Positive force resisting all the negative forces of social exclusion and discrimination. The text notes the possibility in St Giles Trust of the continuous exposure to corrective social encounters which enable trust and confidence in the most socially disadvantaged individuals. With a sense of security offered by St Giles Trust’s value base and personal interactions, peer mentors are able to explore new senses of self and commit to new identities containing elements of compassion and kindness to the self and to others. Such an environment synergises the various elements giving rise to desistance and encourages and supports transformations and new reconciliations in identity, rehabilitation and behavioural change.
And the other thing about the peer advisor stuff and this to me is the most amazing thing, is that it’s organic, so that matey trains up, comes out, gets his NVQ, goes back in, other people get interested, they come out, they train up, they go back in, and so it’s presenting a positive force against all these crushing negative forces that these people are surrounded by. You know, we can’t even imagine what effort it would take to pull yourself out of that if you’re in that culture of people, up in that culture, that’s all you ever know, (12_09_12_one service peer mentor)

The volunteer peer mentor as bulwark against St Giles Trust mission drift

An important feature of maintaining independence, distinctiveness and offering enrichment activities and access to welfare resources is St Giles Trust’s core delivery model. At its core, St Giles Trust offers support and advice from volunteer peer mentors who have unique knowledge and skills from “having been there”. As a result the importance for St Giles Trust of securing legitimacy and ‘buy in’ from volunteers and ex-offenders can act as a bulwark to agendas incorporating either the delivery of coercion and punishment, or alternatively interventions which amount to managerial tick box exercises. St Giles Trust’s political and commercial uniqueness and legitimacy came from a delivery model which places ex offender peer mentor volunteers to the centre of the charities identity. Peer mentors are often noted as being the life blood of St Giles Trust. As unpaid actors, peer mentors could act as a bulwark to creeping managerialism and challenges to core values in St Giles. As a result where projects in the penal field involved coercion, conditionality or enforcement of prison licences, St Giles Trust adapted their delivery model away from peers taking centre stage.

St Giles Trust’s future commercial success as a charity in the penal voluntary sector was therefore by preserving the values and attributes around altruism, generativity and care from those who had similar experiences. By remaining true to its core values and principles, the charity actually became more influential and successful. The need to draw a hypothetical line in the sand with respect to what peer mentors could be expected to do was noted by the member of the senior management team.

Yeah, if peers were just keeping an eye on service users and not doing much more than that then we’d lose all that legitimacy yeah. Yeah, it just wouldn’t work. So yeah I think we were quite clear that when we employed peer advisors. We employ them because they deliver particular roles really, really well. And so we’re not in the business of perverting that into something else, it’s not punishment. I think we’re very clear about what we’re about as a
The subjective understanding of the peer mentor role demonstrates the amount of agency which volunteer mentors undertake their work. In the conversation below despite the peer mentor being co-located with more powerful statutory criminal justice professionals he makes reference to the fact that he has maintained his own sense of values and managed the tension whilst resisting the temptation to become part of the Probation Service’s supervision of offenders. He highlights how his values underpinning his practice remained distinctive from the statutory arrangements of probation. The peer mentors below offer resistance to the co-option of peer mentors to coercive roles in the penal system by differentiating their role from those of the statutory sector.

“I suppose the police and probation are doing more sort of monitoring and making sure offenders adhere to their licence... You know that working for St Giles Trust you sometimes you want to distance yourself slightly from the police/probation aspect of the IOM because we were trying to offer something rather different (26_04_12_01 paid peer mentor)
The importance of creating and maintaining independence and distinctness was also translated into personal style and dress by the charities work in a multi-agency setting.

I really want to maintain some level of distinctiveness so I am not just seen as part of the disruptive carrot and stick police thing... that's why I have a messy beard and messy hair you can tell im not a police officer... there is a lot more scope to be innovative and try different things (26_04_12_01 paid peer mentor)

St Giles Trust, structural constraints and not moving on

The final theme relating to St Giles Trust as a redemptive or desistogenic space was in relation to the structural constraints and limitations of self-invention afforded to those leaving prison. In terms of making up oneself, structural and institutional factors are important in creating the boundaries and possibilities of building a new sense of self. As such agency or the possibility to needs to be linked to the effects of very challenging societal context. At the time of the research in 2012 and 2013 London had witnessed some of the worst riots in a generation and the UK economy was in a significant period of economic retrenchment and austerity. As a result the opportunities for an already stigmatised and socially marginalised group of ex-prisoners, some of who were still subject to prison licence were few and far between. This was implicitly understood by St Giles Trust who throughout this period continued to “stick its neck out” to advocate for ex offender volunteer peer mentor interventions. As Healy (2013:557) notes the difference between ex-offenders who say they want to go straight and the few who actually do so can be attributed to lack of will or motivation but it can also be from a lack of ‘a way’ or the few robust and meaningful ways to create a new sense of oneself.

As a result it may seem obvious that structural factors can shape and provide new avenues for reinvention of one’s self or alternatively may actively limit such opportunities. With respect to St Giles Trust, for all the important talk of reinvention or recapturing one’s true core, the contribution of the peer mentor role was limited in several respects. Firstly, the making up of the peer mentor role involved calling on individualised resources to achieve desistance from crime rather than a plethora of respectable and redemptive roles in society. Secondly, whilst St Giles Trust offered ex-prisoners a number of peer mentor roles which were valued and constructed them as knowledgeable and skilled individuals, they were however contained within the institutional setting of a charity in the penal voluntary sector. As a result it is important to remember that however much peer mentors were valorised and to the foreground of the charity’s mission and delivery, most were undertaking such roles in a voluntary capacity and
any sense of peer mentoring being constructed as ‘work’ was only in the subjective understandings of some of the peers mentors themselves. Secondly, the role of peer mentor relies on the reconstruction of criminal knowledge and identity and can only be the beginning of a pro social sense of self. This was best articulated by a senior manager who stated that a key member of staff in the SOS gangs project was continually referred to as an ex gang member and peer mentor in the London and National press. As a senior manager stated “when we think about [name of peer mentor] of the SOS gangs project well he’s been interviewed by national newspapers and advised the London Mayor on gang related crime, however at some point he has to move on from being an ex-gang member and become an expert on gangs”. Perhaps this would happen once he completed his Doctoral studies into new theoretical constructions of gangs but in the meantime the notion of constructing him as the professional -ex served St Giles Trust well in terms of politically and commercial legitimacy.

As a result there was a considerable desire and demand that such volunteering such eventually result in paid employment with St Giles Trust and until this point new self identities around generative volunteering were precarious and volatile as “volunteering don’t pay the bills or put food on the table” (peer mentor field notes). A third structural limitation was the fact that St Giles Trust was a somewhat artificial environment of acceptance and trust for ex-prisoners. As a result, in terms of developing non-criminal identities the looking glass which communicated positivity respect and self-worth didn’t transfer into the community.

“There’s plenty of people that have come through the St Giles system here that are easily good enough and skilled enough to slot in other organisations, but they simply don’t want to, because they’re going to lose this culture” (14_06_12_01manager community)

The harsh realities of finding employment after incarceration were well known by the peer mentors themselves.

I think it’s worthwhile what we do here as well. I mean, like I say, it will go on the CV, it’s a reference, it’s to show that I haven’t given up, you know, that I haven’t thought fuck it, I’ll just stay in bed, you know. I mean, basically, you know, you’re spending two days of your time for nothing and helping and I think it gives you your self-esteem, you know. Like I say, I won’t give up but I’m doing something worthwhile in my life, I’m not doing nothing you know, and that was a problem, because I was getting turned down for so many jobs, you know, it was like a slap in the face and I needed something where someone appreciated that I was trying to do something positive and that was St Giles. (12_09_12 peer mentor one service)
As a result St Giles trust were concerned that the economic climate and exclusionary community attitudes contrasted with the artificial sense of trust and acceptance afforded to peer mentors in this redemptive space had problems with respect to peer mentors not moving on and seeing their future as only through the lens of opportunities in St Giles Trust often equating this with paid employment.

“I suppose that can be an issue as well, we do get quite a dependency. We have a really low staff turnover, which is great in a way, but my personal view is it’s good to turn that over because these people that haven’t worked before it’s nice to go and work somewhere else. A peer advisor that come out of prison done 6 months here and got a peer job here because we’re not like most organisations. So we do have quite a dependency. Because that would say to people you can get jobs in the harsh real world out there that aren’t so tolerant” (20_11_12_02 peer mentor).

Finally the reality of ex-prisoners skills and their ability to flourish outside of this redemptive and desistogenic space was also referred to with respect to creating dependence and the risk of goal failure outside of this unique environment.

“That brings you back to the uniqueness of St Giles Trust. And yes, I hear this quite often; some say, oh my God, I’m going to leave, and then you just laugh, because you know that they’re not going to go anywhere. They couldn’t exist without St Giles, and of course you then look at someone, say the older prisoners who’ve done very, very long sentences who’ve then been taken on by St Giles’, they’re there for the rest of their lives really. They’re not going anywhere. Because they’ve got no friends, no family. Very insular life, you know, they live in a little flat or a bedsit. St Giles is their life. They get up every day, and yes, I’m going to St Giles. Okay, they’re being paid for it as well, but there’s more significantly, if you stop paying them they’d probably still turn up. We’ve got you now, haven’t we, we’re going to stop your wages.” (31_05_12_04 volunteer Ipswich project)

St Giles Trust as a ‘Hybrid’ penal voluntary sector organisation

The research findings presented here focus on one of the most important issues facing the penal voluntary sector in the future of rehabilitation and community Justice. Concerns around whether the penal voluntary sector will become an agent of expanded penal control or maintain it’s
independence and distinctiveness whilst being funded by government have been returned to time and again by political commentators, policy analysts and academic contributors. In a similar vein to how the penal voluntary sector has recently been conceptualised by Tomczak (2017) the empirical research demonstrates how an individual charitable trust itself is characterised by internal heterogeneity and diversity. St Giles Trust has simultaneously turned it’s attention to recent opportunities to successfully contract with government and deliver penal agendas to reduce recidivism whilst continuing to offer creative projects to improve access to housing and benefits in the penal sphere and within civil society. A key to a nuanced conceptualisation of the penal voluntary sector which is able to understand the variety of nuanced relationships between St Giles Trust, private finance and government is to move away from a blunt sectoral analysis. The fact is that a significant number of organisations in all sectors are indelibly marked by their relationships and linkages with organisations from other sectors. Any analysis of the cross sectoral analysis needs to move beyond a notion of sectoral blurring and will require a flexible approach to studying the different sectors. Rather, St Giles Trust is better understood, not as an emblem of the penal voluntary sector in a purist sense but rather as a hybridised organisation. Such hybridity allows a much more enabling and nuanced understanding than the notion of a boundaried penal voluntary sector and enables analysis and understanding of how the penal voluntary sector can operate beyond concerns regarding sectoral purity. As Giddens (1998:79) noted “there are no permanent boundaries between government and civil society” and As Billis (2010:12) notes once analysis can articulate the diversity in the penal voluntary sector we can begin to articulate the significant extent to which “the organisations themselves have become “mixed”.

Such research into hybridised organisations within the voluntary sector is in its infancy (Billis 2010:14) however a number of observations can be made. St Giles Trust as a hybrid organisation has its origins and identity firmly in the realms of the voluntary association. Indeed, St Giles Trust has significant political legitimacy as a result of its position as a leading penal voluntary sector organisation which is emblematic of government imaginary which focuses on innovation and volunteering. As a result St Giles Trust maintains its ultimate sense of independence in the voluntary sector as it retains the power to elect it’s own board of trustees and appoint its senior management team. Its key stakeholders are those in the penal voluntary sector rather than those representing business or government. However the future of the penal voluntary sector arrangements will have to be protected with respect to the sector of ownership.

“well if you think with the commissioning future with this happening that services are going to have to get in bed with various people that they wouldn’t have touched with a barge pole
in the past and make some choices that are going to be a bit uncomfortable for them or else they're going to not be invited to the table. The likely winners of any bids will be a mixture of private sector, public sector and voluntary sector. That will be the strongest bidder. We're sort of bringing the strengths of all three sectors together. So I think the voluntary sector is inevitably going to be involved. (13_09_12_one service case manager)"

Indeed the empirical research demonstrates that St Giles Trust have awareness and acceptance accepts that their power to remain independent of voice and action is compromised by partnering with business in the Transforming Rehabilitation market. As a result they enter into a partnership with Ingeus and create a separate limited company named the Reducing Reoffending Partnership and this is then to some extent divorced from the voluntary sector and peer mentor aspects of St Giles Trust activities. St Giles Trust have a role on the board of the Reducing Reoffending Partnership where they entered into government contracts to supervise offenders with less than 12 month prison licenses whereas the decision makers at Ingeus have absolutely no representation on the Board of Trustees at St Giles Trust. St. Giles have retained many key features of the penal voluntary sector despite contracting with the state. The charity employs significant number of volunteers to work with service users. As a result it continues to be close to its service users and distribute any surpluses to improve or underpin its delivery. St Giles Trust has made no moves to reconfigure its relationships with service users to a rational and impersonal market logic and actually has spoken out when government marketization has resulted in real risks to this effect. Indeed throughout the empirical research there is ample evidence that peer mentors on the ground enjoyed a significant degree of front line freedom and agency to practice as they saw fit. His involved not always respecting and complying with particular funding arrangements and continuing to offer coffee, care and housing advice to service users irrespective of the specific contractual specifications. As the empirical research has demonstrated St Giles Trust is able to straddle the divide between independence and responsibilisation with an ability to both contract with government and participate in high profile, marketised penal arrangements and offer value to service users with respect to support, care, housing and employment opportunities.
Chapter 6: Governmental and subjective rationalities of the ex-offender as ‘peer mentor’

Introduction

In order to make sense of the multiplicity of ways in which governments make particular populations thinkable, knowable and shape their conduct in particular ways, requires analysis at the governmental and the subjective level. As Stenson (1997:45) notes the analysis of government documents and archives need to be integrated with research into the social practices and an analysis of governance from below including the textual and discursive levels. As such, in terms of analysing the mainstreaming of volunteer ex-offender peer mentors as individual actors in community justice, researchers should attend to both the programmatical and the ‘real’, including the recognition of the virtues of oral discourses and multiple forms of data (Lippert and Stenson 2010:476). This chapter offers both an analysis of the governmental construction of ex-offender volunteer peer mentors in government strategy and documented penal reform programmes and additionally, seeks to provide insights into the subjective realities of peer mentoring roles and identities. It details how peer mentors interpret and shape the peer mentor role themselves and make sense of their practices. In doing so this chapter presents research findings relating to two key research questions

- How can we understand the nature and impact of successive governments’ neoliberal penal reforms particularly in relation to the governance of the peer mentor?
- To what extent does St Giles Trust peer mentor delivery model encourage the cessation of criminal behaviour?

Governing Rehabilitation: Technologies of power and technologies of the self.

Michel Foucault was interested in his latter life in how humans turns themselves into ‘subjects’ by their own means or by the involvement of others. Subjects are understood to have acted upon their own bodies, souls, thoughts, conduct and ways of being in order to transform themselves and attain a certain valorised self (Martin, Gutman and Hutton ed (1988:5). As such it is important to analyse and discover the thoughts, emotions and practices by which individuals effect change in themselves. Foucault understood such ways of acting on oneself as ‘technologies of the self’ (Foucault 1988). He described them as technologies “which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immorality” (Foucault in Martin etal 1988). Such ‘technologies of the self’ interrelate and have an important ‘contact point’ with
governmental technologies of power which interact to determine the conduct of individuals and subject them to certain ends or domination. Foucault (1988) often combines the “contact” between ‘technologies of power’ with ‘technologies of the self’ which he terms governmentality. Indeed for Foucault, government refers to the ways in which one might be urged and “educated to bridle one’s own passions, to control one’s own instincts and to govern oneself” (Rose 1999:3). As a result such ‘technologies of the self’ are formed alongside the government technologies of domination underpinned by strategies of discipline and normalisation. Foucault (1998:19) actually stated that the ways individual act upon themselves had received too little attention, "Perhaps i've insisted too much on the technology of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others and in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself, in the technology of self" (Foucault 1998:19)

Foucault’s (1998) analysis of the technologies of the self also sheds light on the means by which individuals come to construe, decipher and act upon themselves in relation to what is permitted, desirable or alternatively forbidden. For example, we can see how particular understandings of enterprise culture and neoliberal political mentalities of government can shape the desirable activities of free citizens. As a result “The autonomy of the self is...not the timeless antithesis of political power, but one of the objectives and instruments of modern mentalities of government. Governing in a liberal democratic way means governing through the freedom and aspirations of subjects rather than in spite of them”. (Rose 1988:7).

In Neoliberal political rationalities the wellbeing of society is deemed to be ensured by the active, enterprising activities of self-serving individuals and not as a result of the centralised planning, and dependency afforded by state welfarism (Ferge 1997). Such political mentalities link to and translate into seductive ethics of the active, competitive self. Here the research findings chart both the government discourse around the construction of the peer mentor. In doing so the findings analyses recent documents to detailing how the foregrounding of the ex-offender as a volunteer peer mentor have been undertaken in particular and specific ways with attributes and characteristics. The chapter moves on to document the importance of an analysis of how such government incentives to undertake peer mentors roles have been received and interpreted by the peer mentors themselves. It offers an analysis of the construction of volunteer peer mentoring by those actually involved in shaping it’s practices and boundaries.

Thematic Network
The process of analysis to construct the thematic network on the governmental and subjective construction of the peer mentor was derived from the specific theoretical basis of governmentality from above and below (Shoshana 2011). Subsequently the analysis of the multitude of ways in which the government, St Giles Trust and the peer mentors themselves constructed peer mentoring roles and practice was captured by documentary analysis of government strategy, St Giles Trust annual impact reports and from the subjective perceptions and experiences of the peer mentors themselves (see Appendix 6). At times these various constructions of peer mentoring converged, particularly in relation to the notion of peer mentors as active and entrepreneurial and diverged with respect to the various conceptualisation of peer mentoring and power relations with mentees. The superordinate theme of the construction or making up of peer mentoring also relates to the two research questions indicated above and sheds light on a new volunteer role in the penal system which has had minimal academic research and analysis.

In order to detail the first steps to constructing the superordinate theme a number of codes were created after documentary analysis of the government’s discourse around peer mentoring and its practices. To chart the various subjective understandings of peer mentoring, the research analysed the everyday discourses of managers and peer mentors. The textual excerpts in the semi structured interviews which related to the peer mentor role and practices were coded thematically.

The most powerful governmental and subjective conceptualisation of peer mentoring was in relation to how the role and practices amounted to new knowledge and expertise in the community justice sphere. Indeed the emphasis given by government to peer mentoring as being ‘best placed’ (Grayling 2013) to influence others, was accepted and reiterated wholeheartedly by the charity employing ex-offender peer mentors as its innovative core delivery and by those undertaking the role. The introduction, not of professionalised knowledge discourses, but rather those constructed through experiences of criminality and experiencing the criminal justice system were identified as adding something authentic and effective into community justice and rehabilitative practices. The significance of the most powerful construction of peer mentoring as “experiential expertise” is therefore the subject of Chapter 7.

In terms of the governmental constructions of peer mentoring, the thematic analysis began by capturing the various ways in which government spoke about peer mentors. As such the influential Meaningful Mentoring report (Aiken 2014) and the then Justice Minister Chris Grayling’s foregrounding of peer mentoring were analysed to highlight and code the descriptions of peer mentoring as “old lags or wise friends”. In addition the thematic analysis coded other less obvious descriptions of peer mentoring as “soldiers, weapons and part of an arsenal” against
recidivism and as important in the quality of the custodial regime. After the first stage of coding textual excerpts was undertaken, the codes were grouped and three themes were identified which began to analyse the descriptive codes undertaken in stage one. As a result the themes of peer mentoring as a neoliberal active and responsibilised, as conceptualised using the metaphor of war and conflict (Simon 2007) and as improving the penal system.

The thematic data analysis for the subjective conceptualisation of peer mentoring at St Giles Trust utilised the semi structured interviews. As such the first stage of data analysis involved the coding of textual excerpts which related to individual perceptions and experiences of practicing as a peer mentor or alternatively employing such individuals. The stage one analysis derived codes relating to how peer mentoring represented the 'real me or new me', of peer mentoring as caring and kind practices to others and to the self, and the peer mentor as active and responsible for the creation of opportunities in order to reach self-fulfilment and the peer mentor observing clients and shaping their behaviours and morals to authorised ends. In addition, whilst generative conceptualisations were present, the thematic analysis of the semi structured interviews unearthed instrumental and individualised constructions of peer mentoring to get ahead or achieve self fulfilment rather than any moral undertones linked to the desire to repay back to society by helping others. As a result the thematic analysis was attuned to issues which was missing in the textual excerpts as well as capturing the recurring themes in the empirical research.

Stage two of the thematic network was constructed when the textual excerpts were re-read and issues were identified from the textual excerpts. Consequently, the research constructed three key organising themes which comprised a subjective understanding of the peer mentor. The first theme captured the variety of issues relating to power and the peer mentor giving meaning to previous descriptive codes which captured the shaping or enforcement of an authorized sense of being for mentees. Secondly, the instrumental and individualised constructions of peer mentoring were considered together and identified as a key unifying theme which prioritised the peer mentor as a route to achieving self-fulfilment including leaving crime behind and getting employed or ahead in the labour market. Thirdly, a cluster of generative codes were considered together as an important construction of the peer mentor as embodying care and kindness to others and oneself. The Thematic network in Appendix 6 therefore offers a visual representation of the research process. It incorporates how governmental and subjective constructions of peer mentoring were varied and contradictory, involving government and subjective mentalities which were linked to notions of power and others to kindness and care.
Technologies of Power: The governmental mainstreaming of the peer mentor as ‘active rehabilitation subject’ or ‘self-correcting offender’

A particular and specific aspect of the penal reform agenda in England and Wales constructed in the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) agenda is the marketization of selected probation tasks to be won and delivered by the private and penal voluntary sector. Whilst a great deal of academic attention has been given at the programmatical level with key aspects of the programme such as innovative payment by results funding mechanisms and the creation of a mixed economy of private and charitable providers receiving scholarly attention, (Corcoran 2009, Annison, Burke, and Senior 2014) relatively little has been said about the government’s encouragement to new types of individual correctional actors to enter the offender rehabilitation field (However see Buck 2017 as the beginning of research into this area). This is particularly noteworthy given the emphasis the government gave to the volunteering and the ‘innovative’ use of ex-offenders in rehabilitation delivery rather than to existing statutory Probation Officer professionals. This theoretical gap is emphasised by Pick, Holmes and Brueckner (2010:390) who note how “there is a discernible paucity of literature that applies the concept of governmentality (Foucault 1979) to volunteer work. Thus little is known to date about how the role of volunteering is understood and how it is expressed in the various types of volunteer groups”.

The application of governmentality and the appreciation of the multitude of government strategies to conduct individuals’ actions, promises to offer insights into how the role of peer mentoring is conceptualised and understood. It also sheds light on how volunteer peer mentors carry out political programmes to reduce recidivism or assist with rehabilitation ‘at a distance’ (Rose 1992) with practices once regarded the actions of government. Here the research findings analyse both the specific Coalition government rationality that is “a way of system of thinking about the nature of the practice of government (who can govern; what governing is, what or who is to be governed) capable of making some form of that activity thinkable and practicable both to its practitioners and to those upon whom it was practiced” (Gordon 1991:3) and Coalition government techniques or policies defined as “intellectual and material means and routines that make different forms of rules possible ranging from risk management techniques to technologies such as empowerment – deployed to work on the self” (Lippert and Stenson 2010:477).

A thematic analysis of Coalition government strategy and policy (Grayling 2013) details a governmental construction of the peer mentor as the ‘active rehabilitation subject’ imagined as a reformed offender who has actively taken responsibility for their previous criminal activity and valorised for their determination to take active measures to successfully resettle and rehabilitate.
themselves. The principle construction of the peer mentor role is contained in Grayling’s (2013) strategy for Transforming Rehabilitation.

“When someone leaves prison, I want them already to have a mentor in place to help them get their lives back together. I want them to be met at the prison gate, to have a place to live sorted out, and above all someone who know where they are, what they are doing, and can be a wise friend to prevent them reoffending. And also to have training or rehab lined up, because this government is determined to do more to address the root causes of offending: to get drug and alcohol users into recovery, and to address mental health needs. Often it will be the former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow, the former gang member best placed to prevent younger members from rushing straight back to re-join the gang on the streets. There are some really good examples out there of organisations making good use of the old lags in stopping the new ones. We need more of that for the future.”

Firstly, in the thematic analysis of government thinking on encouraging peer mentor roles, Grayling (2013) constructs the peer mentor role as offering expertise which previously existed outside the remit of professional criminal justice practitioners. As such, “it is the former offender gone straight” who is best placed to shape the behaviour of the newer member echoing the position of advocacy charities such as Unlock and St Giles Trust. Indeed Grayling (2013) uses a pejorative term in ‘old lags’ to emphasise the distance travelled in the transformation of individuals from prisoner to peer mentor. Indeed, under the new Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) reforms, the Statutory, professional Probation Officer is now ‘reserved’ for those offenders who are deemed ‘high risk’ who supposedly require professionalised knowledge around risk assessment and risk management. For government, it is the function of new penal actors, including the innovative characteristics of the penal voluntary sector, who now occupy positions of expertise in a market for rehabilitation services.

Taking his inspiration from St Giles Trust ‘Through the Gates’ peer mentoring projects in London prisons, Grayling’s (2012) vision is that the ex-prisoner is to be met at the prison gates by the mentor as a ‘wise friend’. Here the government offers a vision of the peer mentor as being something other than professional supervision with its connotations of disciplinary supervision and surveillant power although the government does envisage the former offender “steering” the mentee to a destined mode of living, that is ‘go straight’. The government’s conceptualisation of the peer mentor as “wise friend” offers a number of different yet complementary insights. The peer mentor is constructed as offering friendship from a position of knowledge and ‘wisdom’. In addition, through experiencing being released from prison themselves, peer mentors have a nuanced and detailed knowledge of local resources and treatment opportunities open to prison
leavers. Such knowledge imbues the peer mentor with a heightened sense of social capital in that under Grayling’s reforms the prisoner will be met upon release with significant indices of social exclusion already addressed. Rather than embodying risk and danger, the ex-offender peer mentor is conceptualised by government as indicative of the strong, knowledgeable and connected citizen.

When Grayling (2012) imagines the volunteer peer mentor to fulfil broader penal agendas he moves beyond a construction of the peer mentor as merely a wise friend. The peer mentor is “The former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow, the former gang member best placed to prevent younger members from rushing straight back to re-join the gang on the streets”. Grayling uses carefully chosen words to maximise the legitimacy and effectiveness of the peer mentor by his continued use of “best placed”. However, he also incorporates elements of practice which seeks to reshape, nudge or steer offenders to undertake new law abiding, proscribed types of behaviour. As such the peer mentor represents an example of government ‘at a distance’ not merely to support the mentee with their resettlement into the community but rather to actively shape the identities and behaviours of the mentee in different directions towards an acceptable standard of responsible, law abiding citizenship. A final governmental rationality of the peer mentor also includes the presence of power relations in the peer mentor role. It is based upon mentees knowing “above all someone who knows where they are, what they are doing”, implying that the peer mentor is constructed as a provider of surveillance and security over the mentee. As this role is deemed to be important “above all” others the provision of observations and surveillance is deemed to be the most important and prescient of the peer mentor functions. Throughout the government’s constructions of the role of peer mentor, it is clear that the role is no longer imagined as a peripheral actor on the side-lines of a professionalised penal system. Rather, by showing the way, by motivating, steering and offering monitoring of ex-prisoners, the peer mentor is centrally implicated, as the workforce of the penal voluntary sector, in government penal reform strategies to manage low and medium offenders as they leave prison and move ‘through the gates’ whilst subject to statutory supervision for sentences under 12 months.

An additional consideration with respect to how the Coalition government can mainstream the peer mentor in community justice delivery is in respect to how can the penal voluntary sector expand and scale up innovation and efficiency without bureaucratisation and regulation. Whilst the Coalition government has spent limited time in operationalising mentoring save for including it in the Transforming Rehabilitation Operating Model and leaving it to the market, the Centre for Social Justice has spent considerable time in this respect. Their report entitled “Meaningful
Mentoring” (Aitken 2014) gives more evidence as to how mentoring and peer mentoring can be ‘made up’ in a programmatical sense to reduce recidivism rates. In doing so, the report identifies how government mentalities regarding mentoring have, at their core, a juxtaposition between peer mentoring as an idiosyncratic and unorthodox new approach with the need to capture such unorthodoxy and effectiveness and replicate it across all peer mentoring roles and relationships. There is a clear tension in the government’s construction of peer mentoring between the inherent flexibility and plurality in peer mentor relationships and the need to adapt such practices and link them to the prescriptive and effective approach of government.

The Centre for Social Justice’s Meaningful Mentoring (Aitken 2014) report addresses the complex and contradictory issue of power relationships in mentoring. By doing so, the report highlights the absence of power relations in their understanding of mentoring. The notion that mentors could drift into relationships involving coercion or the sharing of information about concerns is deemed as ‘grassing’. Similarly, mentoring should involve the absence of power which seeks to influence and is deemed akin to ‘bossing the offender around’. The absence of power is best illustrated when the report (Aitken 2014:20) states:

"It is an instinctive judgement to volunteer to become a mentor or to enrol as a professional one. Empathising with an offender enough to change the pattern of his or her life needs feelings from the heart as well as rules from a handbook. Mentoring is not a box-ticking exercise. It is a human engagement of trust, encouragement, guidance and hope. Mentoring is not supervision. If the relationship takes the form of mandatory reporting to a supervisory figure who might ‘grass’ the offender for non-compliance or boss the offender around, then it is based on a wrong premise and will not work."

Similarly, the notion of mentoring is constructed in inherently purist terms and is understood as identifiably separate from any notions of supervision. Aiken (2014) creates a dichotomy between those on the side of the offender and those who are not.

The mentor is on the side of the offender who gradually becomes a client, a partner, a companion and a friend. If the relationship takes the form of mandatory reporting to a supervisory figure who might ‘grass’ the offender for non-compliance or boss the offender around, then it is based on a wrong premise and will not work (Aitken 2014:20)

In turning the peer mentoring from an altruistic volunteering activity to a central government programme in community justice, the Meaningful Mentoring report (Aitken 2014) focuses on the relationship between encouraging diversity and the natural plurality of approaches in peer mentoring relationships and the problematics of turning such interventions into knowledges and truths about effective practice. On one level Aiken (2014) recognizes the need to encourage
a diversity of idiosyncratic mentoring relationships based on a set of powerful underpinning values. However, such plurality is juxtaposed with a simultaneous argument advocating the need for proscription. Diversity in peer mentor relationships is conceptualised both as a positive aspect to the creation of bespoke mentoring relationships, and indeed in problematic terms with respect to the operationalising of mentoring as a new government programme in the penal field.

“It cannot be too strongly emphasised that a mentoring relationship is intensely personal. One size is never going to fit all. Flexibility is an essential ingredient in the process. We have heard during the course of this research that the mentors who get the best out of their mentees are often warm characterful individuals who follow unorthodox paths in helping offenders on their journey to a rehabilitated life. Mentoring is not a box-ticking exercise. It is a human engagement of trust, encouragement, guidance and hope.” (Aitken 2014:20)

Whilst the governmental rationalities discussed above seek to construct mentoring in idiosyncratic and in pluralistic ways which value diversity and difference, there has been a simultaneous government rationale which constructs mentoring arrangements as a public utility and in a programmatic sense. Implicit in this government construction of mentoring, the elements underpinning peer mentoring relationships require standardisation, operationalisation and management. The Meaningful Mentoring report (Aitken 2014) notes how the diversity in delivery, also described as idiosyncratic and flexible, needs to be boundaryed and be subjected to prescribed standards so that the knowledge with respect to volunteer mentoring can become formulaic, is able to be replicated and formulated as a government programme across the penal sector. Aiken (2014) states,

Yet for all the humanity and unorthodoxy that can help to build a good mentoring relationship, the process also requires dedication and discipline. High standards are important. It is a matter of concern that there is too little agreement as to what those standards should be. Up until now, mentoring organisations have tended to be cottage industries doing their own thing in their own way. This needs to change. Without imposing the tyranny of unanimity, mentoring can only become meaningful when there are agreed guidelines and established signposts toward best practice. (Aitken 2014:8)

The plurality welcomed in mentoring relationships is constructed on one level as a desirable feature for government whilst simultaneously being deemed a problematic characteristic of mentoring. This creates the idea that the diversity and idiosyncrasies of mentoring activities have remained problematic as chaotic ‘a free for all’ and out of reach of managerial activities with
respect to creating a government programme to roll out consistently in the penal sector. Government ambitions to offer a prescribed and programmatic peer mentor model to be delivered in all Community Rehabilitation Company areas outlines a thread of government thinking which is that such new and complex relationships can be delivered anywhere despite evidence in Chapter 5 detailing the importance of place or environment in constructing and facilitating peer mentor roles and identities. Similarly, the government consider how such idiosyncratic relationships can be deconstructed and replicated across many delivery agents giving rise to the notion identified in a problematic sense in Chapter 5 that any charity in the penal voluntary sector can recruit, employ and deliver such interventions. For the government all delivery agents could enjoy the same level of legitimacy and participation levels from the volunteer peer mentors such as St Giles Trust has engendered.

Out of this spectrum we believe it is possible to identify examples and themes which constitute best practice. Once these are understood and implemented in the new Transforming Rehabilitation strategy, we believe that the present free-for-all could be replaced by a coherent plan for more effective mentoring in all the geographical areas administrated by the new CRCs. (Aitken 2014:9)

Peer Mentoring and improving the penal system

The idea that the voluntaristic relationships between ex-offender volunteer peer mentors and mentees could be co-opted by government is strengthened when the presence of peer mentor programmes in the custodial environment are seen as demonstrating a key indice of excellence in the governance of the prison estate. One of the key expectations of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) regarding the provision of safety in prisons in England and Wales is to assess whether a peer support or befriending scheme is in place to support prisoners who are new to the custodial environment. Similarly, the HMIP has utilised the peer mentor role to assess how such support programmes to other prisoners determine the quality of the prison regime (HM Inspectorate of Prison 2016:4-5). What is significant here is that the Prison Inspectorate deem peer mentor practices as interventions and key contributions to the effective organisational management of prison safety and having a contribution to the development of a culture of respect in the prison (HM Inspectorate of Prison 2016:5). The idiosyncratic mentor and mentee relationships, at the centre of St Giles Trust’s delivery model, are therefore able to be co-opted and utilised by the Inspectorate as key ingredients to allow prison management to demonstrate the secure and decent running of the prison system. The key individuals at the centre of St Giles Trust volunteering are therefore co-opted for the benefit of the statutory or commercial prison
authorities, rather than remaining in the realm of individualistic and voluntary relationships between mentor and mentee. By emphasising the potential impact of ex-offender peer mentor practices to reduce criminality or improve the custodial experience, government thinking can be seen to have turned the tables of responsibility for these ever present problems onto the human subjects themselves. Serving prisoners, who practice as peer mentors, act to improve themselves and their peers and by doing so demonstrate improvements to the prison regime as an ally of the statutory or commercial governance of prisons.

A final construction of peer mentoring as a programme of government in the penal sphere is its positioning as an effective crime reduction tool using the metaphors of conflict and war (Simon 2007). In this notion, peer mentors are constructed conflictually as a weapon in the ‘war’ against recidivism. To illustrate, “Mentoring stands at a crossroads of opportunity. It is paradoxically the most hopeful and the most neglected weapon in the arsenal of rehabilitation” (Centre for Social Justice 2014:44). Such government rationalities which utilise the metaphor of war and conflict justifies firstly, the government justification to use ex-offenders as peer mentors as an extension of state power and secondly, are indicative of an expansive web of coercive actions against recidivists through the mentoring approach (Simon 2007:259). Perhaps more surprisingly the metaphor of war to conceptualise peer mentoring practices has been co-opted by a broader set of non-governmental actors. Both the organisation Unlock (http://www.unlock.org.uk/) and St Giles Trust used the metaphor of war and conflict to shape the potential of peer mentors to act decisively in the war against recidivism.

I believe that if the government wants to reduce reoffending, then the employment of ex-offenders is the secret weapon. Go to any drugs treatment centre and you will find it mostly staffed by ex-drug users. It is crucial for those recovering from addiction that they learn to support others who are doing the same”

(Mark Johnson Unlock via https://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/dec/14/ex-offenders-ken-clarke-prison-reform)

You know, and this is why you have to strategically place your soldiers to be most effective. (St Giles Trust interview 31_05_12_04 volunteer)

The governmental discourse around peer mentor actors practising in a war against recidivism, the metaphors around weaponisation and the ‘mentoring arsenal’ are very much removed from the generative relationships found in St Giles Trust in this empirical research and the penal voluntary sector. Indeed, such language and imagery provides tensions with the notion that peer
mentoring is on the “side of the offender” (Aiken 2014). Such discourse rather allows for peer mentoring to be conceptualised as acting against the ex-prisoner mentee upon release.

Technologies of the self and subjective constructions of peer mentoring

Foucault’s (1991) theoretical perspectives concerning the nature of power identify that techniques of power do not settle upon all people identically and that any analysis of government needs to be counter balanced with a consideration of how individuals, by their own efforts and means, act on their thoughts and ways of being. He stated "one has to take into account not only techniques of domination but also techniques of the self. One has to show the interaction between these two types on the self" (in Elliot 2001:84). Foucault’s work on governmentality opens up the possibility for active and knowledgeable individuals to both ascribe to government exhortations to conduct themselves in particular valorised ways or alternatively practice resistances or ‘counter conducts’ (Dean 2010:150) to government’s attempts to conceptualise, and monitor the self in particular prescribed ways.

Subjective rationalities of Peer mentors: Morality, Instrumentalism and individualism

Whether one analyses the plethora of self-help books from addressing one’s own cognitive and emotional responses to experiences to the idea of personal transformation in health, fitness and wellbeing or law abiding behaviour, the image of the enterprising self is a potent, political image of the self in late modern life (Rose 1990). It resonates with a basic understanding of the contemporary self and the way in which governments make persons thinkable or the contemporary ways in which we “make people up” (Hacking 1985). Rose (1990) notes how the enterprising or active self is “to be a subjective being, it is to aspire to autonomy, it is to strive to personal fulfilment in its earthly life, it is to interpret its reality and destiny as a matter of individual responsibility, it is to find meaning in existence by shaping its life through acts of choice”.

In academic literature around desistance from crime and advocates of restorative justice, ex-prisoners or ex-offenders are often cast as individuals with moral duties to pay back to communities as a result of their previous criminal behaviour (Maruna 2001). Indeed, by assuming the identity and undertaking the practices of an ex-offender peer mentor has often been understood as a way of ‘paying back’, seeking redemption and salvation in offenders (Maruna 2001:121). When Maruna (2001:122) allies generative practices with a sense of restitution in his path breaking research on desistance from crime, he notes that “all of the interviewees in the sample had to manage the shame and guilt that accompany involvement in criminal behaviour”.

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Similarly, Inerbuitzin, Walraven and Anderson (2016) note how the work being undertaken in prison by prisoners via charitable efforts towards personal transformations are often seen as a compulsion or "drive to give back" and make positive contributions to the community. Goffman (1963:4) highlighted how dealing with a sense of stigma and feelings of blame can be important prerequisites to moving on from a spoiled identity. Here, academic research couples the rationale for undertaking generative acts with a moral obligation to give back in order to clear the ledgers of participants' crimes.

However, the blending of generativity with morality in those who have criminally offended against society and who seek to turn their lives around by helping and healing others could be a simplistic motivation of those who engage in peer mentor work. It may be that a strong normative ethic has pervaded research into ex-offenders which masks other motivations and desires to help others. Academics may have inadvertently only focused on why ex-offenders should act as peer mentors in a similar way as scholars have focused their attention on how the penal voluntary sector should practice (Armstrong 2002).

The empirical research findings analysed here into peer mentor subjectivities at St Giles Trust examined the various subjective rationales for peer mentoring. In the empirical research findings and contrary to the existing literature around ex-offender acts of generativity, peer mentors negated the rationale of 'paying back' as an important motivator to volunteer with St Giles Trust. The notion of helping others, to act in a positive way or to transform a future self to one of law abidance was not directly associated with a moral obligation to pay back. As a result any journey to desistance from crime does not automatically have to accompany a sense of guilt or shame for previous criminal behaviour. In the analysis of the research findings the development of a sense of moral duty to repair the harm committed by criminal behaviour was noticeable by its absence in the peer mentor discourse. The occasions in the research field work where peer mentors were constructed as having moral duties and obligations to law abiding citizens was heard when professionals and paid staff discussed them as individuals needing redemption and being in deficit to the law abiding community. The only codes relating to a sense of 'paying back' in the thematic analysis were made by those who had not been sentenced for criminality and had 'not been there'. This finding indicated how the moral aspects to constructions of peer mentoring or going straight were introduced by those who were outsiders. Despite being present in other academic literature into desistance from crime there were only 8 coding occasions made in the research to 'paying back'. This was noteworthy as it reflected firstly, the absence of moral rationalities in the peer mentor discourse and secondly, the fact that the research never asked any suggestive or leading questions about the perceived need to pay back as a key rationale for acting as a peer mentor. Consequently in the thematic analysis, references made to the notion
of ‘paying back’ as a rationale for adopting volunteer peer mentor roles were made in order to resist what was considered by respondents as an attempt to impose moral conditions to the subjective experiences of peer mentor practices.

‘Getting Ahead’: Instrumental rationalities in peer mentor motivations

The research findings presented here outline that St Giles Trust’s volunteer peer mentors undertake such roles, not from a new sense of moral duty or obligation to others, but rather as a result of a plethora of individualistic and instrumental rationales. The thematic analysis undertaken on individual peer mentor subjectivities echoed the work of Maruna (2001: 97) in the respect that reformed ex-offenders undertaking generative roles seemed to operate at “110 percent”. In the thematic presented in Appendix 7, codes were created on occasions where peer mentor respondents were deemed to have gone the ‘extra mile for service users’, usually by working excessive hours, or by detailing the intensity of the work. As a result of such recurring themes in the interview transcripts, a code named ‘super mentor’ was derived to represent peer mentors ‘going the extra mile’ or ‘not giving up on people’ often to the peer mentor’s own personal detriment. Nevertheless the thematic analysis undertaken on peer mentor subjectivities found that such references to “super mentor” practices were not constructed as a exceptional demonstration of a deep moral need to pay back for previous harming others or as a strategy to de-shame or de-blame oneself.

In the analysis, the motivations to undertake and assume peer mentor roles to help or shape the conduct of others leaving prison, in need of accommodation or resisting the lure of gang related activities were combined and analysed. Such motivations to act as a peer mentor were deemed to be associated with broader attempts by government to shape, guide and steer ex-offenders through their own desires and freedoms and to rethink and reevaluate themselves by their choice to undertake such roles (Dean 2010: 23-24). Far removed from a moral calling, more recurring and multifaceted instrumental motivations for undertaking a peer mentor role were firstly, altruism and the desire to act in a kind and caring way, secondly, to improve one’s own future prospects offered by the lure of St Giles Trust paid employment or thirdly, by transforming oneself into a better, more personally fulfilled self. Acting as a peer mentor with those leaving prison was undertaken by ex-offender, peer mentor volunteers as a way of signifying a personal transformation and the improvement of oneself to reach personal fulfilment and self-actualisation. This reciprocal sense of personal development and growth was coded in this extract from a peer mentor,
It’s just it was right man, right time, right face, my face just fitted, and I love the symbiotic relationship, the fact that I’m growing and developing, and they’re getting someone whose working hard for them as well. We just keeps growing together, and it’s wonderful. (12_09_12 peer mentor)

In comparison to any moral sense of duty to undertake the peer mentor role and practices, the codes derived from by peer mentors’ motivations to engage in generative acts of help and kindness to others were made in relation to three positions. Firstly and most powerfully, the peer mentor’s subjective experiences were underpinned by knowledge and expertise ‘from having been there’ in the area of help and assistance and this was newly acknowledged and contrasted sharply with the criminal justice professional. This theme was identified as a superordinate theme and is analysed in Chapter 7. Peer mentor volunteering was often spoken of as knowledgeable and skilled ‘work’ despite its voluntarism. Secondly, peer mentors had themselves benefited from such expertise from a mentor in their resettlement from custody and understood the process had improved their place in society. As a result they wanted to continue to assist others to negotiate a life away from crime. However these generative acts and thinking were as a result of peers’ overall desire and satisfaction from assisting others as a result of having been there and carrying on the cycle of generative acts. Thirdly, peer mentoring was one of the few available and accessible roles in order to achieve future personal fulfilment where this was gaining employment with St Giles Trust as a paid peer mentor or case worker or by using the experience of volunteering and acting generatively in order to better their own position in society more broadly. The general construction of an improvement in both a sense of self and situation is illustrated here,

Because every area of my life has improved significantly by being a peer mentor and again to keep what I have is done by giving it away. If I can help somebody improve by just a per cent then that makes a big difference to them and me. (29_02_12_3 paid peer mentor)

The multifarious instrumental and individualised rationales for peer mentoring were particularly important with respect to peer mentors directing their own actions in order to improve and reposition the individual’s place in the labour market. At times the amount of time and energy spent volunteering as a peer mentor and working with those leaving crime behind was constructed as impeding what the mentor should be doing which was deemed to be applying for paid work for themselves. Below the individual peer mentor’s ethos of volunteering reflects a need for employment and fulfilling a personal need instead of traditional motives for volunteers based on service to others and a commitment or duty to the community. Indeed, the peer mentor
below is representative of an institutionally, individualised volunteer (Hustinx 2010:165, Rochester 2013:176). Rather than focus upon a sense of selfless giving and active citizenship, embedded in traditional notions of volunteering, the motivation to practice as a volunteer peer mentor centred on the individual volunteer’s gains through meeting their desire for employment and self-realization in an ever increasingly competitive labour market (Hardill and Baines 2011:11). As Rochester etal (2010:11) note the traditional view of volunteering is shaped around the gift of time and altruistic acts.

“While it is increasingly acknowledged that there is a rich cocktail of explanations of why people become volunteers the dominant view is that it is essentially an altruistic act often seen as the ‘gift’ of one’s time and thus analogous to the gift of money which defines philanthropy. In this view, people become volunteers in order to help others who are less fortunate than themselves”.

Such individualised motivations re-shapes the peer mentors’ motivations and their volunteering presents as an excellent yet transitory résumé building exercise or is indicative of enterprising volunteers transforming themselves into ‘better citizens’. (Hustinx 2010:165, Brown etal 2000:207, Hardill and Baines 2011:3).

Volunteering as a peer mentor taught me not to put all my eggs in one basket at the same time. I always concentrate on my work, so while I’ve been here I haven’t managed to apply for any jobs or anything like that, and that’s the one thing I would say, that’s got me stuck where I am now. I don’t apply, I keep on putting all my work in what I’m doing, and really I should put time to myself. But, I’ll sort that out. I’m still giving, and it is taking a lot out of me. I’m supposed to do 16 hours a week, I’m doing four days a week. And it’s like, I really...you know, from here, I’m trying to get straight home. It’s mad. I need to sort it out. I’m helping everybody else, but not helping myself. Isn’t that crazy? (22_03_12_02 peer mentor)

The instrumental rationales for volunteering as a peer mentor were analysed further where peer mentor’s subjectivities include a sense of insecurity and a state a flux over their futures. The possibility of earning an income to meet future wants and needs reflects an individualized and instrumental rationale to volunteer. At the time of the research fieldwork, such insecurities were naturally prevalent amongst St Giles Trust peer mentors, as many had only recently resettled into the community themselves. In addition, the charity was experiencing a number of organisational and personal insecurities as a result of the closing of key peer mentors interventions and the search for new funding arrangements for new interventions. For example, the frustrations for peer mentor volunteers who were motivated by the role as a way to get ahead in the labour
market was illustrated by a peer mentor stating, “All they [St Giles Trust] say is volunteer here, volunteer there, when are they going to start talking about a job. Honestly it’s tempting to go back” (Peer mentor discussion fieldwork notes). Although the actual meaning of the phrase "Honestly it’s tempting to go back" remains unclear, such use of the phrase could refer to a reversal back to prison or criminal activity. Similarly, another peer mentor’s instrumental motivations for undertaking the peer mentor role were evidenced when he states that the rationale for volunteering is to obtain paid employment in the future. Without the possibility of self-fulfilment in this respect the mentor states he will end his involvement in the role. He states,

What they (St Giles Trust) say to you is volunteer and you might get employed. My mum used to say to me, ‘Love don’t buy the food.’ No, but if you go to the corner shop and you say to the man, ‘I’ve got love in my pocket,’ he ain’t going to serve you no food. I need a job. I’ve got a mortgage with my mum, so I ain’t got time to be volunteering do you understand...she’s paying those big bills, and I ain’t paying anything! And the £130 benefit I get every two weeks don’t cut it. So, I don’t mind doing it for a year, that was my benchmark, I’ll stay for a year, and volunteer. If they offer me something, yes, if they’re not, I’m off. (22_03_12_01 peer mentor)

The reciprocal nature of the peer mentor and mentee relationship, whereby the mentor achieves a sense of increased personal fulfilment as a result of the mentee being provided with housing advice, is evidenced when a volunteer peer mentor volunteer sees his work to help individuals as representing a true essence of himself. The internal sense of a generative self is understood here as the person he has always been (Maruna 2001:89, Stevens 2012), rather than an externally imposed category of reformed ex-offender who has been coerced, cajoled or morally obliged to behave in a generative way.

To me, being honest, paying back is not relevant to me. I don’t believe that I am paying back for anything. I just do what’s me. I enjoy helping people. I enjoy trying to help as I say, I’m a person if I see somebody on the street and they are struggling, I will help them or whatever. That’s the kind of person I am. I’m not saying that I don’t owe them or anything, but I don’t believe oh, I owe a society, the sort of society that says I must pay back. I am doing this because that’s the person I am. I like helping people. I want to help somebody and I get that feeling that I’ve helped somebody, it’s a nice feeling, and I know that’s just me. (19_04_12_04 peer mentor volunteer)

Perhaps the starkest negation of volunteer peer mentoring as a way of signalling “mea culpa” (Maruna 2001:131) is in the following contribution from a peer mentor. Here the peer mentor
contrasts the experience of ‘paying back’ through being punished and the broader negative impacts that serving a custodial sentence has had on his life. It is the serving of prison time which represents and signifies any sense of ‘paying back’ for his criminal behaviour. Alternatively, his identity as a peer mentor is underpinned by his desire for his own personal development and rehabilitation. After serving his custodial sentence, he assumes an individual and instrumental rationale for volunteering with St Giles Trust rather than any moral obligation to go straight (Dean 2010:176).

I think I’ve paid enough. I mean, basically, you know, what I did was just a one-off and...by this stage I think I’ve done enough punishment, rehabilitation is the key word now and trust. But my old probation officer was with the attitude of feeling that you’re about to be punished, you know, it’s all about the punishment. And basically, you know, I was trying to say to him I’ve lost my job and everything in my old life, I’ve been in prison, you know, where does like the punishment stop and rehabilitation start. You know, you can’t keep on hitting people with the rod, you can’t keep, you know, beating people. There must be a time where that mistake has - you know, unless they’re a paedophile - there comes a time where they say right, you’ve done it, if you work you can come back in society, you know, without having that stick beating you. And it will wise up, you know, you think, oh...and then all of a sudden like there’ll be about like a check that’ll come up, oh, you’ve still got a criminal record and you can’t do this and you can’t do that. Which is infuriating sometimes because, I mean, it’s always a reminder. Where I think well, can’t you just, you know, that’s it, draw a line under it, move on, you know, I’ve paid my time, I’ve done enough without having to keep on having to pay back” (12_09_12 peer mentor).

The peer mentor as the self-correcting offender: Active, resilient and personally responsible

A key thematic network named the Constructions of peer mentors was created to highlight how, in the constructing their role, peer mentors conceptualised their own sense of responsibility for self-improvement, for resettling successfully after prison or leaving crime behind (see Appendix 6). In the analysis of the research findings there was an absence and resistance to any medicalised rehabilitative discourse, such as a focus upon the need for professionalised treatment which emphasized the idea of treatment or the correction of cognitive deficits. This absence was apparent both within St Giles Trust discourse around ex-offender peer mentors and the subjectivities of the peer mentors themselves. Instead of being considered a source of collective
needs, ex-offender peer mentors are instead regarded as a source of energy, freedom and self responsibility (Dean 2010:179)

In the absence of any references to forensic treatment discourse, a reoccurring theme for ex-offender peer mentors was the emphasise given to a sense of their own responsibility in their subjective understanding of the relationship between peer mentor identities and leaving crime behind. In the empirical research and thematic network created to capture the ‘constructions of the peer mentor’, the recurring codes of “individual agency” and “personal responsibility” were created and used on 35 occasions. In one sense the codes reflected the sense of personal responsibility in the peer mentor subjectivities which contrasted sharply with the negativity associated with cognitive behavioural treatment approaches. This was best demonstrated by an ex-offender peer mentor who understood, and yet did not accept, the established research into “evidenced based” cognitive deficit and moral retraining on offer in the prison system at the time of her incarceration (Raynor and Robinson 2005). Rather than viewing her criminality as resulting previous trauma or deficits in her personality, she gives great weight to the importance of her own sense of agency and freedom to commit serious crime in the future or alternatively ‘go straight’. She recalled how she found the established model of correctional rehabilitation irrelevant to her future decisions to desist. The key to her successful desistance from crime through work with St Giles Trust was based upon her own agency and conscious decisions to shape her own life,

*I didn’t fit into the prison’s neat little box. There’s no offending behaviour courses I could do. They wanted me to do thinking behaviour. I went to there and they were like ‘what are you doing here?’ I consciously made a decision to commit a crime and that’s it, and that’s what I’ve said the whole way through. What do you do to deal with that? If I decide to do it in future it will be a conscious decision again. I won’t make it because I feel like I won’t now, but I can’t say I won’t. So I was constantly having a tussle, because I’m not someone who’d just tell them what they want to hear while I was in the prison, because I was just trying to be honest.* (20_11_12_02)

A recurring part of the individualised, subjective understandings of peer mentoring was to whole heartedly accept personal responsibility for personal behavioural change and going straight. As a result peer mentors’ subjectivities correlated strongly with Neoliberal modality of government which affords great emphasis to the importance of self-development by making informed choices and taking personal responsibility for problem solving (Dean 2010:196). Similarly, the need to become an enterprising individual, to undertake assessments on oneself about one’s future, make decisions in order to ensure future self-fulfilment and ‘work on oneself’ is also illustrated in a quotation by a paid peer mentor who reflected on the key decisions she made whilst
incarcerated. Her desistance from crime in the future was constructed as her personal responsibility to become active and entrepreneurial, rather than rely on other ways to change which involved state expenditure, dependence and inaction (Pratt 1997:133, Rose 1998:150). As a result, leaving crime behind in peer mentor subjectivities reflects Neoliberal political rationalities in that solutions are to be found within the realms of private actions and moral decision making to do the right thing and make the right choices rather than receive the appropriate treatment or welfare. As a result as Rose (1998:151) notes that the government of enterprising individuals centre on thinking about individuals as aspiring to achieve autonomy and personal fulfilment. Below peer mentor mentalities illustrate where ‘technologies of domination’ and ‘technologies of the self’ meet each other and ‘touch’, moving the personal views of peer mentors out of the private sphere to meet the political vocabulary of neoliberal political discourse.

I just started doing all these assessments on myself and thinking, I need to make this change, because I can’t come back here, you know, I watched...oh, my brother was my co-defendant, so I watched his little family fall apart, his children, his daughter wouldn’t speak to him for six months, you know, his partner left him, my mum and dad were broken, absolutely broken, their health deteriorated and I was thinking, I can’t do this no more, I can’t live this kind of life, because it’s my parents who always bail me out and, you know, what am I really doing to them? So I started thinking, okay, I’ve got this amount of years left, I’ve got this amount of time to do this, this will take this long and I just started doing everything possible to give me more options, I did an anatomy and physiology course, I did a hairdressing course, the anatomy and physiology was a diploma, I did English A levels, maths A levels (19_04_02 paid peer mentor).

The subjectivities of peer mentors which centre on accepting personal responsibility are communicated and passed on to their mentees. A pathway to desistance from crime is formulated in an understanding of an individualised self-correcting peer mentor who possesses and demonstrates the requisite determination and willpower to succeed,

I say to my clients it’s very hard out there and when you have a record you’re looked upon as nothing - not nothing but you’re looked upon as you can’t be trusted and you are not given that chance. It is hard but a lot of people out there need to realise that - if you’re focused on yourself and everything and you know what road to go, you can change yourself. But it will take some sacrifice upon yourself. Don’t think it’s going to happen like that, it will take some sacrificing and some will power on the client’s behalf” (29_3_12_01 peer mentor)
Where St Giles Trust peer mentors’ emphasised the importance of being active in one’s own rehabilitation, such discourse often contrasted with comments relating to the paucity of structural or community resources with which to employ in order improve the future self. Returning to an unforgiving and resource starved community after being incarcerated may mean that peer mentor’s retains a stigmatized identity and are more likely to rely and employ personalised or individuated resources to go straight.

Well you can’t really teach anybody about the experience, I do through myself and others that work here that have been through the criminal justice systems themselves and a lot of the time it’s about making opportunities for yourself to try and move forward with your life and they’re not always available for ex-offenders (22_03_12_04 peer mentor).

The importance of being Enterprising was translated into the individual activities of peer mentors by St Giles Trust. The charity often used league tables as a visible demonstration of volunteer peer mentor practice, designed to encourage all to act with drive and determination to achieve targets and secure rewards. The charity would mark the successful funding outcomes by peer mentor work by the use of green marks. The most effective peer mentor volunteers practised with energy, competitiveness and ambition to ensure that St Giles Trust met their contractual demands and the mentors secure their own happiness. This mentor was one of a number who spoke of volunteering as work in order to highlight both its importance in his life and the way in which he approached his volunteering.

P: But...as long as...remember it’s a competition in my brain, because for every outcome you get, you get a green mark. I want more greens than reds, because the reds are closed cases such as I didn’t meet him at the gates, he didn’t get released or what have you.
I: Oh I see what you mean, yes.
P: And I want green marks.
I: Yes.
P: I don’t want to be the last one with them greens.
I: Yes. Are you quite competitive then?
P: I’m definitely competitive, because I’m number one up there with the greens! Do you understand what I’m saying? Yes. I’m number one with the greens.

In the analysis of peer mentor interviews, the extent to which peer mentors constructed themselves as being active in their own rehabilitation and that of others was sometimes deemed
beyond what was normally expected of volunteering. As a result a code was derived which was called "super mentor" to reflect a recurring theme where St Giles Trust peer mentors went the extra mile or undertake the role with enormous vigour and commitment (Maruna 2001: 97). In all this code was used on 28 occasions reflecting the strength of the idea. After discussing the fact that some peer mentors volunteered to work 8 hours a day and over 5 days a week, one peer mentor reflected upon the fact that this was actually precluded under welfare reforms which stipulate that peer mentors receiving benefits should be looking for paid employment rather than volunteering each day. However the volunteering with St Giles Trust was deemed as of greater importance than abiding by regulations,

"Oh don't tell the social that. If you're only volunteering two days some cases do take four days so you do volunteering, even myself sometimes I have to come in certain days I'm not supposed to be volunteering because it just feels the right thing to do. We know what the staff percentage is, we know how many members are on what team, we know who is off sick and who is on holiday and we know in ourselves what needs to be done. So if there is a colleague that is not going to be in for whatever reason, we know that on the day off they have to go to the Homeless Persons Unit then more times out of ten I will sort of make myself available." (29_03_12_03 peer mentor)

"Oh believe me, that's the one. If you wait for someone or with someone in a homeless person's unit, you can get there at nine o'clock and not leave until five thirty. Now I finish work at five, and then I've got to take them to the temporary accommodation the council has left, take pictures to make sure it's all safe and I've checked it. And then I leave. So, by, say nine o'clock, I'm arriving home, as a volunteer!" (22_03_12_05 peer mentor)

In addition some peer mentor’s conceptualisation of being active in their own rehabilitation and rehabilitation into society is mirrored by their expectations that mentees will also assume an equally active subjectivity. In the research a code was created called “conditionality in service” which was used to collate occasions where peer mentors created conditions or expectations in the relationship between mentor and mentee. This code was used on 40 occasions in the basic and thematic coding. An aspect of “conditionality in service” was with respect to the key personal attributes that peer mentors expected to see in any mentee. For example, a peer mentor who performed a salaried role in a 'Through the Gates' prison project did not see his peer mentor role as developing an ex-offender's capacities to make the right decisions and choices on their own behalf. Rather, the mentor constructs the mentee as an active rehabilitative subject, who should
already be imbued with such characteristics upon release from prison. Without an active sense of self, or worse still, presenting as inactive or dependent, the mentor considers ending his work with someone more deservable.

_I don’t know if you’re actually going to like this, but I make it fairly clear, at the outset, that I will only put in the effort for somebody that really wants to achieve something, at the end of the day, so I’m looking for commensurate effort from them and, also, honesty and integrity and I make it, kind of, clear at the outset that, you know, I am busy, there’s lots of people that would like what I’m doing, would like the attention and by giving it to this person, then I am depriving somebody else, in return, I expect sincerity and honesty and continual engagement, you know, which is fairly important, you know, which means a telephone number that works and a response to a message, you know, if I leave a message and to, you know, keep appointments, without fail, where possible (17_05_12 paid peer mentor)_.

**Generative, disciplinary and surveillant peer mentor subjectivities**

Peer mentors have been discussed in recent academic research by Buck (2016, 2017). One of the key components of peer mentoring was in relation to generative acts of kindness and caring mentalities. In the analysis of observations and interviews with peer mentors on their subjective rationales for undertaking the role, a recurring emphasis on the ethics of care and of helping others was made. For example, Buck (2017:4) notes how peer mentoring revolves around the three ‘core conditions’. She states that peer mentoring is constructed around the notions of “caring, listening and setting manageable goals”. These principles were not always explicitly stated in the peer mentoring qualification and training and yet were claimed, in diverse research field settings, to have specific benefits for people attempting to desist from crime. In addition Buck (2017) notes how peer mentors aim to heal suffering by demonstrating these core conditions. A thematic network was created to highlight a superordinate theme of ‘subjective constructions of peer mentoring’. A sub-ordinate theme relating to the subjective constructions of peer mentors was derived, named and used on 34 occasions was ‘giving care and practical assistance’. There were many coding occasions from the semi structured interviews with St Giles Trust where peer mentors discussed how they were involved in generative relationships with mentees and performed generative acts centring on the provisions of care, kindness and concern for another person leaving prison. The delivery of both emotional care and practical assistance is referred to on numerous occasions as core to the peer mentor subjectivities. Here the provision
of kindness and help is referred to as ‘filtering back’ to hopefully encourage similar acts of mutual kindness and assistance in those being helped.

I’m proud to be a part of the St Giles organisation and representing it, and doing what I’m doing and where I’m doing it. Sometimes you’re overstretched but it doesn’t really matter because I’m in a position now, there are people who have been in my position before and, you know, any little thing you can do, even if I can’t help them get somewhere to live, you know, if they walk away feeling that someone’s listened, someone actually cares, that makes a big difference in somebody’s life, and if somehow they might go somewhere else and they remember what St Giles, how we were with them, that filters back, it’s all good, all of its good, all of its positive, and I like I say it’s not about personal wealth for me (29_03_12_02 peer mentor).

The core of subjective understanding of peer mentoring as offering practical assistance such as making welfare benefit applications, advocating for service users and improving social capital by referring users to other services and interventions in the community. This practical work was combined with the provision emotional care and protection as understood by a peer mentor from the award winning female resettlement project (WIRE).

“We access two nights bed and breakfast for them on their day of release and, hopefully, sometimes we don’t even have to go through that route, we can access housing for them on their day of release, taking them to the Homeless Department and making referrals, prior to them coming out, to housing projects and trying to get them through that way and, basically, just being somebody they can lean on, kind of, like, their problems are shared with somebody else, because you have that attitude of don’t worry, let us worry for you” (19_04_12_03 WIRE)

Often the adoption of the caring self is combined by peer mentors to a sense of personal satisfaction or self-fulfilment as a result of acting generatively. Throughout the research findings the subjective experiences of acting as a peer mentor volunteer was often about the idea of a mutually benefitting relationship where care and kindness was given to the mentee and a resultant sense of positivity and pleasure was experienced by the mentor. As has been highlighted in the work of Buck (2017), Perrin and Blagden (2016) Inderbitzin etal (2016) the care of the self and others has been a feature of peer related education, lifer care and support programmes. This peer mentor participant volunteered with St Giles Trust housing information and advice project. His levels of generativity meant that in order to provide a service for his client he was prepared to create problems for himself by his acts of kindness.
Disciplinary Power: Making the right choices and doing the right thing

Whilst Buck (2017) refers to the qualities of genuine care and listening as core components to peer mentoring practices, the research findings of peer mentors at St Giles Trust with respect to the subjective understandings of peer mentoring found a more complex and contradictory understanding regarding the fundamental values and underpinnings of the peer mentor role. The conceptualisations of peer mentoring in the analysis were also permeated by disciplinary notions of working with the mentee, but in order to shape and influence their conduct to a particular authorised end goal. Peer mentor volunteers spoke of working with clients in order to explicitly shape their behaviour to reduce recidivism, emphasising the idea that an external governmental aim had permeated the rationale for the peer mentor and mentee relationship. As a result the goals around behaviour change such as reducing recidivism or increased levels of sobriety are referred to as the core of the peer mentor and mentee relationship rather than discussions of care or practical assistance.

*There’s a lot of preparation that needs to be done before release and not only that but we have to meet them at the gates and accompany them to make sure that they are secure for that night because that will enable them to help the risk of reoffending*

(19_04_12_01 peer mentor).

This law abiding norm was heavily represented in those St Giles Trust projects which had an explicit penal aim to reduce recidivism. Consequently the Peterborough One Service and the Integrated Offender Management projects which target prolific offenders often referred to working with the client in order to reduce recidivism. This isn’t a surprise with respect to these projects, as the adoption of penal aims was central to the funding arrangements. This was especially prescient where payment was only achieved by demonstrating such reductions in
recidivism. For example, a peer mentor working with the Peterborough One service notes how having the power to change people was something which had developed incrementally over time as he became more experienced in the peer mentor role. His peer mentor practices began by advocacy and improving community networks by referrals to other resources for service users but gradually developed to working to change them.

When volunteering you start by writing a letter or two letters and it becomes quite boring and then gradually given a bit more trust and you can go out and visit the client and a little bit more, then before you know it you’re fully fledged, you jump right in the deep end and you’re trying to change people. It’s just, sort of, all of a sudden it just happens. It gradually builds up and then you’re in the deep end of it, you’re working with everyone. (13_09_12 one service peer mentor)

The code derived from such textual excerpts was named “disciplinary mentality”. It was used on 35 occasions during the data coding and analysis demonstrating how disciplinary mentalities were permeating through peer mentor volunteers’ subjective experiences of the role. For Foucault, the nature of disciplinary mentalities of power centre around the observing, retraining and rendering the subject obedient (Foucault 1977, Cohen 1985:26). Consequently peer mentoring is also constructed as a disciplinary force for behavioural change. A clear aspect of dissemination of disciplinary forms of power is related to surveillant gaze in order to gain knowledge and intervene more effectively and deeply into society in order to achieve an accepted norm for proper conduct (Valverde 2018). Related to the techniques of assessment and observation is the associated task of correcting behaviours which deviate from the norm rather than merely punishing them (Garland 1991:131). For example, a mentor who worked at the Meet at the Gates project as a volunteer noted how he would only offer support and care to those who made the appropriate decisions to remain sober or drug free upon release from prison. As such the legitimacy based on “having been there” and successfully moving away from crime, signalled by the peer mentor role, is used as a powerful tool to shape the conduct of others leaving prison. Peer mentors therefore could be seen to hold subtle and soft power to shape a mentee’s behaviour to an ascribed ‘norm’ which is productive and obedient. Subsequently, peer mentors are representative of government at a distance in the rehabilitation field as they engage on “technologies of citizenship” to volunteer to assist and motivate others to lead a crime free life or resettle as active citizens themselves. The citation below relates to how the peer mentor would only engage in a working relationship if the prisoner was willing to address his substance misuse problem.

Me personally I’m not there to wait for you [the mentee] to score heroin, so if you want to fool someone, go and fool someone that aint bothered “But I’m here generally, volunteering
to help you, I’m not paid so if you want to do all that rubbish, see you later, I’ve got other people who do really want to gain help and respect what we’re doing for you. So if you want to score and come back a week later and tell me how regretful you are for not being there, and yes I’ll give you a second chance this is what it’s about but I’m not going to keep doing the same pattern (19_04_12_01 peer mentor).

The peer mentor can be understood as a role extending the capillary of disciplinary power. That is “the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies, and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourse and learning processes and everyday lives” (Foucault 1980 in Garland 1991:138). The mentoring activity creates a set of knowledges from having been there which are deemed more permeated and effective as the level of supervision and reach of power is maximised. For example, a peer mentor in the Housing Advice project speaks about how knowledge of the client is developed by investing greater amounts of time with them.

If you put them into housing with too much independence, we won’t know everything they’re doing, if they were in supported housing, we would know what’s happening with her, right now, she’s in bed and breakfast and she’s been there for months, not through our fault, through the Council’s and, you know, stuff like that, she hasn’t helped herself either, but we don’t know what...we can’t get the truth out of her, but if she was living in a hostel, they could say to us, definitely, we know this is who she’s hanging around with and we do believe she is doing this, and that, and the other. (21_06_12_01 per mentor)

Aligned to a construction of normalisation and correctional disciplinary power involves the observation of others and the use of surveillant technologies to ensure conformity. This is obviously discussed in a theoretical architectural sense by Foucault’s use of Bentham’s blueprint for a panoptican prison (Foucault 1977:200). However, government techniques of observation and knowledge are not constrained to the prison design. Rather, a general sense of panoptic observation and inspection in order to acquire knowledge can be imported outside of the prison into the creation of a broader disciplinary power in society (Cohen 1985, Valverde 2018). Peer mentors’ subjective understanding of the role incorporated an aspect of the observation and surveillance involved in a ‘carceral continuum’ (Cohen 1985) in order to achieve a level of oversight of mentees. For example, a mentor who was working on a Meet at the Gates prison project discussed how keeping tracks on, and obtaining knowledge of his clients were was being resisted by the clients themselves. The mentee was resistant to levels of peer observation and oversight either by not responding to the peer mentor practices or by having a view that peer mentoring was characteristic of older, disciplinary techniques of the displaced statutory workers.
And then we have to try and trace them and find them because they don’t turn up for appointments. It’s a kind of hard show, I mean I’ve got a couple of clients at the moment and they’re making me do my work. They’ve heard all this shit for the past 20 years anyway so when you come with your bright eyes and your happy clapping conversation and your attitude to help they’re “I’ve heard it all before, I’ve got things to do, I’m busy,” and that’s the response you get at the end of the day. (29_03_12_02 peer mentor staff)

Interestingly, in the code derived for surveillant practices, a peer mentor volunteer constructed his own practices by embodying the notion of a surveillant technology and stated that the peer mentor offered a type of panoptic web camera in a bodily sense. By adopting such practices the mentee could feel constantly observed. Such conceptualisations of peer mentoring as disciplinary power on the micro level involved the watching of unacceptable personal characteristics, and the undertaking of assessments and judgements as to how seriously the mentees are with respect to committing to a sober and law abiding lifestyle.

It’s a combination of eye contact, body language, attitude, conversation, listening to them when they’re getting their scripts. Sometimes you take to them to get their script, they want to change, they want to change their lives, and then you hear them whispering “Is there any good stuff around?” So you have to be aware of it, you have to be like your own personal web camera, you have to see what you’re supposed to see and the rest of it discard it, it’s just background (19_04_12_01 peer mentor).

Finally, in the thematic code for surveillant practices another peer mentor takes the notion of observation and surveillant power as akin to the skills and practices of a police detective to find out where the client is and impact on their privacy to ensure complaint behaviour.

If we have to sort of make sure that we’ve got aftercare for a year for these guys then I think I should use my detective skills of what I’m capable of doing to make sure that I can tempt them back into actually engaging with us. So I’ll go through the doctors, the local soup centres, because they have given me a waver to the confidentiality clause so I extend it and tend to use it for their personal benefit. So I will go to the doctor that are dealing with giving their scripts, I’ll deal with the receptionist girls, girls at the front that knows the ins and outs, I’ll go to the chemist where they pick their script up, I will contact certain soup kitchens, if the weather is really bad then they’re not going to be on the streets, they’re more likely to book into a night shelter. (21_06_12_01 peer mentor)

Power is both conceptualised and demonstrated in the peer mentor subjectivities in much more
nuanced terms than the notion of a single, unified conceptualisation of power as blunt coercion. The notion of peer mentors having the “power to” observe or change (Pansadi 2012:73) allows us to understand power in relational terms which serve to highlight how peer mentor’s power to transform, empower or resettle clients exists as a power which acts through mentees. It aims to unleash the talents and freedoms of individuals involved. However it is also clear that even when we see power used in such a positive or ethical sense to change to help, peer mentors do attempt to change the perceived incentives and thinking of the client in order to bring about behavioural and attitudinal change towards a proscribed outcome. In the analysis presented here, peer mentors do contain the interpersonal elements of emotional care and practical assistance to the core of their peer mentor subjectivities. However, the analysis presented here offers a more complex and contradictory rationale for peer mentor practices. Peer mentoring does not exist in a kind of bubble. Rather it is situated in political and organisational boundaries which shape and influence what peer mentoring practices are. As a result the presence of generative subjectivities are coupled and melded together with disciplinary and surveillant techniques in St Giles Trust peer mentor practices.

**Peer mentoring, identity and the desistance from crime**

Whilst an analysis based upon power and knowledge offers a fruitful approach to conceptualising the peer mentor it is important when analysing the subjectivities of peer mentors to see beyond a power paradigm. For example, whilst asking questions about the similarity or difference to statutory penal professional values practices is important to do, there is more to conceptualising the peer mentor in their own right. In the research analysis into lived realities of ex-offender peer mentor volunteer roles, an important subordinate theme to conceptualising the peer mentor related to the relationship of peer mentor identifies and practices related to create a new sense of self and the path to desistance from crime (Maruna 2001, Perrin and Blagden 2016). Their and research into the termination from crime has emphasised the interplay of maturational reform and the development of bonds and attachments to society which encourage the development of law abiding behaviour (Needs and Adair-Stantiall 2018, Farrall, Hunter, Sharpe, and Calverley 2014). Only recently has a shift in the understanding of leaving crime behind adapted to include new theoretical developments around identity and self-narrative highlighted by researching the subjective changes to both (Healy 2013). Following on from the ground breaking work of Maruna (2001), researchers have begun to uncover the potential interplay of developing levels of maturity, the improvement of positive social bonds and the individual narratives and constructions which desisters construct or ‘make up’ (Hacking 1986) and
continue to tell about themselves in a positive way (Healy 2013, Stevens 2013:7). St Giles Trust's re-construction of the ex-offender as a skilled and knowledgeable peer mentor provides the environment for individuals to make sense of their own personal story about why they committed crime, and why they may not do so in the future. The empirical research into peer mentor subjectivities often focused on peers’ construction of a journey to St Giles Trust. As those who are in the early stages of resettling after prison and leaving crime behind, peer mentors make sense of their past and present in particular ways in order to construct a crime free future. The analysis into the subjective understandings of peer mentoring reflects the credible reformative stories which Maruna (2001:131) alludes to. Ex-offender peer mentor volunteers noted how undertaking generative acts in the role uncovered an essence of their “true self” rather than the development of new values or practices. Assuming the identity of the peer mentor enabled the individual’s true self to be reconstructed as a ‘professional–ex’ offender, inspired to help and shape others by using the experiential knowledge gained from their own journeys away from crime or successfully resettling after imprisonment. Encapsulated in the 16 coding occasions that the ‘real me’ theme was found, St Giles Trust peer mentors spoke of a sense of continuity in the positive and generative sense of self or the re-establishment of a previous non-criminal core self which had ended by criminal activity.

This paid peer mentor notes how the experience of assuming a volunteer peer mentor role had resurrected his past positive characteristics and indeed improved them.

*I think, I hold most of the, sort of, values that I hold now, prior to the prison experience, it’s just made me a little bit more realistic on, sort of, you know, the things that others have to deal with and the answer to that is, no, because I don’t think I was a fundamentally different person prior to the St Giles experience, certainly the St Giles experience has, kind of, enhanced the better aspects of my character, but I don’t think it, in itself, has made that much of a change, because I don’t think I was that different before I went off track. (17_05_12 paid staff)*

Another peer mentor was able to blend his desire to help others and act in a generative sense with an individualistic and competitive tendency to want to be the very best to do this.

*No I never been through that path of life changing, I’ve always been a helper, I went to prison because of my own reasons but while I was in prison I was always number one server, I was always number one in the kitchens, I was always number one this and that. I would read and write people’s letters and whatever else, it’s just in my nature (19_04_12_01 peer mentor).*
Another subordinate analytical theme to constructions of the peer mentor was where peer mentors referred to their lives taking a wrong turn before St Giles Trust enabled them to revisit those qualities which had previously been the ‘real me’ and create an improved sense of self for the future (Maruna 2001:95). This was particularly powerful for those ex-prisoners who had previously had white collar career but were now motivated by ‘doing good’ working with peers rather than being motivated by earning significant amounts of money.

I mean that’s the thing, I’m a [senior member of staff] but I was doing this [kindness] when I was 17. So it’s like a million back steps but I probably could go and get a job in a corporate company as a PA and work my way up and prove myself, but I think I’m doing that here and hopefully that is seen and things move on from here. Previously it was all about me and my family and friends but you know, I did used to volunteer at Christmas at homeless shelters and stuff. I don’t know, if I saw a homeless person - for example I saw someone at Tottenham Station once and he had no shoes. The next day I got him a pair of shoes I brought them back and gave him shoes. The day after he didn’t have them again because he probably sold them. They weren’t really nice ones but... I know a lot of people that have been and gone to prison but it’s not something I ever really thought about. Whereas now if I see someone on the floor I pick them up and help. I’m just so much more aware of things. It’s a bit of a pain when you walk through reception and everyone wants to talk to you, but giving someone five minutes just talking to them about something even if you haven’t got that five minutes it can mean the world to them, and it’s just being aware of that (22_03_12_01 Peer mentor /staff).

Another white collar peer mentor respondent, who had a background in running several businesses, was in the process of setting up a St Giles Trust employment agency for ex-offenders. He made links between how he was using the same skill which had been very successful for him previously in order to maximise outcomes for service users or to provide funds for service user interventions. For him any real change in his sense of self was in valuing the underpinning values of work. He was able to blend a commercial desire to create a successful employment agency with the knowledge that any surplus would be ploughed back into the charity.

I came to St Giles because when I went inside... in the old days I used to think that life was about making money, and then when it all went horribly wrong I realised that there was more to life than that and that what I enjoyed was actually making things happen and the money was a bi product. I got a buzz out of doing the deal, not spending the money.
And really running the employment agency my aim is first of all to give these guys a chance to get into work, but if I have to sell my soul and just make it a professional commercial income generating agency and I’m employing people who are not ex-offenders so be it, because if I can make a profit it goes to St Giles and they do the work. So I started off thinking right, let’s get these guys into jobs, and then I’m thinking hang on a minute, it’d be nice if I could get these guys into jobs but what’s more important is I make some money because that money goes into the charity and the charity can do what the charity does really well (22_03_12_01 PM staff).

I am doing this because that’s the person I am. I like helping people. I want to help somebody and I get that feeling that I’ve helped somebody, it’s a nice feeling, and I know that’s just me. (19_04_12_04 volunteer)

These subtle shifts in the sense of self or the resurrection of the old self, were facilitated by the culture and environment of St Giles Trust. The charity generates a sense of belief in oneself and acknowledges that ex-offenders have positive qualities. Consequently, peer mentors are able to assume a tailor-made role which is predicated around their own strengths, skills and tacit knowledge. By ‘trying on’ the peer mentor role, ex-offenders ‘make up’ (Hacking 1986) themselves as someone worthy of respect and capable of more (Stevens 2011:10)

my story in a nutshell is that I worked in the voluntary sector from 1998 till 2005 and then I went... I worked on different projects, I found a job with the homeless persons unit, I worked for CRI, they help out with drugs and things like that and I worked for another company who help people get into jobs and stuff. Then I moved away from London back to my home town, I met up with old mates and all the rest of it and I started getting into bad habits and I ended up on heroin myself. I got addicted to that and I subsequently ended up in prison for 14 months on a 28 month sentence. And I bumped into the St Giles Trust workers in there and I’d worked with the St Giles Trust about 13 years ago on a project called Into the Wilds, taking their clients up to Cumbria courses such as canoeing and rock-climbing, abseiling and that sort of thing. I knew about St Giles, I knew that they were quite good but I wasn’t sure what they were doing. And so I’ve always liked working with people and I like helping people achieve their goals that wouldn’t know how to do it without a little bit of advice and a little bit of direction from somebody that does know where to look. (22_03_12_04 peer mentor)

Subjectivities, life changes or new beginnings
During the stages of thematic analysis, a code was created where peer mentoring was conceptualised in the textual extracts of interviews which referred to a turning point in life or emblematic of a different sense of self. This mirrors the notion of the ‘new me’ and the development of replacement scripts which separate the old shamed self from the new (Maruna 2001:167).

An analytical theme called a ‘new sense of self’ was coded on 13 occasions when peer mentors made reference to the purposive changes made to the sense of self by peer mentor volunteers. Involvement with St Giles Trust was understood as a rupture from previous experiences and a turning point from which to exercise will and re-orientate the self (Hlavka, Wheelock and Jones 2015:408, Healey 2013). In these textual excerpts, peer mentors speak of a conscious commitment to avoid old behavioural traits and to develop and maintain new ones. In the first excerpt from a peer mentor practising with the Peterborough One service, he contrasts how new peer mentor practices in the prison environment were conceptualised by his old offending peers as being reflective of an old sense of self. The peer mentor was in a familiar place but for a very different reason and role. His subjective understanding of peer mentoring centres on total changes to life, changes to behaviour and attitudes which his peers find hard to comprehend.

*It’s changed my life. It’s changed my life. I’ve got married since I started work at St Giles. I’ve got my house, I’ve virtually bought my own car legally. I’ve got my own nice new car and loads of stuff. Yes, it’s changed my life totally and for the better as well. I don’t really look over my shoulder anymore, I don’t have to do anything dodgy. It was hard to start with because it was hard for the people that I grew up with and there was all the people that have been in and out of prison, that have been in situations, you think like drug dealers and gangsters and things like that. They were all people that I grew up with in my life and it’s hard to start with but probably the only time they say, well what’s he doing, he’s going into prison, what’s he doing? Is he a grass, is he this? Is he that? It’s the old idea of me but once people actually realise what you’re doing is peer mentoring and they see you’re happy with it, I think everyone’s getting along fine with everyone that were my friends in the past and still are (13_09_12 one service peer mentor).*

The interrelationship between a positive sense of self and the institutional and familial looking glass which St Giles Trust provided (see chapter 5) is reflected in this peer mentor who obtained a paid position as a peer mentor. His paid employment as a peer mentor is understood as
representing himself as different. It is symbolic of a life changing and transformational narrative and a journey from negativity to personal development, achievement and a sense of success.

Most definitely, most definitely. Peer mentoring has been one of the biggest impacts on my life, life changing, but it’s also been one of my biggest achievements. You know, to see myself proud and not be influenced by negativity and to see how proud my parents are and just to see the whole positive impact, instead of the devastation I’ve caused and that makes it so much worthwhile. (19_04_12_02 paid peer mentor)

Like other people have been. I wanted to make a difference and I wanted to change my life. Do you know what, I sit sometimes and I see myself now, I used to see myself as weak, but not at the time, when I was going through my process, I thought I was so weak, I see myself now as so strong and there is nothing that could stop me achieving my goals, there is no barrier that I can put there myself, or that anyone else can put there to stop me achieving those goals, I’ll be like a steam roller! That is an amazing feeling, but because of the process I’ve gone through, I always...the first thing, I don’t know if you noticed when I asked you what interests you in what you do and what I do and why would you want to see those changes, because I’m so passionate about making the change, you know, I don’t like to see it about money (19_04_12_02 peer mentor).

The textual except from the peer mentor below makes reference to a change in values as particularly important for a new sense of self. Here the mentor alludes to “knifing off” (Maruna and Roy 2007) his previous criminogenic values and replaces them with generative ones. He notes how his new role is as a ‘good person’ which affords a sense of self-satisfaction rather than a previous self characterised by ‘doing bad’. This new sense of self comes out of the organisational opportunities afforded to peer mentors by St Giles Trust’s peer mentor delivery model. In addition the extent to which the peer mentor role can engender a totally new sense of self is exemplified by an account where the transformation of self is understood as a journey from a sense of being ‘nothing’ to a ‘role model’ able to assist others in achieving dreams and bringing families back together.

I think, that my colleagues here, at least, from the background from which I’ve emerged, I’ve had an awakening in life that, actually, doing good is better than doing bad and you can be a much better person, more fulfilled and all the positive adjectives which you can apply to that and get the benefits from the satisfaction that that brings about and, I think, that we’ve all, kind of, shared that experience and, I think, that’s really, in essence,
in a small statement, you know, that sums it all up, I think, they just understand that to
do good is better than to do bad and not only are you a better person, but you feel a
better person also (17_05_12 paid peer mentor)

That means so much to me, because to be able to case work them and empower them and
just give them that support, you know, to make them think holistically about everything, to
change, just seeing a change in one of them, if there’s five of them sat around the table, makes
me feel so proud and makes me feel, like, it makes you think I’ve gone from nothing to being
someone’s role model and being able to help people to achieve their dreams and be, you
know, changing families, bringing families back together (19_04_12_02 paid peer mentor).

Conclusion

The thematic analysis of the subjective understandings of peer mentoring has traced the
multiplicity of ways in which ex–offender peer mentors respond to technologies of power by
government. The peer mentor roles at St Giles Trust were created around an understanding of
the role and volunteering identity as a generative act of mutual aid whilst offering practical
assistance to the mentee. Peer mentor subjectivities also equated the role as being symbolic of
an individual’s willingness to desist from crime. This is achieved by subjectivities which identify
the role as allowing their true generative sense of self to re-emerge or alternatively as a
representation of a moral transformation to achieve a new and different sense of self.

The thematic analysis of peer mentor interviews has uncovered tension and contradictions in the
peer mentor subjectivities. The research findings demonstrate how some peer mentor
subjectivities involve embodying significant power within the role to correct their mentee’s
behaviour to an acceptable law abiding norm. Consequently, peer mentor volunteer practices
move on from being underpinned by mutually caring relationships to assume disciplinary and
surveillant practices to become part of an expanded yet dispersed penal power (Buck 2017,
Cohen 1985).
Chapter 7: ‘Making up’ the peer mentor as the professional ‘ex’-offender: contested knowledge and new skills in community justice

Introduction
This chapter presents research findings relating to two key research questions,

- How can we understand the nature and impact of successive governments’ neoliberal penal reform particularly in relation to the governance of the peer mentor?
- In what ways do the involvement of the penal voluntary sector and peer mentors reflect new criminal justice professional cultures and knowledges?

The most significant governmental and subjective construction of the peer mentor in the thematic analysis was in respect to the role being imbued with new experiential knowledge and expertise. As a result an important analytical theme which underpinned the construction the peer mentor in the research was in respect to the development of a plurality of knowledges in the community justice field. This chapter describes the analytical process including the construction of the thematic network of the superordinate theme in appendix 7. It then moves on to highlight how a plurality of knowledges has been highlighted by academic literature as a feature of a move to neoliberalism. The work then traces and analyses the significance of both a governmental and subjective ‘making up’ of the peer mentor in ways which construct the role as knowledgeable and expert. It highlights how government policy which foregrounds the peer mentor, found synergy both with St Giles Trust’s discourse around the use of ex-offenders in their delivery model and the peer mentors perceptions themselves. However the chapter also highlights a number of constructions of the peer mentor role which challenge more established professionalised notions of knowledges in the rehabilitation of offenders, including those which undermine the supervision of ex-offenders themselves.

Constructing the Thematic Network

In analysing both governmental and the discursive constructions of peer mentoring, a recurring theme was how the role embodied new knowledge and expertise in community justice. In describing the analytical process to the research, both government documents, St Giles Trust documents and the themes contained in the semi structured interviews with St Giles Trust staff members and ex offender peer mentor volunteers were analysed and coded in a structured way. The process, portrayed as a thematic network in appendix 7, coded the textual excerpts from the semi structured interviewed, particularly around the questions which made reference to the strengths and weaknesses of the peer mentor delivery model. This first stage was also repeated
with respect to the government and St Giles Trust documents. An important recurring theme with respect to constructions of the peer mentor was how both the governmental and subjective understandings of peer mentors gave great prominence to peer mentor volunteers embodying important knowledge from their experiences in the criminal justice system and resettlement into the community. As a result, the first stage codes referred to by the government and St Giles Trust as ‘trained, skilled and competent’ in their practice. This is important as such discourses offer a different interpretation of the volunteer in the voluntary sector from embodying lay amateurism. In a similar way the discursive constructions of peer mentors themselves also highlighted the centrality of skills and knowledge in making up the peer mentor.

The subjective constructions of peer mentoring also contrasted knowledge and expertise and compared it favourably against the statutory worker. This was important as there was an absence of how the peer mentor could complement statutory probation practice. Rather, the first stage analysis derived codes such as the statutory worker being less effective than the peer mentor due to value and knowledge gaps. The statutory worker was described as self interested, engaged in ‘tick box’ practice. As a result, a key analytical theme named ‘competing knowledges’ was created after considering all the descriptive codes. In a similar vein the negative aspects of statutory post custody licence supervision were coded and re-read in order to derive an analytical theme called ‘undermining statutory supervision’. Both themes were then combined to construct a broader analytical theme called ‘plural knowledge in marketised probation’. Another important analytical theme was constructed around the primacy of experiential knowledge and new expertise of the professional ‘ex’. This theme was derived from descriptions in the texts which referred to the usefulness of ‘having been there’ in terms of developing relationships with others and indeed avoiding pitfalls and having greater influence and legitimacy over the mentee. In addition, a second descriptive theme was coded where peer mentors used the knowledge of the everyday in order to access resources for mentees which involved negotiating around eligibility criteria which would have meant the service user was not entitled to such assistance. As a result the semi-structured interviews were coded and analysed together to encapsulate the various ways in which the peer mentor role embodies the utility of new experience and knowledge. However, the subjective perceptions and experiences of peer mentoring identities rather different knowledges and experience than those encapsulated in the governmental construction of ‘having been there’.

Peer mentors and experiential expertise

Rose (1998) notes how advanced liberal rule places the active and enterprising self at the core of a political ideal of the citizen. The enterprising self is “thus a calculating self, that works upon
itself in order to better itself”. (Rose 1998:7). Consequently, the effective governance of citizens can be undertaken through though their relative freedoms and personal capacities rather than via coercion or the domination of individuals (Dean 2010). The ex-offender as peer mentor is constructed by government as salvageable in that the peer mentor works both upon themselves and others to be law abiding and forward thinking in order to maximise their own happiness and future. By mainstreaming peer mentor relationships as a new distance between government and non governmental experts in rehabilitation. Through the introduction of a quasi-market in rehabilitation and probation, government introduces new alliances of knowledge and expertise experience or consuming rehabilitative interventions themselves. Such plurality in knowledges and expertise are created outside of the statutory penal professional whose expertise was formed around the treatment and management of offenders. Rose (1998b:99) notes how there needs to be a rethink between what we mean as knowledge and subjectivity. “We tend to think of knowledge as a rationalized, sober, public domain, regulated by norms of objectivity, universality, and impartiality. This domain of knowledge would thus appear to be different in almost every respect from the private space of subjectivity which is the play of the partial, the idiosyncratic, the experiential, the spontaneous”. As such Rose (1993:294) highlights how techniques of neoliberal rule serves to free up traditional notions of expertise and privileged knowledge. In its ideal sense neoliberalism “imagines a free market in expertise, where the relations between citizens and experts are not organised and regulated by compulsion but through acts of choice”. Similarly, Garland (2001:150) notes how contemporary social welfare experts have had their status challenged by the politicisation and populist common sense approaches to social problems and the development of new experts identifying how individualism or self-help have replaced collective solutions.

Knowledge can be understood as “the capacity to take social action and setting something in motion” and thus it has an inherent power to transform individuals in both coercive and productive ways (Adolf and Stehr (2104:2). Certain types of knowledge can lead to certain types of action and indeed, certain types of knowledge can be gained as a result of certain types of action. For example, expert knowledge of offender rehabilitation based on psychological principles will privilege individualistic strategies and actions to address cognition and behaviour. Actions such as self-help groups for substance misusers will privilege the lay knowledges of the power of the group or peer to offer support and assistance based upon learning from experience. Hence, knowledge can be conceived as both a precondition and a consequence of human activity. However as Stehr and Grundmann (2011:3) state knowledge is heard unevenly and the opportunities to take action as a result of knowledge are distributed unevenly in society. They state,
"Whilst such knowledges exist, what really matters with respect to whether knowledge is heard are the opportunities which different actors have to take action. Whoever wishes to transform knowledge into social action needs chances to do so in order for the knowledge to become authoritative or legitimate."

The pluralisation of knowledge inherent in market-based societies and high consumerism can also be understood and conceptualised as one of democratising knowledge and expertise with "the question of whose knowledge is to be recognised, translated and incorporated into action" hotly contested (Nowotny 2003:151). Hardin’s (2002) concept of the knowledge of the ordinary person, which he termed street-level epistemology, has particular resonance in the research here. As Hardin (2002:214) states that street-level epistemology is about a morass of subjective and ordinary knowledge, not about "what counts as knowledge in say physics, but rather what counts as your knowledge, my knowledge, the ordinary person’s knowledge". However, as Adolf and Stehr (2014:82) note, even the knowledge of the everyday does have some relationship to higher order scientific and universal claims of truth.

New markets and new knowledges

The plurality of knowledges and the array of power relations between them are produced by the creation of new modes of marketised penal delivery, involving ideals of competition and greater choice. Such marketization strategies and plurality of delivery agents in offender rehabilitation involves a move away from the "old knowledges" of the statist public sector. For example, in the Coalition government's Open Public Services White Paper (2011) the turn to the market in order to organise and deliver public services effectively and efficiently is indicted as a failure of the old bureaucratic and centralised public sector delivery and results in an incumbent need for a democratization and plurality in knowledge. For example the White paper states, "too many of our public services are still run according to the maxim, the man in Whitehall really does know best'. Decades of top-down prescription and centralisation have put bureaucratic imperatives above the needs of service users, whilst damaging the public sector ethos by continually second guessing highly trained professionals. As such choice, decentralisation, delivered by a range of providers of different size and sectors who are more inclined to innovate, and accountability to taxpayers form the competitive core to the reforms to the correctional system. (2011:5)"

The Open Public Services White Paper (2011) makes explicit reference to the plurality of knowledge in society. For too long public services have been delivered by the assumption that a small group of politicians and bureaucrats have had a monopoly on knowledge, resulting in a
belief that the state alone is capable of running public services. The government recognises the need for a democratization of knowledge in order to enable the sum of knowledge held by individuals themselves, communities and local authorities to be a driving force for change.

More specifically, in the community justice field the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) reform agenda also makes reference to specific governmental mentalities regarding the legitimacy of knowledge and expertise within the penal system. The marketised field of rehabilitation particularly around the supervision of those low and medium risk offenders serving under 12 months are to be the core work for the Community Rehabilitation Companies comprised of the expertise of the private and penal voluntary sectors. The construction of statist knowledge underpinning older ways of funding and delivery is deemed as outmoded and ineffective. For example, when detailing the lack of positive outcomes from significant investment into probation, the Coalition government states that "we simply can't carry on the same way hoping for a different result... and right now we are failing to turn their lives around" (MOJ 213:5).

Similarly, previous actions of government have been based on the premise of keeping offenders under lock and key. However, the government detail how new knowledge and actions are needed to transform the failing system. "the fundamental failing of policy has been the lack of a firm focus on reform and rehabilitation, so that most criminals continue to commit more crimes against more victims" (MOJ 2012:1). Where the statutory Probation Service was implicated in these failings was in the specific expectations placed upon it by the previous Labour government when it implemented a delivery model based on New Public Managerialism and the primacy of performance management. Kenneth Clarke stated that he wanted to end the ‘tick box’ and ‘bean counting’ culture which underpinned probation practice. (in Travis and Mulholland 2011). The desire for new knowledge and skills in the penal system was explicitly welcomed by government and is best articulated by Clarke when he states;

"we [the Coalition government] want to see a step change which draws fully on the innovation, expertise and local knowledge of all sectors – public, voluntary and private- in a way which embraces competition and is genuinely open to new ways of doing things better" (Clarke 2012:2-3). Similarly, Grayling notes that the Probation Service has a crisis of legitimacy with its own service users because he states “it increasingly plays a compulsory and box ticking role in their lives.”

The Coalition government's penal reforms also embody a radical reshaping of the knowledges or evidence base from which penal policies and interventions for offenders are commissioned or funded. Again, the challenge set is to move away from an attitude of 'Whitehall knows best' and the reliance upon centrally directed offending behaviour programmes which have been the core of the much vaunted 'what works' agenda since the late 1990s. The Coalition’s proposals are
different in two respects. Firstly, the government admits that with recidivism rates stubbornly high, there is a dearth of knowledge about what can work with offenders to reduce recidivism (Home Office 2013). Secondly, with the involvement of the private and the voluntary sector, the government wishes to move away from ‘top down accredited programmes’ delivered by statutory agencies, underpinned largely by the principles of cognitive behaviourism and seeks to develop to a more innovative model whereby offenders have the opportunity to actively participate in services designed and delivered by organisations who are much closer to civil society and from the communities from which offenders are drawn. Knowledge about ‘what works’ in offender rehabilitation in the future may take a more democratic, diverse and plural nature. Knowledge may emerge from the grass roots of mutual aid interventions rather than from the knowledge and practices of statutory correctional staff or psychologists. As such, the government’s ambitions are that superior knowledge is unearthed from being more sensitive to the localised realities of resettling from prison and “going straight”. The knowledge underpinning peer mentor practice and service user experience is therefore well placed to add plurality to existing knowledge regarding the rehabilitation of offenders and desistance from criminal behaviour. The welcome given by the government to the experiential knowledge of the peer mentor and volunteer based on treading a similar path, affords a significant challenge to traditional academic or scientific knowledge of the certificated probation professional expert.

The Probation field and boundaried knowledge

The Coalition government’s reforms of community justice under the Transforming Rehabilitation strategy reduces the statutory National Probation Service to having expertise regarding risk assessment and risk management. In creating the National Probation Service the government has placed significant boundaries around the organisation to manage a rump of high risk of harm offenders, most of whom serving significant periods of incarceration. In designing the marketization of probation the government have separated the high risk work away from the innovative and effective rehabilitative work which is now the preserve of the private and penal voluntary sectors. As Castel and Rose (in Rose 1996:349) articulate, the responsibilities of experts are being reformulated in terms of risk and managerialism logics. They note that;

“In a range of domains social workers, psychiatrists, doctors and others have been allocated accountability not so much for the cure or reform of clients, patients and other problematic individuals who cannot govern themselves, but for their administration according to the logic of risk minimisation”.
This is important with respect to the boundaries around the role of the penal voluntary sector and peer mentors. Government thinking is based upon the statutory probation officer in the National Probation Service having the requisite knowledge and expertise to make public interest decisions such as the enforcement of licences and community orders and managing those deemed more likely to commit serious harm. Alternatively, the ex-offender peer mentor is embodied as a role which is best placed to motivate and encourage the journey away from crime. This is best encapsulated when Aitken (2014) contrasts older statutory knowledges against new peer mentoring expertise which has huge potential. He states, “mentoring is an idea whose time has come... mentoring has gained acceptance because it is a caring human relationship with a huge potential to change lives and reduce reoffending. It is a personal rather than an official activity...mentoring is not probation (Aitken 2014:8).

As such the ex-offender peer mentor is centrally implicated in the Coalition government’s call for new expertise and knowledge in the penal sector. They are deemed best placed to end the depressing ‘merry go round’ of criminal behaviour and punishment. Even Aitkin, author of the influential Centre for Social Justice Meaningful Mentoring report (2014:3) acknowledges his ‘unusual but perhaps useful qualifications’ for writing the report. He notes he has the benefit of having both a bird’s eye view and a worm’s eye view of the criminal justice system as a result of his expertise as a former cabinet minister and former prisoner. Mentors are discussed as giving an offender a fair chance of “staying on the straight and narrow by being that wise friend” (Grayling in Aitkin 2014:6). By emphasizing his authority and legitimacy as both a politician, ex-offender and peer mentor, Aitken offers a range of legitimacies for his work on mentoring including the notion of having authority by experience. In a similar vein, the Coalition government’s valorisation of the experiences underpinning volunteer peer mentor journeys can be deemed as ‘experiential authority’ being heard. As a result the knowledge acquired by experience and ‘having been there’ provides St Giles Trust with unique legitimacy with government commissioners and a powerful wealth creating power in a marketised rehabilitation field.

An implicit aspect of the Transforming Rehabilitation reform agenda is that the government has opened up a new space for a plurality of voices of expertise regarding rehabilitation including voices from the private and voluntary sectors and from new individual actors such as the peer mentor. Rose (1998:350) highlights the establishment of expertise and experts in quasi-autonomous associations and intermediate organisations who are distanced from the state. The attempt to encourage individuals to empower and conduct themselves within delineated moral boundaries, embodies new knowledges and expertise. The knowledge centres on learning from experience regarding how to achieve successful resettlement from prison and maintaining law
abiding behaviour which is owned, not by state professionals, but by the individuals themselves who have achieved this. The opportunity provided by the mainstreaming of the penal voluntary sector is to challenge the established settled order with respect to new knowledge of those successfully leaving crime behind. As Lakeman et al (cited in Noorani 2013) note the relationship between ex-offender peer mentor volunteers and the penal voluntary sector organisation is symbiotic,

“these people [ex-service users] need to have some commitment to the ethos, legitimacy and authority of the employing organisation which extends some of its authority to the employee, and the employee enhances the legitimacy of the organisation”.

The government’s reforms to mainstream the penal voluntary sector in the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda gives primacy to the newly legitimized knowledge of the ex-offender peer mentor. Resultantly, those involved in previous criminality are reconstructed as having valuable and commercial first-hand experience of crime and the penal system. What may have been previously been considered as risky, criminogenic knowledge of crime and custody is now reconsidered as useful to lead others away from crime, offering St Giles Trust unique ‘desistogenic’ expertise.

Knowledge conflict between old and new knowledge systems in an increasingly neoliberal penal system was a key analytical theme. The theme contributed data around the tensions between different knowledges and experts to construct the superordinate thematic analysis of subjective understandings of peer mentoring practices. For example in the process of undertaking the fieldwork at St Giles Trust there were a number of challenging occasions when the volunteer peer mentor contrasted the superiority of their experiential learning with the researcher’s scientific, certificated academic training. Here, the volunteer contrasts the superior utility of the peer mentor’s knowledge with that of the University based researcher.

P: If you [meaning the researcher] went to one of our clients who has just come out of prison, and said, ‘don’t worry mate, I know how you’re feeling, I’ll help you’. He’s going to laugh at you. Because the first thing he’s going to say is ‘when were you in prison?’

I: Yeah.

P: At least when he says that to St Giles Trust people, they say well six months ago I got out. Someone can say that. That changes the whole perspective of how you’re dealing with the client, but more importantly how the client is dealing with you. You know what it’s like when these young kids who go to the probation office. Because the kids know that they haven’t got a clue they just sit there they’re not interested. They come here and suddenly they’re finding actually there are people out there that will help, that
actually do know where I’m coming from and where I’ve been. And that is amazing (29_03_12_01 peer mentor).

Empirical research findings: The governmental and subjective construction of the peer mentor through experiential knowledge and expertise

St Giles Trust’s discursive framing of volunteer peer mentors did not reflect the government’s use of the term. Unsurprisingly, the charity did not equate their delivery model to that of ‘old lags’ with its connotations of tired, amateurism. Rather, throughout St Giles policy documents and communication, peer mentors are referred to in relation to being active and embodying new, legitimate knowledge and skills. For example, an analysis of the St Giles Trust (2011:38) Impact Report encourages the reader to ‘meet the professionals’ who ‘have successfully made the difficult journey from service user to volunteer peer mentor to finally ex-client paid staff. Similarly in the report peer mentors are constructed as having “unique expertise”. St Giles Trust also purposively distance peer mentors from traditional constructions of volunteers as amateurs. This is markedly so when detailing the SOS gang project in the Impact report of 2011. In relation to the SOS project, funded by local London boroughs. The fact that peer mentors are constructed as having similar problems to the gang members is used as a source of legitimacy and strength in the peer led delivery model. As a result of such similar experiences and genuine empathy, the peer mentor volunteers can deal with complex problems and work effectively,

“it remains an ex-offender led project, using specially trained caseworkers who have similar issues to their clients...Our caseworkers have expert knowledge on the issues around gang-crime and youth offending which is essential to work effectively with their clients. The problems they work with are highly complex and it is typical for the clients to encounter setbacks and challenges”(St Giles Trust 2011:14).

In a similar vein to the neoliberal construction of a competitive marketplace in probation and rehabilitation services, there emerges a contest amongst plural and competing knowledges in the reconfigured field with the private and penal voluntary sectors bring their own experience and expertise to the field. For example rather than take their lead from qualified probation officer knowledges, St Giles Trust and their peer mentor programmes are conceptualised as embodying “desistance in action” (Maruna 2001). In doing so Maruna (2001) powerfully couples both scientific and academic research findings from the desistance research agenda and the subjective knowledge born of the everyday practices of the peer mentor situated in St Giles Trust. The tacit knowledge of peer mentors is born out of cumulative experiences of incarceration and exclusion in environments such as the prison. As a result, knowledge of how to practice as a peer mentor
to support, shape or challenge conduct is often passed on orally amongst the peer themselves rather than being set down in a programmatical sense via professional practice standards. Peer mentor subjectivities offer tacit "knowhow" with respect to moving on from the criminal justice system and leaving crime behind. However, in the thematic analysis there were few instances where the notion of peer mentors being skilful and knowledgeable was deemed problematic. Subsequently, as a result of this normalised view, there was little appreciation as to just how subversive the construction could sound,

I There are some who will employ offenders because they are a good plumber or plasterer or ground worker but St Giles are employing people specifically because of their previous experiences of criminality and their experience of the criminal justice system.

P: Blimey I’ve never thought of it that way. (Field notes with SMT)

The final emphasis of the legitimacy of unique experiential knowledge is the weight given to the fact that peer mentors’ experiences are translated into a certified qualification. Peer mentors are trained at St Giles Trust by obtaining a Level 3 Vocational Qualification in Advice and Guidance whilst serving their custodial sentence. An analysis of the Vocational Award in Advice and Guidance documentation offers St Giles Trust significant legitimacy with respect to the skill base and competency levels from which it can scale up its peer mentor delivery model. Consequently, peer mentor expertise transforms from being considered merely as lay and idiosyncratic and "becomes a result of evidence based experience" (Nowotny 2003). This is a crucial observation as to make the systematisation and routinisation of experience into knowledge it has to become standardised and able to be replicated, subject to testing and monitoring.

The Level 3 Vocational Qualification actively shapes the peer mentor in particular ways and serves to make up the peer mentor as a skilled and certificated volunteer. Subsequently, St Giles Trust are able to refer to their volunteer peer mentors as “our highly trained ex-offender staff who bring to their job a profound professionalism, expertise and credibility which drives their deep willing to go the all important extra mile for our clients" (St Giles Trust 2016). Indeed, the content of the Vocational Qualification in Advice and Guidance further cements the construction of ex-offender peer mentors as trained and professional. Peer mentors have to successfully demonstrate competence in relationships in a range of practice delivery areas such as establishing communication with service users, developing interactions with clients, assisting clients to decide a course of action, and negotiating on behalf of clients. The Vocational award therefore translates the intrinsic skills and experiential knowledge of the peer mentor used to create relationships with mentees and certifies them in the form of a work based qualification.
The demonstration of competences in the Level 3 Advice and guidance award such as “Review your own contribution to the service, and understand the importance of legislation and procedures” shape peer mentor practices in ways unrelated to the core relationships with mentees. The Vocational Qualification actively shapes and moulds the peer mentor in particular ways by its demands for mentors to demonstrate competence in areas which seek to professionalise and managerialise the role. For example, the Level 3 Vocational Award in Advice and Guidance asks for demonstration of competence in units which move the peer mentor away from merely delivering interventions with service users. As an example, a trained peer mentor should ‘provide and maintain information materials for use in the service’ and ‘manage a personal caseload’. These two vocational units are significant in that they are core to the success of the penal voluntary sector in a marketised penal system. Firstly, the units demonstrate the peer mentor’s ability to keep accurate and detailed case records on the relationships they build and their practices. This is most probably in St Giles Trust via the electronic case record system and the electronic recording of assessments and practice. This enables internal organisational and external governmental evaluations to be made of the quality of the peer mentor’s work by the use of audit techniques. Secondly, the peer mentor’s work with those leaving prison and wishing to leave crime behind and resettle into the community is constructed as a ‘caseload’ to be managed and reviewed for progress. The peer mentor’s work is shaped by the use of management techniques to look holistically at the entirety of their activities rather than their individual desire to make a difference to individual service users. These managerialised competencies seek to ensure that peer mentors practice is controlled and boundaried by the organisational values and procedures of St Giles Trust and by practicing within a broader legislative framework. The Vocational Qualification also shapes the peer mentor’s practice within the broader criminal justice and penal networks by the need to demonstrate of competences such as “Liaise with other services and operate within networks”. This ensures that ‘qualified’ peer mentors are situated as an enabler to broader community services and resources or importantly ensure they operate within the particular multi-agency arrangements in the penal field. Other competencies also compromise the trust and purity of the generative relationship between mentor and mentee. Such competencies ensure that peer mentors work to serve broader and powerful interests in the penal field such as assuming government agendas of contributing to protect the public. Resultantly, competent peer mentors ‘make the client aware of the limits of confidentiality’ and ‘manage any inappropriate information by clients’ presumably by reporting such information to powerful others in a joined up penal system.

The Vocational Qualification should be understood as part of a governmental technique which shapes the direction of the peer mentor’s work in the rehabilitation field. The requirements to demonstrate competence to attain the Level 3 Vocational award in Advice and Guidance constructs the core technical components of peer mentor practice and indeed, supports the utilisation and commodification of peer mentor activities to be bought and sold in the marketised rehabilitation and community justice fields.

In effect St Giles Trust offers an alternative epistemological truth based on the knowledge of ‘someone who has been there.’ The establishment and legitimisation of the ‘know how’ of the volunteer peer mentor is the fulcrum of the unique and innovative approach which the charity states it can offer.

And so what St Giles Trust do as an organisation is we provide them with a home if you like with which to continue to build up their confidence and their abilities but give them a meaningful job at the same time, whether it’s paid or unpaid almost initially is irrelevant because actually it’s the job itself, that we give them responsibility and we treat them...we don’t treat them as old lags, we treat them as individuals who’ve got skills and expertise if you like to offer to others. (20_11_12_01 senior management team)

The analyses of governmental discourse around the foregrounding of the experiential knowledge and expertise of peer mentors demonstrate the presence of a “free market” in rehabilitation expertise. A key aspect of the market is the rival claims of truth from experts including the displaced, professionalised statutory probation officer but also increasingly the consumers of rehabilitation services and the ex-offender peer mentor volunteer offering dedication and service to those leaving prison. However, these discursive governmentality of government strategy and policy texts really only shed light on a macro level analysis offering a view ‘from the top’. Questions remain as to how such government agendas impact upon the peer mentor and how their knowledge and status has been shaped and understood by the peer mentors themselves. In addition, we know very little as to how peer mentor’s notions of knowledge and expertise are situated in a particular penal voluntary sector organisation. Furthermore, we know very little of the varied subjective understandings of peer mentors and the ways in which peer mentor volunteers conceptualise their role or sense of self. An analysis of governmentality ‘from below’, afforded by grounded empirical research seeks to shed significant light on such areas. (Shoshana 2011:722, Lea and Stenson 2007:14)
Experiential knowledge and peer mentor subjectivities: The importance of “having been there”

A key finding from the thematic analysis into the subjective understandings and experiences of peer mentoring was that respondents made recurring references to the acquisition of ‘ways of doing’ peer mentoring from other peer mentors they had met in St Giles Trust’s various peer led projects. The knowledge underpinning the values and practices of peer mentoring was discussed by peer mentoring as originating from the importance of “having been there” referring both to prison and to criminal behaviour. As a result a code was derived to capture this and indeed the code was used on 41 occasions in the process of thematic analysis. Mentors spoke of how such experiential knowledge is often communicated orally by other peer mentors rather than by any formalised set of practice guidelines. Finally, throughout the research when discussing the ethos and values of practice, peer mentors contrasted these new ways of practising with the traditional construction of expertise in the penal system.

The emphasis afforded by peer mentors to knowledge gained by experience echoed St Giles Trust foregrounding of them in their delivery model and the emergent governmental mentalities of the ex-offender as “wise friend” in the Transforming Rehabilitation reform agenda. There were many references to the importance of ‘having been there’ as a new legitimising factors for working with those leaving the penal system. The notion of added legitimacy and commercial clout for St Giles Trust from the use of peer mentors is understood implicitly here,

“The advantage St Giles’ Trust has got over many organisations is the majority of the people have been where the actual people are right now. If you’ve got somebody coming to tell you, “don’t do the drugs, don’t do the crime or whatever” they’re going to say, “you don’t know where I’m coming from, you don’t know where I’ve been” or whatever. The advantage is we’ve got people from every single way of life. As I said, peer mentors have been involved in different areas, she can actually say to people like her that she’s been places that many guys have never been. (19_04_12_03WIRE)”

The peer mentors’ views of the importance of ‘having been there’ centred around a genuine sense of empathy derived from knowledge of where mentees come from and the everyday challenges and difficulties of overcoming the practical problems and systemic hurdles of leaving crime behind.
“The idea that there were volunteers volunteering from prison to volunteer, like the ROTL placements that have come out, it is a good idea because they know where the client’s coming from. It’s the ones that have been there, done that” and “it’s basically when they’re talking about like benefits and housing and, you know, they’ve got…I mean, I can say to them, you know, I’ve had to fill in the forms, I’ve had to go to the meetings, I’ve had to wait in the queues, I’ve had to…yeah, there’s a process, you know, we’re there to help you, so we can help you. But, I mean, I understand, you know, when they say about, oh, I haven’t got this housing form yet or I haven’t got contacted about the housing benefit and we need to chase this up and this form needs more information and you can understand and relate to it because you’ve been there and I’ve had to do it” (12_09_12 one service peer mentor)

Additionally, the importance of experimental knowledge constructed as ‘having been there’ was also constructed as being essential on an emotional and cognitive level with respect to demonstrating a genuine and implicit empathic understanding of the lives which can lead to crime. For example this peer mentor is able to identify all these elements which arise out of homophilic relationships, based upon a powerful sense of similarity between participant characteristics and shared life experiences (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001). An understanding and knowledge gained from experience enables the peer mentor to offer both practical and emotional assistance to leaving gangs and crime behind.

“You know, it’s the way that they have that approach towards…and I think it’s because they’ve come through the mill; they’ve had traumatic upbringings, they’ve had offending backgrounds and they fully understand and I think what St Giles, well I know what we do here, we turn that round and we show them, why, this is the importance of the counselling side of it as well. You know, which is what I want to employ in here. Basically showing them why they behave in that way and showing them the correct path. Because they can talk to those gang members, the same age group, the same colour, you know, and they have the same character traits. That’s very important. And I think because a lot of the peer support workers have actually maybe, most of them have actually been in prison etc, you know, they understand fully how that person is psychology when they leave them at the gates. So when they start interacting with them that they know exactly how they feel psychologically”. (31_05_12_04 peer mentor)

Similarly, this peer mentor focused on an emotional and empathic understanding of overcoming a sense of loss in a mentee’s life and how this was exacerbated by the experience of imprisonment.
Peer mentors spoke often of their unique ability to have genuine knowledge of the multifarious impacts of the prison on client’s lives.

“I’ve been in prison 18 months and so clients feel confident that you’re on the same playing field, do you know what I mean. Yeah, sometimes, yeah, they think, oh, you must be able to understand what’s going on in life or, you know, what I’ve had to go through but you can explain that you’ve been in that situation, you’ve been there, do you know what I mean, I must have been in a better position when I came out than you but, I mean, I’ve been faced with like having lost everything, lost my job, lost everything, and then having to start again, you know. Yeah, so basically, I think you just build up a bit more trust, I think, yeah, they seem to like, you know, latch on that you do know what they're talking about, basically. You know, and I suppose that’s different to what a probation officer is. Yeah, even a good probation officer, he’s been to prison, he’s seen it, but he hasn’t actually been through the system as such” (120902 one service peer).

The higher value given to experiential knowledge is highlighted by this peer mentor who relates the peer mentor similar life experiences to an empathic understanding of the position of the client. In doing so the peer mentor links experience as an evidence base akin to the what works agenda in rehabilitation.

What works here is that the client is at the centre of everything and around that is someone that’s been there. I think that is the ultimate unique point. Because you will not speak to someone or connect with someone unless they’ve got some sort of - you just naturally fit if you’ve experienced something. But that is to me that’s unique about St Giles, is that we’ve got that unique experience of being there and done it. I could talk to you about prison all day long and you’d probably understand it, but unless you’ve been there and you’ve been in a cell locked up for 24 hours a day, you wouldn’t get it. (20_11_12_02 peer mentor)
reconstruction of one's own deviant history. What the thematic analysis details here is the fact that peer mentor roles and identities do not necessarily represent "desistance in action" in the sense that they represent a totally transformed sense of self which is far removed or "knived off" from one's criminal identity (Maruna and Roy 2007). Rather, peer mentor identities can best be understood as existing on a pathway to desistance where the knowledge and experience from experiencing the world as an offender, serving time before resettling back into society marks not a break in a sense of self to a more conventional lifestyle. Subsequently, old knowledges and values from a criminal past are not jettisoned but alternatively form part of a process to desistance from crime. The experiential knowledge and understanding gained from criminal behaviour and experiencing contact with the criminal justice system are used and re-evaluated as having utility by the peer mentor. Therefore, an ex-offender's 'hangover' deviant identity actually facilitates the exiting of a life of crime as knowledge and experience of a criminal past is reconstructed as knowledgeable and of value by both government and St Giles Trust (Brown 1991). Perrin and Blagden (2016:117) note how peer support programmes can have a positive effect upon both the providers and recipients of such support. During their practice peer mentors may reflect upon their own past experiences and view their progress to desistance in a favourable way (Perrin and Blagden 2016:121). A peer mentor discussed how his previous deviancy could be turned into a social utility,

"It is that kind of, poacher turned game keeper thing, isn't it, and it's quite, sort of, bold really, isn't it? To say, you know, you're going to use someone's criminality and experience of being a criminal as a good thing. (14_06_12_01)"

The ex-offender who symbolically demonstrates a cessation of criminal activity by assuming a peer mentor identity can be constructed as an "expert –by-experience". Dear 2004 (cited in Stehr and Grundmann 2011:9) notes that an expert is "someone who is reckoned to be likely to be experienced in the relevant matters. In this sense expertise has to be generic; it cannot be truly unique. If it were, it would be no better than a kind of private language...experience as expertise translates into a question about the culturally sanctioned techniques whereby credibility for experiential assertions is established". The subjective understanding of peer mentors found favour with such a notion with references made in the textual excerpts to acting as a professional. This notion of embodying expertise was made even more powerfully by the fact that this peer mentor was been rewarded financially for his peer mentor work.
Exactly, I’m professional at what I do and I speak to people outside of work as well about their situation and I can impart a bit of my knowledge that they seek from me, which is always a good thing, so I impart my knowledge to them and it makes sense to them. (29_03_12 paid peer mentor)

The thematic analysis constructed the valorisation of peer mentor experiential knowledge and expertise as the “professional -ex” (Brown 1991). During their transformation from offender to peer mentor the ‘professional ex-offender’ utilizes vestiges of their deviant identity to legitimize their past deviance and generate a new productive sense of self. For many peer mentors in the research, the new understanding of peer mentor was interlaced with the old sense of self as the remnants of the experiencing the old offending self were either impossible or unadvisable to eradicate completely. In the research findings on peer mentor subjectivities, respondents made reference to how they continued to have a nuanced understanding of the offender mentality and the usefulness of such knowledge to prevent being duped by excuses and minimisations. This was especially prescient when detailing how the peer mentor’s experiential knowledge enabled them to detect and challenge those mentees who were not taking full responsibility for their actions or who were trying to resist peer mentor influence. For example, a peer mentor who worked in the housing projects was able to use his experience of leaving prison and his pathway to successful resettlement into society in order to make an assessment of a mentee’s similar motivation.

if you’re sleeping rough you do what is needed to get yourself out of that situation. And it’s just things like that where you know from my own experience that some people come in and say I’m in a situation where I’m homeless, I’m in need, I’m in need, I’m in need, then I say alright cool, I take them to an address and offer them a private rented accommodation, it’s a room in a shared house, for under 35s and they turn it down! You offer them a room in a shared house and they go and see it, and say no. I say well the roof you have now is the sky. Yeah, yeah, yeah and I say if you’ve got money you can go and live in Belgravia, the fact that you’ve come to a charity to ask for help, and like we’re doing the best we can and all this was explained to you at the very beginning so for you now to try to manipulate for something more you’re not in as desperate need as you were (29_12_03_Pmstaff).

A result of peer mentors using their own experiences as useful in their practices was contrasted sharply in comparison to the statutory criminal justice professionals’ knowledge and expertise. A
subordinate theme from the research around knowledge and expertise was the way in which the knowledge of the ex-offender peer mentor volunteer was viewed in a positive way in order to effectively shape the behaviour of others. A peer mentor made reference to meeting prisoners at the gate and using his own previous experiences and knowledge as an offender in order to restrict mentees’ freedom. As a result, the peer mentor notes how his previous experience of criminality, something society would normally declare as morally reprehensible, becomes useful knowledge to enable him to comprehend and address offenders’ ‘tricks and angles’.

Then again it comes down to peer’s experience again because you have to time manage it, you have to draw boundaries. Because I’ve got extensive experience of being an ex-offender myself and dealing with them in their cells as a listener, as a neighbour, I know the sort of tricks and I know the angles, there’s not many things they can say to really deter me from knowing what exactly their intentions are (19-04-12-01pm)

Similarly, a previous experience of criminality was seen as a useful way of avoiding deception by mentees. A peer mentor respondent, employed on the SOS gangs project, stated how his previous experience as a gang member underpinned his ability to develop honest and truthful discussions with young people which prevented him from being deceived into believing an altogether more positive life story.

I try and empower all my young people to sit and assess what they’re doing, you know, because most of them, they’ll try and pull the wool over your eyes and I say, I used to do what you’re doing now, I used to go out and be a criminal, I’ve met your parents, they haven’t got a clue what you do, the same as mine never, mine used to go to work every day, that would be my reign of terror, then, come six o’clock in the evening, I’d come home, sit down for dinner, “how has your day been mum? Oh, fine, what have you been doing? I’ve just been to college. Oh, are you still doing that course? Yeah. Can you get me some paperwork? I’ll get it next week mum, because I’ve lost my folder. You know, I used to do all of that, every single little bit. (19_04_12_02 peer mentor paid)

Peer mentors therefore do not put all their criminal knowledge or values behind them or ‘knife it off’ simply in exchange for a law abiding concept of self such as the father or worker. Rather as the thesis demonstrates by the individual subjectivities of the peer mentors themselves they use vestiges of knowledge from their previous deviancy in order to maximise their effectiveness as a peer mentor, their ability to connect and understand the mentee and indeed their future occupational strategy with St Giles trust. Governing rehabilitation through the peer mentor enables both the peer and the mentee to become more knowable both with respect to the
behaviours and actions which peer mentor’s can understand and address which may not be open and obvious to the trained statutory professional. Peer mentors know the criminal’s mind, tricks and angles from a perspective of having utilised such tactics themselves. The penal voluntary sector benefits from the extent of peer mentors’ knowledge of service users excuses and a realistic assessment of need the possibility of active mentee’s self-governance increase.

Peer Mentor subjectivities: ‘knowledge’ and ‘gaming the system’

Any volunteer or paid professional engaged in personal service delivery where human action plays a part can have considerable agency to make their own operational decisions (Lipsky 1980). Too often analyses of organisations are generalisations without explaining how individual workers reproduce or resist organisational change or prescribed ways of operating. Strategy documents are not inconsequential but they are sometimes mistaken for what really happens on the front line. Indeed “a new configuration does not finally and fully emerge until it is formed in the minds and the habits of those who work the system” (Garland 2001:24). Arguably, despite peer mentors being trained and demonstrating competences in a range of areas relating to advice and guidance, volunteers are probably one group of front line actors who are the least governed or managed. Prior and Barnes (2011:265) note how actors are ‘situated agents,’ able to make their own assessments and decisions about how to respond to specific problematic situations within institutional settings and cultures. As broader policy actors, peer mentors are able to draw upon ways of acting which are not necessarily prescribed by government prescriptions and priorities. Rather, such agency may result in experiential knowledge about which practices achieve results for clients that may be much more variable and uncertain. The empirical research here charts how ex offender peer mentor volunteers created alternative methods and approaches to maximising client outcomes.

In the thematic analysis peer mentor subjectivities referred to the importance of knowledge and skills which aped the government’s rationalisation for involving the peer mentor in the marketisation of rehabilitation. Two subordinate themes relating to the peer mentor knowledge and expertise were the knowledge of everyday reality and relatedly, the limits of scientific knowledge to effectively change the lives of those involved in rehabilitation services. Peers mentors often spoke of the utility of expertise and knowledge of the every day. This encompassed knowledge such as how to massage practice or possibly ‘game’ the system in order to maximise the potential benefits for mentees. St Giles Trust paid employees and peer mentors spoke of how “those who had been there” had privileged knowledge with respect to the realities of leaving crime behind and resettling into society. This was discussed with respect to how peer mentors
had tacit knowledge and knew how things really were with respect to the difficulties obtaining housing or welfare services. This street level epistemology is an important feature in peer mentor subjectivities which raises their status above the notion that they are unskilled amateurs.

In the thematic analysis peer mentor’s experiences and understandings of the role, an absence of practice standards was referred to on 12 coding occasions. This was particularly relevant in order to demonstrate the relative freedom peer mentors had to practice in a multitude of innovative and creative ways. However it also gave rise the possibility of ‘counter conducts’ of peer mentors (Dean 2010) involving practices which St Giles Trust may not have welcomed. The absence of practice standards and the resultant freedoms to innovate in practice were commented below;

“The mentality of St Giles Trust is passed on. They were all ex offenders like myself and they came and started the project up and then obviously the project’s moved on, people have learnt their ethos and the way the St Giles Trust worked. So it’s just passed down and it’s passed down through, this is how we work and this is how we do things. Obviously then I’ll start to pass things down to the next volunteer and as they do their training they will pass that on to the next volunteer and everyone has their own opinion on how to do things” (13_09_12one service peer)

“No, there aren’t practice standards, because all the work is so, you know, a lot of the work is different, every client is different, every situation is different, each, like you say, lots of the services are really just one person, so they just have to gauge how they work with their case load on their own, because there’s nothing to compare it to, it’s just that’s the peer mentor service”. (14_6_12_01 manager community team)

An ex-prisoner peer mentor who created and constructed the Inside and Out project to offer support for gay prisoners in the prison estate identified the level of freedom and trust St Giles Trust afforded to him when he stated;

“So it was very much, you know, I had pretty free hands. Obviously, I had a line manager and managers above that but I really...you know, I was the one who was sort of coming up with the ideas on how the project should work you know, what we should have in place and what’s the sort of way forward. And then we decided that we were going to roll it out to five prisons, all male prisons, purely for the reason that we had services already in these prisons and really good relationships well, they had a big respect for our work already. So like easy it was to sort of come up with something new and go sort of
forward with it, without sort of upsetting them or going like oh well, why do we need that, you know, we’re quite good at doing that ourselves”. (29_03_12_04 peer mentor)

Street level knowledge and gaming the system

A particular aspect from the research reflecting freedom to practice was the extent to which peer mentors’ had developed significant levels of knowledge and experience of successfully advocating for clients and accessing benefits and housing. This experience led to a concerted effort on the part of some peer mentors to actively shape a service user’s claim for services in particular ways in order to maximise the chances of success. For example, whilst a traditional social work of probation professional may have provided the Housing Department of Department for work and pensions a full and accurate reflection of the client’s situation, peer mentors were rather more aware of how to actively construct an individual’s life situation in order to receive benefits or be considered for housing. This ability to achieve outcomes by creative ways was noted by one of the service users. Indeed, the active construction of individual’s situations was evident in the observations undertaken in the fieldwork whereby peer mentors would often advise service users which details the client should disclose and those aspects of their situation not to speak about. As a result peer mentors developed a prestigious reputation amongst service users as being able to access welfare resources where other advisers had failed.

The client has applied for benefits and they’ve got knocked back and St Giles knows, has experience, they know the reasons why people get knocked back when they apply for a community care grant, the thing is, it’s the way people phrase their case for the grant, they’ll say, like, often, they say, they’ve just got out of prison and they got a place and they need furniture and social fund people don’t really want to hear that you’ve got out of prison, what they want to know is, it’s about the address you’re at, is it part of a resettlement programme for you to set up home in that place, so you have to start learning what to say (23_05_12 focus group2)

Yeah. St Giles trust done that for me, I got knocked back when I applied for a community care grant for a washing machine and St Giles, one of the ladies upstairs said, oh, it’s because of...probably the way I phrased my application, so she phrased it the proper way and it made a big difference and I got the money for the washing machine. (Focus group 1)
The active construction of service user’s claims was taken a step further where peer mentors could be considered as gaming the benefits or housing system in order to maximise the outcomes for service users. Examples of ‘gaming the system’ or subverting benefit regulations by actively not disclosing information which would be detrimental to the claim was referred to and tolerated by the mentors. Benefit regulations were constructed as ‘things to get around’ by knowledge of little tricks, white lies and other tacit knowledge.

*If you’re doing it time and time again it becomes sort of second nature to you and they know the little tricks and the little ways to get round things. You know the things to say and you might have to tell a little white lie every now and again and you might have to just, sort of, bend the truth, but that’s the sort of things that get results and help the clients get through.* (13_09_12 peer mentor one service)

*The peer mentors know the system and they know what to say, so from that point of view they are really good, you know, they can work the system properly – well maybe not properly, but [laugh], but they get the result because they know how to do it, so it does work better like that.* (13_09_12 One Service paid Caseworker)

The practices alluded to here represent a sense of favouritism to service users where techniques have been developed to counter what has been considered as unfair allocation of resources to the excluded and vulnerable. Peer mentors spoke of enjoying the challenge and advocating for their clients in an assertive way where they stated they would not accept no for an answer from the gatekeepers of housing and benefit resources.

‘Having been there’ as a community justice practice ‘tool’

The significance of “having been there” as a powerful legitimising notion for work with peer mentors ran throughout the peer mentor subjectivities. On a number of occasions staff and mentor’s spoke of the peer led delivery as being St Giles Trust’s jewels in the crown. However, the notion of experiential learning was made more complex when analysing how peer mentors used such knowledge and legitimacy. The experiential knowledge of criminal behaviour, the impacts of the experience of prison and the practical and emotional aspects of leaving crime behind was acknowledged in different ways. In the thematic analysis of the importance of constructing peer mentors as knowledgeable and skilful, peer mentors spoke of ‘having been there’ as a tool or strategy to be used or selected when the occasion arose. This could be when the peer mentor needed a heightened sense of legitimacy and authority with service users or
interestedly when such legitimacy was threatened by the service user. Finally, the use of experiential knowledge was deemed as less helpful and became less acknowledged when peer mentors attempted to move on from their past and become a rehabilitation expert in their own right. The St Giles Trust manager below notes how previous experiences of the penal system was not something peer mentors celebrated even if they knew that it was important aspect of building relationship.

\[ \textit{it's not a badge of honour, but it does give legitimacy, I think that's...} \textit{I think, you know, people don't necessarily brag about it, but what they'll do is say when they need it and people very often say in the interviews that they might not, for some people, use it until they have to, it's, like, a sort of tool, you know, bring it out when you need it. For example, if somebody challenges the peer mentor's legitimacy, well, why should I wait for benefits or that housing benefits taken three weeks, the peer mentor can say, well, look, you know, that's how it is and how it was for me - it's a tool like that. (14_06_12_01 manager community) } \]

Well that’s so true because like I was saying, you [meaning the researcher] and I could go and present in a prison and give them exactly the same information that the peer advisors do and you’d [meaning the researcher] be laughed out of the place. Unfortunately it’s true. (12_09_12 one service peer)

Here a peer mentor uses the notion of ‘having been there’ as his trump card when he required extra sense of legitimacy with the client, where the creation of a more effective mentoring relationship was needed or where the mentor needed additional assistance to ensure compliance.

\[ \text{P: The fact that a lot of us are ex-offenders, me personally, I never tell my client that in the beginning.} \]

\[ \text{I: Do you not?} \]

\[ \text{P: I only tell them that if it’s relevant. In fact most of the time, I only tell them that when they start to play up and they say something to me like, well, you don’t know what it’s like. Then I may tell them. I think what’s more important is the relationships that we build with the client. And maybe...you see, maybe that’s still not right, because maybe the reason why we build such good relationships with the client is because we are ex-offenders and we know what you’re going through; we've been that road, some of us} \]
many times, so we know what you’re going through and we know what we would have wanted or needed at that time.

Finally, peer mentors emphasised their ability and willingness to assimilate formalised and professionalised knowledge into their peer mentor practice. This was especially apparent in peer mentor subjectivities as St Giles Trust became more intertwined with formalised delivery in the penal sector. The peer mentor involved in a Prolific and priority offender project (PPO) or Integrated Offender Management project (IOM) notes how he assimilated knowledge from the statutory partners which at some level moves the mentor away from subjective understanding of the peer mentor embodying experiential expertise. Here the wise friend or old lag had begun to conceptualise his role as a professional in a multi-agency setting based on training in housing law, benefits advice and eligibility criteria. Indeed, the mentor spoke of developing effective relationships with other criminal justice partners and in doing so assimilating knowledge about the formal mechanisms of the criminal justice system, some of which were far removed from traditional peer mentor work. For example, the peer mentor spoke of gaining knowledge from criminal justice partners around key criminal justice strategies around the assessment and management of dangerous offenders and spoke of how peer mentors practice was shaped by new knowledge around risk and how peer mentors could contribute to the delivery of such agendas.

“I regularly attend monthly MAPPA meetings, Prolific and Priority Offender meetings and adult offender group meetings. So that’s where I picked up a lot of information and knowledge as well. We have a referral form. We’ve tried to keep it short and sweet so its got everything we need within the first two pages. If we do require further information – but that also depends on the level of risk of that offender too-so if were working with someone who is subject to MAPPA of PPO then we would need extra information just for risk purposes….if you saw a MAPPA level 3 [immanent risk of committing serious harm] you wouldn’t be thinking I can just place him anywhere”.

New Knowledge and a Crisis of Legitimacy for the Statutory Sector

This analysis of the impact new experiential knowledge and skills has on a transformed penal system is important and underexplored. Power relations between the statutory sector and the penal voluntary sector can also be reflected between trained professionals and ‘professional – ex’ offender (Brown 1991). Such tensions can result from threats to a traditional sense of status incumbent with marketization and pluralisation of the penal sphere. For example, it is well documented that peer mentors find it difficult to obtain training and practice their role in a
prison regime which prioritises safety and control and which negates the importance of generative acts inside the prison regime often viewing them as threats to security.


The table 6.1 below presents in stark terms how a plurality of actors has taken shape and to what extent the experiential knowledge of the peer mentor is juxtaposed against outmoded knowledge of the statutory worker. As such the peer mentor is "made up" by government in ways which challenge the status quo and reflect a competitive marketplace in rehabilitation services rather than in ways which complement statutory provision of services. The table notes the construction of peer mentoring as active and entrepreneurial in their desires for themselves and others to lead a law-abiding life which was detailed here in chapter 6. Moreover the table outlines how peer mentors represent new knowledge and expertise from a genuine understanding of the lives of service users, developed by experiencing similar lives themselves. In contrast the statutory professional is trained to demonstrate empathy and engagement skills in order to work with service users who are largely different to the professional. As a result of the valorisation of experiential expertise, the two roles are currently enjoying a rather different sense of legitimacy with government and service users.

Table 6.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUTORY PROBATION AND PRISON OFFICER</th>
<th>PEER MENTOR VOLUNTEER</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucratic and statist-'bean counting'</td>
<td>Active, Entrepreneurial and innovative new sectors – new knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process led and Resistant to change – knowledge and skill deficits</td>
<td>Imbued with innovative characteristics leading to improved outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power relationship based on professional distance</td>
<td>Peer relationship based on genuine closeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old expertise based on professional certificated, scientific knowledge,</td>
<td>New expertise based on experiential knowledge of 'having been there' or 'walked in their shoes'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taught and trained in empathy and relationship skills to understand the different service user</td>
<td>Genuine empathy and relationship skills from similar experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced legitimacy with politicians, public and service user</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Probation officers and prison officers can also view peer mentors as threats to their own future career and professional place. Conflict can centre around the battle for legitimacy amongst systems of truth and knowledge. A professionalized knowledge system has traditionally held great power as it is licenced by the state, professionally developed, certificated and positioned against a knowledge of the lived, experiential and the genuine. For example Borkman (1990) distinguishes between experiential knowledge, and professional knowledge, arguing that experiential knowledge emerges from a group situation and is based on ‘direct’ experience, which is then reflected on and agreed on in a group environment. This form of knowledge production, then, is ‘specialised knowledge, grounded in an individual’s lived experience’ (Borkman 1990, p. 3). While professional knowledge is understood as being university-or institution-based, and grounded in theory or scientific principles, experiential knowledge is seen as concrete, grounded in lived experience and holistic.

Peer mentors and various other ex service user groups have pursued the valorisation of experiential, embodied knowledge as a means of contesting and resisting dominant modes of knowledge that produce subjugated subjectivities. They demonstrate forms of knowledge that are expressly tied to the valorisation of experience as positioned against formal, institutionalised forms of knowledge. Usually experiential knowledge tends to be eclipsed by scientific rationalist knowledge which is certificated. Therefore the valorisation of knowledge and skills central to peer mentor subjectivities acts as a reversal and resistance to older scientific knowledges in corrections specifically around the notion of treatment programmes for offender groups. The extent to which a tension between knowledge was apparent in peer mentor work is exemplified where the peer mentor gives an account of how his tacit knowledge of experiencing gangs was of greater utility than the knowledge of the professionalised, statutory agency whose raison d’etre was to protect the public.

*I’ll give you a quick example. I had a young man, he came from this area, in the Southwark area, and he was involved in gangs. Basically, the majority of his family were in another gang, and he was...well just say Red and Blue, he was in the Reds, they were in the Blue. And he had to go on probation. So I picked him up from the prison, his mum told me that he*
wanted to order a cab, because he felt unsafe. I said, ‘A cab? Okay, I’m following you.’ I told my manager I needed to get into the cab, it was signed off, it was okay. So we’ve taken the cab to the probation office. And funnily enough, the gang, the other red gang, was in the probation office. So, I’ve then turned to the probation officer, and remember I’m only there to help with housing...but I had to ask the question, ‘We’re here to house this young man on the day of release...and basically you’ve put that in jeopardy with having two gangs in the same probation office, I said to probation “wouldn’t it have made sense to send him to East London?” Somewhere out of South London? But she didn’t care. She was like, ‘Well this is the only way we can handle him.’

You know, they’re at Probation for violence. My client was in prison for a firearms offence. I don’t know what the other person was there for, but I can imagine...but, I’m in a situation where I can only read it as it is, and...act on what I can act on. (22_03_12_02)

The peer mentor valorises and legitimate their own knowledge and experience over the criminal justice professional and by doing so reduces penal professional’s knowledge as worthless and mundane. Not only do volunteer peer members see their understanding from experience as invaluable for others leaving crime behind but this knowledge is developed and refined as the peer mentor gains experience in the new role. The crisis of old knowledge and practices was articulated by an ex prison officer who became a member of staff with the Peterborough One Service. He voiced how the knowledge of the ‘professional ex’ held the most legitimacy within the St Giles Trust culture and organisation. As he did not have experience and knowledge derived from ‘having been there’, it was a problematic and uncomfortable experience which undermined his own sense of competency.

I worried my prison officer past would put people off me because I think a lot of the clients that we work with quite like the fact that a lot of people are ex-offenders and they have that level of understanding. And so for me I was worried that people go, well you’ve not got a criminal record... (12_09_12 one service caseworker).

Value limits of the statutory sector

The empirical research into peer mentor subjectivities often juxtaposed experiential knowledge against that of the statutory criminal justice professional and represented an important
subordinate theme. In the thematic analysis, a clear demarcation between peer mentor values and knowledges and those of the statutory worker as found. Whilst the new expertise and values of peer mentors are welcomed by government in deregulating the penal sphere, peer mentor subjectivities were constructed around how statutory workers had both value and knowledge limitations. This sense of competition between knowledge had unforeseen and unexpected consequences which served to delegitimized and undermine the statutory supervision which some of the peer mentors remained subject to.

As Dawney (2013:34) notes "experiential knowledge has emerged as a means through which the authority of professional knowledges can be challenged through direct referral to the authority of experience. Experiential knowledge is positioned as a supplement for, or a counter to, formal, institutional knowledge that is seen as the property of professionals." Experiential knowledge has gained weight in healthcare in the UK through practices of service user involvement. For example in a related sphere Noorani (2013) discusses how mental health service users are regularly invited onto panels and how government policy emphasises that 'service users are experts-by-experience who have a privileged understanding of their mental distress, what they need for their recovery'. (Dawney 2013:34)

I think that first of all where the clients seem to be amazed is that the majority of us are people with in depth knowledge of their problems, i.e. over 30 per cent of our staff, paid staff, not voluntary, paid staff have some kind of criminal conviction themselves, which when you take into consideration that the empathy for the client is so much better than the statutory organisations where obviously you've got to be squeaky clean or you don't get a job, and a lot of clients find that old stigma of that's the system against me where they don't tend to feel that we're part of the system, they tend to see us as part of the solution rather than somebody who wants to keep their thumb on their heads and keep them down and keep them in place, where we try to empower people, to inspire them to lift their lives up and to move on from crime (31_05_13_02 volunteer peer mentor)

Subsequently, the peer mentor 'professional-ex' constructed part of the peer mentor role as being the prisoner's champion by an appreciation of the experience of leaving prison and the full range of difficulties and problems one might face in the resettlement process. As a result with respect to the underpinning values inherent in the peer mentor role, the enabling and empowering peer mentor practices are juxtaposed against the old system of socio legal coercion and control.

One of the key subordinate themes identified and analysed in the research was the relationship between St Giles Trust and the formalised statutory criminal justice sector. At times peer
mentors discussed difficult relationship between themselves and the rest of the criminal justice and organisations in civil society. There were references in the textual excerpts to how difficult peer mentoring in the prison environment, where coercion and control always usurped efforts for offenders to take control of their lives. Similarly, when practising in the community, peer mentors recalled tensions and conflicts between knowledges inherent within different professional roles. The following words from a manager of community services recalled how threatened the statutory housing services were, each time they had to deal with a “rowdy Black ex-offender” peer mentor who wouldn’t take no for an answer.

And, you know, over the years I’ve just become so used to saying, oh, I’m sure they didn’t mean any harm and, you know, they’re very passionate and they really care about their clients and blah, blah, and roll out the same stuff. Because I know that they wouldn’t deliberately just go and be rude to someone, you know, for no reason, that wouldn’t happen, I…you know, maybe this is going a bit too far but sometimes I get the impression that there’s a slight anti ex offender, even potentially classist, racist element to some of the professionals that don’t want what they clearly perceive as a rowdy, black ex offender, working class guy coming in and quoting housing laws to them, you know, and they’ll say, hang on a minute, I’m a white middle class professional person, I’m not going to be spoken to by this guy. I’m the housing expert (14_06_12_01 Manager)

The tensions in practice detailed here by this respondent could be related to classism and racism. However, it can also be understood as a conflict between different knowledges of the state and the penal voluntary sector. The peer mentors construct their practices as advocating for the rights of the marginalised against an unhelpful gatekeeper of resources to which the client has a right. The housing officer construct themselves as the professional who has the legitimate right to higher level knowledge about housing law.

Knowledge limits of the statutory sector

The construction of peer mentors as embodying new expertise aligns itself with the political ambitions of government to reduce criminality and ensure fiscal restraint. However, whilst doing so, peer mentor expertise does pose significant problems for government. Firstly, as the research goes on to demonstrate those constructed to be experts have the capacity to create 'enclosures' to concentrate their power and authority. Peer mentors in my research therefore can be seen to be safeguarding their newly acquired legitimacy and expert status by government by emphasising their specific and particular experiential knowledge, skills set and value base in
order to contest against the established professional knowledge base of the probation or prison professional. Rose and Miller (1992:188) note that such ‘enclosures’ are usually the preserve of high level professional roles who have significant power to translate the interests and policies of government agendas into meeting their own ends. However this research demonstrates how such low level experts such as volunteer ‘wise friends’ in the penal system can also act to protect their knowledge and legitimacy. Here two peer mentors contrast their genuine desire to see service users turn their lives around with the lack of authenticity and care of the statutory worker. Importantly the knowledge base of the peer mentor born out of experience and their detailed knowledge of the service user is constructed as lacking in the current system.

Exactly, yeah. And it really has been an incredible journey. At the moment, I’m totally dedicated to the St Giles Trust, simply because I really believe in what they’re trying to do. I really believe in the fact that, you know, they really do want to make a change. And what I always say is that St Giles Trust, we don’t tick boxes here, we change lives; we don’t want a project as long as you tick the boxes, you get paid, that’s not how work. We want to do and what we thrive on is seeing that client’s life turn around. And that goes for everyone from reception all the way up to the senior managers; that is what is different about it. (22_03_12_05 peer mentor)

More than something like 30%-something of the organisation is ex-offenders, you know. So I think with a lot of the statutory agencies although they get paid for what they’re doing, their heart’s not in it. Same with the prison, I’ve said to the prison, you know, sometimes I find it really hard to get into a prison [as a peer mentor]. And I said to them, I would have thought you lot would be throwing your gates open for somebody like me to come in, because I’ve been through this system since borstal, I mean, I’ve done maybe six or seven sentences; nine months, four years, three years, two years. Now I’m on the right track. Now there are so many serving prisoners inside that know me that I served my sentence with. Now I would have thought you would be bringing people like me, once a month to come and speak to them and say, look, this is what can happen if you do the right thing. (22_03_12_04 peer mentor paid)

The following textual excerpt provides perhaps the starkest comparison between new values and knowledge and the outmoded statutory worker. The peer mentor constructs his practices as being able to get service users to open up and speak about important issues, thereby making a difference to the service user. He contrasts such practices with the statutory workers desire to act punitively without key information in a climate of fiscal restraint. He summarises the whole
conflict as representative of the need for the peer mentor to supplant the work of the statutory professional.

I: And when you work with probation and prisons does it change the way you have to work?

P: Not at all because we’re requesting information for their clients that they’re neglecting to do, we’re better than a probation officer, these people open up and talk to me, probation go round and recall them for the slightest misdemeanour. So as I said we’re making a difference, I’m not saying we could do probation’s job but probation can’t do their own work because all those things got cut from probation services.

I: I can see why they want to work with you.

P: Sometime they don’t, they fuck us off and everything.

I: Really?

P: Yes they think we’re interfering, They say “Oh why didn’t he contact me, I didn’t know he was going to get released?” We say “Because you’re not doing your fucking job are you?...it’s the basics because Probation recalled him and they don’t know when he’s released. And I leave three or four messages and I’m being a bug, so be it, it’s not going to stop me leaving messages is it...I don’t care, I’m doing my job. (19_04_12_01peer mentor)

Peer Mentor roles and the undermining of formal statutory supervision

Perhaps one of the most worrying themes identified in the thematic analysis was the impact that plural knowledges had on the actual experience and legitimacy of peer mentor’s post custody supervision by the statutory services. In the thematic analysis, the subjective views of peer mentors constructed the “old” statutory system as being characterised by ‘tick boxing’ practices which highlighted a lack of genuine interest and desire to see ex-offenders make significant changes to their behaviour. This subjective view of peer mentors mirrored the macro-level strategic pronouncements from successive governments about the need for new expertise and new actors in the rehabilitation field to improve quality. Here two peer mentors who were subject to a lengthy prison licences undermined the efficacy of their licence supervision with
their allocated parole officer. The textual exceptions make reference to problems with the power relationship whereby an honest and accurate portrayal of the problems they were facing could have led to recall. Instead, each volunteer indicates that they would preferably receive support from peer mentors who firstly, have the time and empathy to do so and secondly, cannot act 'against the mentee' with the information.

I think that’s the issue, I can’t use the word ‘problem’ I guess, but the issues that probation face is that they’ve not got that empathy we have. I feel one because most of them don’t want to have it, and two they just don’t get it. You know you’ve committed a crime and that’s it for the majority of probation. They’ve not got the time to deal with it either and that’s the problem, that’s why there is so much recalling and reoffending in a lot of cases, because you face that barrier of someone you can’t talk to. I’ve got a probation officer, I don’t tell her nothing. I go in there sit down say, 'hi everything’s fantastic', even if everything’s not. Hi and bye and I’m out. I’m not telling her anything.

(12_11_12_02)

“If I’m not doing very well and I need assistance or help I’m going to talk to one of the peer mentors here who have been there rather than my probation officer who could recall me (12_11_12 fieldnotes)

Furthermore, an unforeseen consequence of acting on the offenders side meant that peer mentors did not always practice openly if information or actions could create negative consequence for the client. Similarly to Aiken’s (2014:8) conceptualisation of mentoring as "not probation" and "not grassing," the peer mentor's genuine appreciation of the difficulties after leaving prison and resettling in the community meant that certain illegalities would not be reported even if they were of interest to other criminal justice professionals.

It’s just that understanding inside and once someone’s out into the community, it’s just the understanding of, I don’t think, Like, I suppose, cash in hand work, et cetera, is that I’m not going to phone up the Benefits agency and say, well I’ve got this guy here, he’s working cash in hand. My best interest is my client and I know it’s against the law and everything else, but that’s his prerogative and I’m not going to tell - there’s obviously other people in the office that may well do that because they feel that’s wrong (13_09_12_one service peer mentor)
Conclusion: Peer mentors and transformation in the community justice role

By utilising theoretical perspectives from governmentality from above and below (Shoshana 2011) this chapter has attempted to shed new light as to how government agendas, St Giles Trust and peer mentors have come together to construct the peer mentor as an effective and knowledgeable alternative to older, professionalized roles in rehabilitation and community justice. As such the thematic analysis demonstrates how, in governing through the peer mentor to shape the behaviour of those exiting prison, the government has enlisted new knowledges and skills in the rehabilitation of offenders. The peer mentor is thus “made up” as a signifier of the innovation and desire to create a radical reshaping of the rehabilitation field which will assume a new focus on outcomes for service users and move away from self-serving statutory provision. The reshaping of the correctional task is at times conflictual, with peer mentors juxtaposed against the statutory probation officer with respect to the type of knowledge currently gaining political legitimacy. Whilst this new knowledge and experience has been welcomes by government and valorised as expertise by St Giles Trust, peer mentor subjectivities have outlines a number of ways where the foregrounding of ex offender peer mentor roles has had unintended consequences and resulted in peer mentor practices which undermine the government’s ambitions.
Conclusion: Discovering the penal voluntary sector

This chapter draws together the various threads of argument running through the thesis and reflects upon the contributions that governmentality and grounded empirical research bring to an understanding the penal voluntary sector. The research represents a unique, if partial, contribution to the development of academic knowledge in the penal voluntary sector. It acts as a counter to criminology's overly narrow focus on the statutory pillars of the penal state and the lack of grounded, empirical research into the very different charitable organisations operating in the Penal Voluntary Sector. Much of the academic scholarship into the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) government review of the probation field has focused on the sense of liminality and bifurcation found in what remains of the Probation Service (Burke and Collett 2016, Robinson, Burke, and Millings 2015). The nexus between charity and punishment has only recently emerging as a legitimate yet problematic field of investigation for criminologists (Tomczak 2017:169, Abrams et al 2016). Whilst sector level studies have unearthed vast levels of difference and variety amongst the charities in the penal voluntary sector (Tomczak 2017, Mills, Meek, and Gojkovic, 2011), any appreciation of significant heterogeneity in the individual charitable organisations themselves remains absent. Rather charities have been conceptualised a homogenous and consistent organisations both in terms of their mission and practices. Charities are often pigeon holed in a homogenous sense as ‘national’ players, ‘small’ or ‘localised’ or ‘commercially driven’ which may hide as much as it seeks to illuminate.

This thesis offers valuable insights into the heterogeneity of a single voluntary organisation in order to enhance the sophistication of the academic analysis of charities in the sector. In a similar vein, charities in the penal voluntary sector are often discussed without reference to those volunteers and individuals who give the organisations life. For example, little research has been undertaken into the significance of the government’s call to the ex-offender peer mentor volunteer in the delivery of rehabilitation in the future. The notion of ex-offenders as peer mentors has only recently been subject to critical analysis (Buck 2107). Whilst developing new research into the penal voluntary sector is an exciting and overdue area, the academic scholarship and research agendas are only just taking shape (see CRIMVOL: The international criminal justice voluntary sector research network at https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/law/research/clusters/ccr/crimvol). It is hoped that this thesis serves as an addition to research elsewhere to adequately encapsulate the changing contours
and boundaries of penality in England and Wales involving a multiplicity of new organisational and individual actors.

Summary of Research Findings: St Giles Trust as Neoliberal and Generative

The thematic analysis reported in the research findings in chapters 5, 6 and 7 sheds new light into the nature of an important actor in the penal voluntary sector. It highlights how it operates within a variety of different relationships with national and local government, and how the impacts of its’ creative linkages with private finance and individual donor funding arrangements. The research highlights how an understanding or analysis of St Giles Trust as simply a national charity delivering government contracts in the penal voluntary sector is too simplistic a description to capture the full extent of St Giles Trust's internal heterogeneity. The research has charted how the charity helped shape and contributed to important neoliberal penal reforms, for example delivering the main functions of the Peterborough One Service. Similarly, the charity has been involved in a range of localised multi-agency arrangements in criminal justice such as the Integrated Offender Management programmes. As a result of such involvements, St Giles Trust has undeniably increased both its size and intensity of its footprint in the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders in England Wales. St Giles Trust has become increasingly involved in penal projects which could be analysed as “expanding the carceral net” (Tomczak 2015) by for example, supervising all those individuals released from Peterborough Prison whilst spending much its strategic focus securing a successful outcome from the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) marketization of probation. This has impacted upon St Giles Trust organisationally and indeed in the various practices of its salaried employees and ex-offender peer mentor volunteers. For example, the research findings in Chapter 5 demonstrate how St Giles Trust has assimilated newly heard correctional and punitive values into its own practices and how staff members began to view their work through a correctional risk lens. By doing so they accepted a plethora of rationales for the ending of relationships with service users if non-compliance with ‘supervision’ was evident. Nevertheless, to encapsulate St Giles Trust solely as merely a dispersed agency of penal control, as a result of its success under the aegis of The Rehabilitation Company, misses much of what characterises and underpins St Giles Trust.

Thus far, academic analysis of how the penal voluntary sector is able to maintain independence of mission, control the values and nature of delivery and maintain a critical voice have been forged around a three stage typology where individual charities are identified as either state funded, partially state funded or non-state funding and afforded characteristics accordingly. Tomczak's (2017) conceptualisation of the penal voluntary sector as a complex three tier model moves our understanding considerably beyond the notion of a homogenous and uniform penal
voluntary sector. The model raises important considerations as to how the effects of neoliberal mainstreaming of the penal voluntary sector can have a uneven impact on the sector with some voluntary organisations experiencing a dramatic impact whereas neoliberal reforms are of no concern at all to those smaller charities who work with offenders and their families (Tomczak 2014). However, a three tier model, largely underpinned by the extent to which charities receive government funding at its core, serves to foreground funding arrangements with government as the key criteria of categorisation at the expense of a number of other important considerations. As a result the temptation of the typology is to assess the character and heterogeneity of the penal voluntary sector purely through a lens of the extent of government funding each charity receives. This can become the crucial variable to make assessments of each charity’s relative power to shape its mission and keep its critical voice. As this work testifies, in order to move beyond imaginaries of the penal voluntary sector activities (Armstrong 2002), an equally complex conceptualisation of individual penal voluntary sector charities is required, grounded in empirical research and open to understandings of how charities working with offenders and their families are internally differentiated, develop a range of funding streams in order to deliver a broad repertoire of interventions and services to the disadvantaged (Morris 2000).

The empirical research findings capture the complex and uneven variegation and internal diversity inherent in St Giles Trust operating contemporaneously in the penal voluntary sector and civil sphere. The impact of it’s involvement in neoliberal penal reforms such as marketization and payment by result mechanisms were felt unevenly within the charity itself. Simultaneously to becoming a main player in the rehabilitation market, St Giles Trust continued to offer a range of other innovative, peer led interventions in the broader criminal justice system and with welfare missions in South London boroughs. As a result, the charity continued to offer a housing intervention and advice service, delivered by those who had been previously been service users of the intervention. At its core, St Giles Trust developed a range of peer led interventions addressing gang related activity, led and run by the ex-gang members themselves. The key to such programmes was the foregrounding of the skills and capabilities of ex-offenders, ex-gang members and those at the margins of society whose practice was underpinned by genuine legitimacy of “having been there” themselves. As such, the research findings demonstrated how St Giles Trust employed professional case workers when engaged in penal sector projects, whilst continuing to safeguard its core mission regarding the development of peer mentor projects. In doing so it offered something different to the professionalization of welfare and criminal justice interventions. Subsequently, rather than being consumed by correctional and punitive mentalities, the research uncovers how St Giles Trust has a generative value base at its core. Peer mentors valued the desistogenic environment which St Giles Trust had developed, underpinned by the values of acceptance, trust and respect and a sense of de-labelling the individual in the
journey from offender to peer mentor. Peer mentor respondents identified the specific environmental and cultural aspects of St Giles Trust as a place to leave previous acts of criminality behind by utilising the knowledge and expertise gained from contact with the penal system. St Giles Trust was conceptualised as offering offenders a redemptive space where the ‘good’ self which had become hidden or the new generative self which had been developed, were able to be revealed. The thematic analysis identified significant distance between St Giles Trust’s penal projects and the construction of it as ‘desistance in action’ (Maruna 2001) or as a ‘desistogenic place’ to go straight. An analysis of the research findings suggest that St Giles Trust was understood concomitantly by government as a charity in the penal voluntary sector undertaking the supervision of prison licences, and somewhat contradictory, by local South London service users as a charity offering ex-offenders a “desistogenic place” to go straight by following the advice of their peers. As a result the research provides a sophisticated internal analysis of a big player in the penal voluntary sector, highlighting St Giles Trust’s complex “innards” (Crewe 2009) or core attributes within the various fields of activity. In doing so it offers a more sophisticated analysis of the influence of neoliberal politics than a choice between an optimistic and pessimistic account (Billis 2010:16).

It is clear in the findings presented here that for government penal reform agendas, St Giles Trust is a high profile member of the penal voluntary sector able to undertake activities at scale. Furthermore, the charity has developed a range of peer led delivery models which seek to activate and make responsible, ex-prisoners for their own rehabilitation and to advise and assist others to do the same. However, for service users in Camberwell, South London, St Giles Trust is understood as predominantly a homelessness charity, true to its roots, and a charity seeking to help ex-offenders gain employment by unleashing the talents of those who were service users. For those on the receiving ends of the charity’s work in the social sphere, government redesigns of the probation and rehabilitation fields has not altered the intensive, altruistic, generative relationship between ex offender mentor and mentee which has been the fulcrum of St Giles Trust’s value base and practice. Resultantly the research findings here are conceptualised as uneven and variegated rather than allowing for a neat and single narrative. St Giles Trust can sit astride the control and emancipation divide and it can be in receipt of government funding and yet be worthwhile (Tomczak 2017:173). St Giles Trust can expand the carceral net by supervising offenders subject to post custodial release, whilst at the same time advocate and devise programmes which position such individuals as skilled and knowledgeable actors shaping rehabilitation services for offenders whilst the charity can add value to service users by being a desistogenic place to go straight. The findings from the thematic analysis note overall that just as the entire penal voluntary sector has not been captured by the state or the market, neither have the individual charities which work within the sector. A nuanced conceptualisation of
heterogeneity within a single penal voluntary sector charity seeks to partially answer Tomczak's (2017) call for greater complexity in our understandings of punishment and charity in a neoliberal age. It has demonstrated how insightful Tomczak's (2017) insights are with respect to the possibility of mutually inclusive control and emancipatory practices are with respect to St Giles Trust. As Tomczak (2017:176) states "both the control and the emancipatory literature appears to be inadequate and more nuanced hybrid or integrated theorisation is required. The work of voluntary organisations can apparently result in both exclusion and inclusion, control and emancipation or negative and positive effects. As charities’ contributions to building social and human capital and expanding social control are not mutually exclusive, the task for scholars is to highlight, using evidence, how and under which conditions both of these outcomes can occur".

The notion that a single penal voluntary sector charity can encompass both inclusionary and exclusionary practices can be evidenced as a result of a web of different contractual arrangements. In the case of St Giles Trust the funding of interventions and services may be purposively spread across many areas in order to maintain organisational power, agency and distinctiveness whilst delivering the work in a marketised probation field. As Campi et al (2006:30) note charities have multiple stakeholders and are multiple goals in nature. Indeed, "non profit organisations are more likely and better able to combine several objectives than traditional for profit firms which ...are supposed to have one single major goal ie profit maximisation".

Grounded empirical research may uncover charities who are partially funded by the state doing their best to hold firm to their traditional mission and increasing social capital and work opportunities for their service users. Similarly, it is equally possible that charitable trusts who develop prisoner skills in the creative prison industries may also focus on maximising their commercial activities. For example, Fine Cell Work is a charity who “enables prisoners to build fulfilling and crime-free lives by training them to do high-quality, skilled, creative needlework undertaken in the long hours spent in their cells to foster hope, discipline and self esteem”. However the charity combines these positive aims unproblematically with commercial ambitions to “become the country’s "go-to" site for needlework and soft furnishings, selling high quality, handmade British goods to the public and interior designers.” https://finecellwork.co.uk/pages/about-us#our-vision).
Governmental and Subjective constructions of ex-offender peer mentoring volunteering

The research findings also shed important new light on the subjective understandings of how peer mentoring roles are both situated and boundaried by St Giles Trust and individually constructed by the experiences and perceptions of the peer mentors themselves. Until recently research into peer mentoring in rehabilitation activities was largely absent. Buck (2017) has begun addressing this by analysing the core components of peer mentoring. However her analysis is considered limited to the general unproblematic, generative aspects of the role. Nevertheless, the research findings here echoed the importance given to generativity in peer mentoring practices. It notes its presence in the governmental foregrounding of the values and knowledge of peer mentors in the rehabilitation field, contained in Transforming Rehabilitation (2012) and the Meaningful Mentoring reports (Aiken 2014), which positioned peer mentors as active and entrepreneurial in their own transformation, embodying important generative practices (Halsey and Harris 2011), and legitimated by expertise and democratised experiential knowledge around achieving successful rehabilitation for offenders. However, the research identified contradictions in peer mentor subjectivities in that some peer mentors constructed their practices rather differently. They emphasised disciplinary and surveillant elements to mentoring activities. Such constructions of peer mentoring are absent from the existing academic literature which links those ex-offenders who undertake peer mentor identities and practices to a drive, compulsion or moral obligation to pay back to society for their previous criminality or gang related activity (Maruna 2001, Inderbitzin, Walraven and Anderson 2016:85, Lebel et al 2008).

Importantly for this research peer mentor identities were not created in a generative vacuum but were shaped and situated within St Giles Trust organisational culture. Motivations to assume peer mentor volunteering formed, not as a result of any sorrow or regret weighing down upon the ex-offender for their past, but rather by being intertwined by the discourse and culture of St Giles Trust. As a result, peer mentor motivations were constructed around a number of instrumental themes. Instrumental motivations to ‘trying on’ the role of the peer mentor meant that motivations were often constructed by a desire for individuals to get ahead and use their experiential knowledge and skill base in order to position themselves more favourably in the labour market. These constructions of peer mentoring activities as embodying new expertise and precious knowledge gained from experience made peer mentoring as a more complex and problematic phenomenon than the existing literature has recognised (Buck 2017, Perrin and Blagden 2015). The valorisation of peer mentor knowledge and skills to encourage innovation and efficiencies in the marketization of probation was also found in government discourse. Peer
mentoring as 'expertise' was important for the political and service user legitimisation of St Giles Trust delivery model and indeed for developing a sense of respect and self fulfilment for the peer mentor volunteers themselves. All constructions of ex offender peer mentoring as experiential expertise agreed that "Often it will be the former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow, the former gang member best placed to prevent younger members from rushing straight back to re-join the gang on the streets (Grayling 2013).

A desistogenic place for reinvention

In a similar vein to the grounded governmental approach to research on an important charity in the penal voluntary sector, this thesis offers an empirical analysis of ex-offender, peer mentor volunteers in community justice. As a result, the research offer a critical analysis of the often neglected lifeblood of voluntary organisations, particularly in relation to the subjective perceptions and experiences of individual volunteers being encouraged to participate in the community justice field. The empirical research has sought to conceptualise the roles and practices of ex-offender peer mentors in relation to government encouragements to become active in the field and utilise new experiential knowledge and expertise. The research also situates how various peer mentoring practices are shaping within the St Giles Trust environment and finally has sought to understand the subjective motivations, understandings and experiences of peer mentors themselves. The thematic analysis undertaken in the research demonstrate that St Giles Trust peer mentors are a complex mix of informal and formalised discursive understanding of peer mentors which shape the practices and relationships between mentors and mentees in various ways. As such the research findings identify that the core conditions of peer mentoring in the community justice and civil spheres of activity are based upon both generative and altruistic rationales which place the desires and needs of service users to the centre of practice and additionally in contrast, correctional, disciplinary and surveillant based activities which link up peer mentoring practices to broader government crime reduction agendas.

However, the research findings also highlight how St Giles Trust offers another insight into the possible future roles for the penal voluntary sector. Much of the academic literature has focused upon the role of the penal voluntary sector to 'sell out' and become co-opted as the image of the retreating state (Corcoran 2011, Benson and Hedges 2009). This is of relevance to these research findings presented in the thesis and relate to many of the 'replacement of the state' discourses found. Alternatively, the unevenness in the penal voluntary sector is highlighted when some organisations are discussed as exercising significant agency thereby, keeping to their traditional
voluntary sector mission, values and practices (Tomczak 2014). As a consequence of this, within government and academic discourses, the debate around the degree of independence and distinctiveness of the voluntary sector, has been founded on a state and third sector binary where a complex array of voluntary sector activities are reduced and deemed characteristic of the state or alternatively characteristic of voluntarism. There has been very little knowledge forthcoming about the extent to which a penal voluntary sector organisation might offer something fluid and altogether innovatively different in the marketization of rehabilitation as it enters new practice arenas and creates new roles and practices for itself.

The sense of St Giles Trust becoming something new was evident in the research findings in the thesis. The thematic analysis of peer mentors’ subjective experiences of the charity centred around the notion that they considered St Giles Trust culture and practices as significantly different to other penal agents, particularly in respect to the statutory sector. The thematic analysis therefore identified an important superordinate theme relating to the specific nature of St Giles Trust as a ‘desistogenic place’ within the penal voluntary sector. This construction of St Giles Trust was not alluded to by government or the charity itself, but rather was identified and analysed as a result of hearing the multiplicity of ways in which individual’s receive and respond to governmental strategies. As such it was derived from an analysis of governmentality from below involving the perceptions of St Giles Trust peer mentors and service users. (Shoshana 2011). The thematic analysis as of St Giles Trust, as a high profile player in the penal voluntary sector, could be constructed as a transformational “desistogenic place” offering service users and ex-prisoners the possibility of “trying on” new powerful identities and practices from which reinvent oneself in new productive ways. Whilst Maruna (2011) doesn’t elaborate on his rationale for considering St Giles Trust as “desistance in action,” he is not referring to opportunities for personal transformations afforded by formalised programmes of change. Rather, Maruna (2011) is attempting to highlight the underpinning generative and redemptive value base and the recreation of ex-offender peer mentor identities which are important for successful desistance from crime explored here.

As neoliberal governments have downsized, or removed altogether, the redistributive and social welfarist aspects of offender rehabilitative practices in favour of a focus on individual self-improvement and personal identity change, the penal voluntary sector’s future role could be in its ability to offer opportunities to offenders to demonstrate to themselves and others their own transformation to become a positive member of society through peer mentor and associated support roles. The contribution of the penal voluntary sector offering ex-offenders the opportunity to undertake peer mentoring roles serves to introduce something new into the penal system. The penal sphere becomes implicitly involved with the notion of a ‘reinvention era’
where society has witnessed a proliferation of cultures of personal reinvention from changes to the physical body such as cosmetic surgery and diet fads to changes on the cognitive and emotional level life such as life coaching and opportunities to continually self-improve (Elliott 2013).

As such these ‘reinvention practices’ of the penal voluntary sector to create a place and culture to facilitate reinvention of the criminal self is broader than the sector’s traditional remit to provide interventions and services to increase social capital and welfarism. The research findings highlight how peer mentor roles enable prisoners to instantly transform with minimal restraint. Successful peer mentor training involves the demonstration and reconstruction of pre-existing behavioural and personality competencies in relationship building with others and managing one’s self and work activities to increase productivity. This sense of reinvention is largely understood as ‘do it yourself’ transformation, (Elliot 2013) devoid of any time-based need to complete peer mentor programmes or complete long therapeutic endeavours to acquire new qualities. Rather reinvention is able to be accomplished quickly by the harnessing of pre-existing motivations and desires to become law abiding and the sharing of experiences and knowledges to enable others to demonstrate prescribed changes to their self. As Miller and Rose (2008:147) note one of the most successful ways in which to transform the many is not by legal codes or professional training but rather by “transforming their personhood, their ways of experiencing themselves and their world so that they understand and explain the meaning and nature of life conduct in fundamentally new ways. conversion transforms person at the levels of subjectivity”.

As a result the time required to reinvent oneself as a peer mentor can be short and undertaken whilst incarcerated, and as such seen in favourable terms by penal policy makers. Taking the theme of time further, reinventing as a peer mentor is orientated towards the future by a sense of a reinvented self, demonstrating the core qualities of peer mentoring which have been hidden from view in the offender’s recent past. In effect by assuming a peer mentor role, the ex-offender begins to reflexively understand how he or she should behave.

As Elliot (2013:7) notes “reinvention... is inextricably interwoven with the dream of something else”. For peer mentor volunteers, this sense of becoming something else is positioned as a person who has left crime behind and seeks to assist others to do the same. Furthermore, the governmental foregrounding of the peer mentor role reclassifies the risk laden ex-prisoner into the expert peer mentor role. This highlights how such transformations of position and self are heralded as a cultural accomplishment and success story which require the retelling and celebration of specific life experiences, demonstration of skills and personal reflection on one’s own growth and personal change rather than as a result of a painful therapy or the effect of treatment. Indeed
during the semi-structured interviews with peer mentor volunteers, the question of ‘how did you come to volunteer at St Giles Trust’ was often reconfigured by the mentors themselves into the celebration of a personal journey of growth and personal reinvention. Peer mentor’s utility is assessed less on their pasts and previous record of conduct, but more so on their willingness to embrace change and how adaptable they are to personally reconstruct and make themselves over (McGee 2005:22). The research presented here into governmental, charitable and subjective conceptualisations of peer mentoring touches on how fragile and fragmented the role is for prisoners leaving incarceration and returning to the community. Whilst the work reminds us that the peer mentor is largely a voluntary and unpaid actor, insecurities also present themselves with respect to how the peer mentor’s value is a result of contemporary government thought and policy which is notoriously subject to volatility and rapid change itself. As a result as Reich states (in Elliott 2017) that utility in the contemporary labour market is characterised by short-termism where an understanding of long term careers is replaced by the short term completion of projects. The insecurities for peer mentors, and for the core of St Giles Trust’s philosophy and delivery is based on “a spot auction market. What you’re paid is what you’re worth at that particular time” (in Elliott 2017:41). Once the governmental ‘project’ to foreground the skills and expertise of peer mentors in the future reforms in rehabilitation reconstructs to other ways of thinking about the utility of ex-offenders resulting in new types of policy development, only successfully rehabilitated or resettled ex-prisoners will have demonstrated a readiness to rebuild their lives in response to other opportunities offering reinvention and personal transformation. For example, Hoskings and Rico (2018) noted that London Community Rehabilitation Company reviewed their use of the unique skills and experiences of ex-offenders as “offender engagement officers” in 2016. The company decided to discontinue the role largely as a result of financial constraints. This decision was made despite the fact that the ex-offenders had made an effective contribution to probation work by connecting with “hard to reach” service users. Hoskings and Rico (2018) note that the ex-offender peer mentors were re-employed in unqualified Probation Service officer roles, bringing the ex-offender much closer to roles involving coercive “supervision” and punitive practices.

Understanding complex and inconsistent research findings

Addressing the key research questions served to uncover inconsistency and plurality in the effects of neoliberal penal reforms, including marketization and deregulation strategies, on a single penal voluntary sector charity. The key to fully appreciating and understanding how such complex, uneven and contradictory research findings have arisen and, what they mean for the penal voluntary sector lies firstly in a sophisticated understanding of late modern government ‘a
t a distance’, that is the contemporary nature and techniques of the state to govern the penal voluntary sector and volunteers. Secondly, St Giles Trust’s internal heterogeneity is understood by an analysis of the intertwining or hybridisation of realities between the statutory, private and third sectors in the developing penal economy.

**Governing Rehabilitation ‘at a distance’**

A theoretical underpinning of the governmentality literature (Foucault 1991) affords important insights into the role and function of the neoliberal penal state. A common conceptualisation of relations between the neoliberal state and the penal voluntary sector has often been centred around an ‘imaginary’ (Armstrong 2002) of the command and control of charitable activities, resulting in those involved having little sense of agency or power to shape their delivery or have their critical voice heard. Crawford (1998:73) agrees stating “there is insufficient attention given to non-statist ‘private’ control mechanisms, beyond seeing them as subjects of capture, co-option by the state, dependence upon the state or...taking over the gaps vacated by the state.”

Indeed, with little empirical underpinning, claims have been made with reference to the relationships between the size of charitable organisations and the resultant ability to resist capture by the state or the market (Corcoran 2011). Huckelsby and Corcoran (2013) note how a marketised penal system puts voluntary organisations who work with offenders and their families at risk of goal distortion or mission drift. They are seen to move away from their original charitable values and ethics to deliver social justice, to becoming fixated on securing the next contract. However, it is tempting to see the risks of mission drift as an inevitable consequence of neoliberal marketization agendas or engaging in contractual relations with the state. Often these warnings regarding the effects of neoliberalism and marketisation on the penal voluntary sector are rarely accompanied by grounded empirical research.

The thesis presents how the field of rehabilitation and post prison sentence supervision has become the latest in a government agenda to broaden out the responsibility of delivering reductions in recidivism and holding of offenders to account for their offending behaviour. Under the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) reforms the responsibility to supervise offenders has been disseminated and spread beyond the state, at least for low and medium risk offenders, to private and voluntary sector organisations. In doing so the state encourages much needed diversity and innovation in practices which are seen to be available outside of statutory provision. However as Schuilenburg (2015:30) notes this does not mean that the state's power or influence has been diminished, just that it not any longer solely the State's responsibility to achieve its aims. As Burris et al (2008 in Schuilenburg 2015: 30) notes, “the King is dead...Long live the
extended Royal Family" in terms of understanding the relationship between different sites of state power in a neoliberal age. The state governs social problems by opening up what was previously considered as state practice through a logic of networked delivery, filling the vacuum created by the retreating public sector.

The neoliberal governance of rehabilitation therefore activates non-governmental organisations, and by doing so seeks to benefit from perceived gains in innovation and efficiencies. As such the field of penality is marked by new actors from the private and the penal voluntary sector. However as Tomczak (2017) highlights this does not mean a simplistic rush by all the main charitable players to assume governmental duties. Some charities will refuse to respond to the lure of becoming intertwined in the penal system. Others, such as St Giles Trust will utilise the freedom and autonomy they continue to enjoy to reshape and adapt their various practices to ensure service users, funders and the board of trustees are happy with such developments. The penal voluntary sector’s field of action and practices are not prescribed in the Transforming Rehabilitation (2013) or payment by results agendas. However such government strategies shape a charity’s activities to meet specific ends such as a prioritising work which reduces recidivism rather than services which provide for social justice. However, such pressures from responsibilisation strategies do not necessarily have to uniformly impact on all of a charity’s activities as the state seek to govern through encouragement or working through the charity’s desires and choices to work with the marginalised. The neoliberal state governs, not through proscription and command and control methodologies, but rather by maximising the agency, freedom and responsibilities of organisations in the penal voluntary sector in order to reduce expenditure and increase innovation in the system (Dean 2010:176). As Miller and Rose (2008:55) note the state rarely seeks to coerce and proscribe the activities of a range of non-governmental actors like charities. Rather “government ...enacts assorted attempts at the calculated administration of diverse aspects of conduct through countless, often competing, local tactics of education, persuasion, inducement, management, incitement, motivation and encouragement”. Subsequently, it is the absence of state coercion and the presence of tactics which operate through freedom which is important to understand how St Giles Trust contracted with the state whilst having freedom to create and resource their own peer mentor led projects around gang prevention, housing advice and youth projects. Government therefore is increasingly conceptualised as ‘action at a distance’ (Rose and Miller 1992). Rather than relying upon the imposition of law, the actions of state functionaries or public bureaucracies, government is made possible “through the activities and calculations of a proliferation of independent agent including philanthropists, and it is dependent upon the forging of alliances. This takes place on the one hand between political strategies and the activities of these authorities and, on the other, between these authorities and free citizens.” (Rose and Miller 1992:180). The power of government is related to
the ability to create an assemblage of non-governmental forces which can shape the behaviour of individuals.

The encouragement to the penal voluntary sector to contract with government and deliver rehabilitative interventions to those leaving prison was developed through a range of government strategies which operated through the sector’s freedoms. For example, the government’s emphasis on the experiential expertise embodied in St Giles Trust’s ex-offender peer mentor volunteers empowers the charity and provides it with legitimacy to follow its own delivery model rather than replicate the practices of the retreating statutory sector. Indicative of the ways in which the state has governed through freedom, is the extent to which St Giles Trust has been able to provide its core peer mentor led delivery in the Reducing Reoffending Company’s work since the marketization of probation.

The flexibility and freedom of the penal voluntary sector to follow its own delivery methods to achieve reductions in recidivism was implicit in the encouragement given to innovation in the Transforming Rehabilitation strategic review and in the accompanying legislation. For example, the Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR) introduced by the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014. "repeals the Supervision and Activity Requirements replacing them with a single new Requirement that gives greater flexibility for providers of probation services to determine the rehabilitative interventions delivered to offenders." (Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014)

The emphasis given to the freedom in modes of delivery is also echoed by the Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation when it stated that the Rehabilitation Activity Requirement aimed to encourage innovation and actually liberate probation from central control. “Rehabilitation activity requirements have now become a common feature of community sentence orders. They liberate probation services, enabling them to decide the best ways in which to rehabilitate each individual”.


The notion of governing through an individual’s freedom is best illustrated in the government’s encouragement to ex-offenders to assume peer mentor volunteer identities and practices. The state continues to remain strong and coercive, restricting the rights of offenders to leave prison early for example, whilst at the same time governing offenders at a distance through their freedoms and desires to ‘get ahead’ and position themselves favourably in the labour market by foregrounding the ex-offender as a knowledgeable and generative adviser of others.
Governning Rehabilitation ‘through individual freedom’

To conceptualise the individual within power relations, Foucault’s theoretical assumption centres upon the notion of the individual as both subjected to power, but also as an active subject within power relations (Dean 2010). Each individual is therefore caught up in a web of fluid power relations through which s/he constitutes her/himself as a subject who acts upon others, and indeed is subjected to control. For Foucault, individuals are therefore influenced by power relationships whilst simultaneously influencing them.

As a result Foucault’s latter interest in the slow formation of experience of the self offers important insights into government techniques to enable individuals to transform themselves and act through a regulated sense of freedom and liberty rather than coercion and rules (Foucault 1998). This is particularly prescient in relation to neoliberal government reason which gives great weight to an active enterprise culture. As a result in order to achieve this, government has a certain image of the self. The subject is a malleable entity and not a fixed essence that is able to be shaped under specific cultural conditions. As a result for Foucault, technologies of the self highlight the propensity for individuals to choose to transform their own sense of identity. The self is deemed to act upon itself, to aspire to autonomy, to strive for personal fulfilment, to interpret its destiny as a matter of personal responsibility and to shape meaning in life by exercising acts of choice (Rose 1990).

The government’s foregrounding of the ex-offender peer mentor volunteer under the Transforming Rehabilitation (2012) reform agenda eschews the techniques of coercion, domination and suppression which have traditionally been important aspects of shaping behaviour through punishment. Such techniques are replaced by a government strategy which attempts to operate through the freedoms of those leaving prison behind and to encourage them to assume specified and regulated roles, attitudes and behaviours. As Rose (1990) notes such calculated orchestration of the activities of individuals involves the maximisation of the capacities of ex offenders prepared to embody attributes of responsibility, discipline and self-improvement. The research evidence presented in this thesis with respect to both the governmental and subjective constructions of peer mentors indicated how the role is imbued with being active and taking personal responsibility in order to self improve. As a result the findings demonstrate how political rhetoric and regulatory programmes are inextricably linked to the self steering capacities of the peer mentors themselves. The ways peer mentors are governed by the state and by St Giles Trust is forged to way in which peer mentors shape themselves and as such liberal government acts through peer mentors personal capacities desires and aspirations. Rose
(1990:7) notes “Liberal government means governing through the freedom and aspirations of subjects rather than in spite of them”. The experiential expertise heralded by government, St Giles Trust and demonstrated by ex-offender peer mentors themselves in the research findings is formed around knowledge of how to act in a responsible, entrepreneurial, competitive and self-improving way which has a utility to others and the state. Experiential expertise is constructed as counter to professionalised knowledges and expertise forged around notions of treatment, risks or deficits.

The strategy of government through the regulated freedoms of peer mentors does not mean that the state becomes an all powerful entity, enjoying total dominance in the lives of peer mentors. Rather, practices and technologies of the self might be taken up different forms of conduct. As such the research findings on peer mentor subjectivities highlighted a range of contradictory and different counter-conducts (Dean 2010:21). As Prior and Barnes (2011) highlight policy is often contingent upon the actions and interactions of those agents involved in the policy process, including front line delivery agents. They offer the possibilities of both resistance and subversion to policy initiatives particularly in the subjective meanings and understanding of those carrying out front line practice. As Foucault (in Prior and Barnes 2011) notes, when conceptualising the nature of power “there are no relations of power without resistances and resistances are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised”. Government policy objectives that seek to persuade or enable subjects to take active responsibility for their own individual and collective well-being, explicitly recognize and value the agency of individuals and their ability to make their own assessments and choose what action to take. These actions can be modifications or rejections of intended practices. For example, in the research findings peer mentors positioned their experiential expertise against the professionalism of the statutory probation officer, undermining the legitimacy and efficacy of statutory supervision. Similarly, another counter conduct illustrated how the ‘every day’ knowledge of how to access benefits was created and used by peer mentors in ways which secured resources outside of the actual eligibility criteria. As such peer mentors often used their role to assist and help mentees irrespective of the rules or prescribed processes. The research findings demonstrated how various St Giles Trust interventions included a diverse array of underpinning values and peer mentor practices depending upon the intended outcome of the specific intervention or initiative. Some peer mentor practices formed around correctional values and practices, such as the enforcement of non-compliance to post supervision licences whilst other peer mentors used their sense of agency to steadfastly refuse to share information and actually subvert the enforcement of orders. Those peer mentors who resisted correctional practices saw the outcome of their role as the provision of care and assistance to the mentee and refused to engage in practices which could be detrimental to the lives of the recently released ex-prisoner. As a result the governmental strategy
to govern through freedoms encourages significant space to do peer mentoring differently. As a result the research findings from the subjective experiences and perceptions of those doing the work present as somewhat fluid, contradictory and problematic in detailing a consistent narrative.

Hybridisation as key to conceptualising charity in the Penal Voluntary Sector

The second consideration seeking to shed light on the complexity and heterogeneity of the research findings relates to the need for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the nature and place of penal voluntary sector organisations. Crawford (1999:73) notes that a great deal of research which highlights the blurring of sectoral boundaries, including where the public and the private sectors are seen to be fused, conceptualise the state as a static, unitary and circumscribed central apparatus of power, carried out through a number of centralised bodies and offices. In addition when the state comes into contact with the private and third sectors, the state is seen to remain an unaffected monolith and only the private and voluntary spheres are understood as altered by changes to such sectoral boundaries. This is particularly prescient in relation to the voluntary sector which is deemed unable to have any sense of agency or be an engine of change when it is considered to be dominated by the state.

The research findings presented here outline the contradictions, discontinuities and diversity inherent in an individual penal voluntary sector charity as well as the sector itself. In order to progress research further into the complexities of the penal voluntary sector and come to nuanced understandings of the nature of power relationships, the penal voluntary sector needs to become a key focus within criminology and with criminal justice scholars in particular. The research highlights how St Giles Trust entered a rehabilitation market place, adapted its practices to supervisory ethics and became “crime controlled” whilst continuing to enjoy space to offer innovative and helpful projects for families and those at risk of crime and gang related activity. Without grounded research into how individual charitable organisations operate in penal marketplaces, it is tempting to uncritically accept the notion that all those involved will uniformly accede to the pull of the market and ape competitive business practices. In order to understand the existence of such complex internal diversity within St Giles Trust, the research utilises the theoretical insights from forms of hybridity in organisations, offered by David Billis (2010) and Brandsen, van de Donk and Putters (2005).

Hybridity in charitable organisations is considered as organisations that possess significant characteristics of more than one sector (public, private and third). However hybrid organisations
have roots in a particular sector. The growth of hybridity in voluntary sector organisations has been as a response to the complexity inherent in the bewildering array of policy developments in social and criminal justice policy since 1997. New organisational forms are required if voluntary sector organisations are to meet the demands and opportunities inherent in public-private partnerships, social enterprises, quasi-markets and multi-agency networks. The linkages between the sectors in these arrangements are so evident that ‘blurring’ does not do just to the nature and extent of what has been happening. As Billis (2010:13) states such as been the extent of public, private and third sector linkages that it provides a "ready-made laboratory to study a creative variety of hybrid since it is here that many volunteer-driven associations have slowly adopted entrepreneurial and market driven initiatives"

A broader analysis of more recent academic literature relating to charitable organisations entering into market based relationships demonstrates a complex picture of compliance, transformation and resistance to government agendas. For example Milbourne and Cushaman (2015:464) noted how, despite voluntary sector organisations entering into public sector outsourcing, “voluntary organisations can also regain agency to reassert their own agendas within and against their contemporary policy and political landscape”. Consequently, voluntary sector organisations have operated “both in and against the state” (Milbourne and Cushaman 2015:469). Morris (2000) notes how contractual relationships with government can sometimes be characterised by sectoral interdependence rather than by domination of the state. She highlights how contracts are often developed thorough dialogue amongst the actors involved rather than being imposed. She concludes that it remains too simplistic to regard voluntary sector relationships with government and third sector independence in polarised terms, arguing that contract culture relates to a distribution of power amongst all those involved. If charitable organisations develop a niche delivery model not available elsewhere and have multiple sources of funding, here is the possibility of significant leverage in the relationships with government on a national and local level.

Overall, government has heard St Giles Trust’s voice to value the utility of those who have been there. However, more recently the Common’s Select Committee’s review of Transforming Rehabilitation heard a powerful critique from St Giles Trust on the unintended consequences of marketization upon the charity’s delivery model and quality of work. Despite being implicated in the delivery model, St Giles Trust took this opportunity to highlight the deficiencies in the marketization agenda and funding mechanisms.

Rather than continue to offer ‘tick box’ interventions with minimal impact for service users, St Giles Trust took an active part in the review into marketisation to renegotiate funding and contractual arrangements in order to make practice more meaningful. In doing so they also highlighted how the owners of the Community Rehabilitation Companies were deemed to be so ‘risk averse’ as to compromise the work of the peer mentor. Finally, Nevile (2010:1) notes how despite winning public funding, third sector organisations were able to protect their “normative legitimacy” through a range of strategies, the most important of which is a mixed resource base. Nevile (2010:9) notes how concerns of isomorphism and contract dependency will impact on the voluntary sector’s value base were less clear where organisations could reveal “a complex process of adjustment” to balance conflicting demands. The research found that a mixed resource base offers a bulwark against the closing down of advocacy and delivery services when particular funding ceased. In addition, charities were seen to use the “creative packaging” of their core delivery to meet changing funding criteria and became more powerful by developing links with like minded community based organisations to partner for funding opportunities.

St Giles Trust can be conceptualised as a hybridised penal voluntary sector organisation, alluded to by the research into those members of staff who were responsible for marketing and fundraising when they stated that the charity had actively developed many ‘faces’ to fundraisers, government, and service users. The table 8.1 highlights how St Giles Trust practices were often found in hybrid spaces which existed between the boundaries of “ideal-typical” (Brandsen, Van de Donk and Putters 2005:750) domains of the public, private and third sectors. These hybrid spaces have relevancy both in terms of policy analysis and on a conceptual level.

The extent of its linkages to high finance, local and national government and individual fundraising activities and donors, necessitates a more holistic conceptualisation of the place of St Giles Trust. For example, using Table 8.1 the research documents how St Giles Trust had developed successful and award winning interventions which were a result of the many diverse creative linkages between the sectors. The delivery of the Peterborough One service was in relation to the statutory post custodial supervision and was funded by government under a payment by results mechanism. However the initial development and running costs were found by Social Finance and involved the use of private capital funding. As such the Peterborough One Project can be illustrated by a star in the very centre of table 8.1 with the intervention a result of a creative and powerful mix of the state, market and a charity in the penal voluntary sector.

St Giles Trust received specific South London local authority fundraising for a range of interventions such as the Brief Intervention Housing project, the range of SOS gang prevention activities and Integrated Offender Management work. These interventions are represented in table 8.1 by the use of star placing these projects as a hybrid arrangement between government
and charity. As a result these projects reflect an increasing hybridity between the penal voluntary sector and public sector as the charity begins to perform what was previously public sector outsourced work or its involvement adds resources to multi-agency partnerships involving statutory work. Despite these examples of hybridised funding relationships shaping particular interventions, St Giles Trust continued to deliver donor-only funded interventions. For example, a project for marginalised youth in Camberwell which St Giles Trust self-managed without any contractual arrangements with other bodies is represented by a star in the voluntary sector sphere.

However, despite the difference and fluidity in funded interventions, the charity placed generative ex-offender peer mentoring at their core. This was despite the fact that St Giles Trust's hybridity meant that at times interventions were akin to the state and at other occasions were commercially driven. The sense of hybridity explains the differentiation and complexity in the research findings when considering the charity in a holistic manner. Table 8.1 highlights how St Giles Trust's interventions can be conceptually 'placed' in a series of hybridised spaces between the state, market and voluntary sector. Rather than conceptualise the penal voluntary sector as being separate to the state or market, the heterogeneity evident in the penal voluntary sector and individual voluntary organisations is as a result of its engagement in practices which have significant overlap in respect to a competing social, commercial and political ambitions and a multifarious array of funding avenues. St Giles Trust's differentiated and often contradictory practices are therefore a result of the presence of a creative mix of linkages to the state, the market and its charitable origins.

Table 8.1
An analysis of hybrid spaces between the idealized sectors offers criminology a more nuanced and relevant understanding of the linkages and relationships between charitable organisations and the delivery of punishment and rehabilitation in contemporary times. It offers a new understandings of organisations in the penal voluntary sector with a heterogeneous array of social, commercial and political roles which are facilitated by relationships to the market, the community and the state. As Bransden et al. (2005:751) note the positive articulation of hybridity also enables the penal voluntary sector to move beyond being conceptualised as a sector of “leftovers”, or of undertaking interventions only where the state and the market has failed. As such this research demonstrates how St Giles Trust has enduring linkages to the local South London communities it has traditionally served, increasing links to national and local government delivery through contracts and payment by results mechanisms and finally links to new capital and finance. The analysis of pure sectoral characteristics is insufficient to capture the diversity of St Giles Trust practices in the research findings. The linkages in hybridised spaces therefore offer more insight of the realities of Third sector organisations under neoliberalism (Evers 2005). The research highlights how St Giles Trust can engage in a range of different practices and be considered both neoliberal and altruistic. St Giles Trust has ambitions to make surpluses from contractual arrangements whilst continuing to espouse the ethic of care. By taking a holistic view of St Giles Trust and its activities, and in doing so, to move beyond a mere imagination of what they do, the research demonstrates how the charity is free to deliver government contracts involving the supervision of offenders after a short custodial sentence, whilst at the very same time advocate for the offenders to use their unique skills and experiences and become ex offender peer mentors. Consequently, the research findings offer St Giles Trust as a hybridised culture based on the competing logics of welfarism, correctionalism, advocacy and punitivism which reflect the linkages to state, community and market. Furthermore, the relative
influence of these logics is fluid and ever shifting in response to multiple goals, diverse funding arrangements and different sense of identity overall.

Whilst it is beyond the boundaries of this thesis, it is equally important to consider that the conceptualisation of the market in the purest sense may also be an imaginary. The notion of the distinct, instrumental market domain focusing entirely on the maximisation of profit and share price, hides the development of different ethics of capitalism and in particular the growth of entrepreneurial vehicles in corporate philanthropy-capitalism and social enterprises to deliver previously state run services (Nyssens 2006). Just as charitable organisations have been urged to scale up and professionalise, a key message for entrepreneurs has been how they can invest in social markets where the outcome is a financial return for the alleviation of social problems (http://www.economist.com/node/5517656). As a result without an appreciation of the variegated aspects of the penal voluntary sector, it may be difficult to highlight that the boundaries of the state and the market have become blurred and fuzzy in a similar vein. As Bransden et al (2005:758) state charities in the penal voluntary sector may often be chameleon like, changing their form as a result of the links developed to the state or the market but remaining recognisable as a charitable organisation. They state “The third sector may be hybrid, fuzzy, and miscellaneous, but so are the other domains and the actors we find there” (Bransden et al 2005:758) referring to the inevitability and permanence of hybridity in both individual charitable organisations and the third sector. Indeed rather than treat such hybridity and heterogeneity in the sector as a complication to a pure sectoral analysis, this research has highlighted and understood fuzziness in organisational forms, strategies and missions “as not the fog which obscures our vision but the very thing we have been trying to discern.” (Bransden et al 2005:759)

Voluntary Actors in Corrections: Shaping future research agendas

The research findings on a single penal voluntary sector “big player” offers the first in depth analysis of the complexities and internal differentiation of a charity which is firmly embedded in the penal voluntary sector. In highlighting the range of activities in the penal sphere, the research looks holistically at the full range of St Giles Trust practices and unearths the continuation of its work in the civil sphere (Tomczak 2017). As a result, grounded and empirical research into St Giles Trust highlights the complexity of such voluntary organisations which have multiple goals and missions, linkages and funding arrangements. Subsequently this work suggests that grounded or ethnographic research methodologies are imperative to understand the complexities of charities within the penal voluntary sector and to fully understand the relationships and meeting points between different the sectors and the resultant practices of
individual volunteer actors. Whilst research to scope the penal voluntary sector and to critically analyse the heterogeneity of the sector has been successfully undertaken, the complex and sometimes contradictory ways in which charitable organisations in the penal voluntary sector may develop relationships with government and private finance is less well understood. Moreover, how multi-sectoral arrangements and tie ups actually impact upon and shape the various practices of volunteers, salaried staff and service users in the penal voluntary sector is even less understood.

This thesis responded to the challenge to criminology set by Loader and Sparks (2007:94-95) in their tracing of the contemporary landscapes of crime, order and control. The forging together of an analysis of the rehabilitation field from above and from below begins to illustrate a future path for criminology. They state,

“One might be forgiven for concluding that the importance of the social transformations...is that criminology should hence forth concern itself primarily with things that are big –the global, the geopolitical, the transnational. In fact this is by no means our thesis... we may need to remind ourselves more sharply than we often do, that that new structures and regimes of governance are not just models...they also introduce significant changes to the conditions and pressures under which some people work, or the ways in which they receive (as customers) the services that organisations deliver... but we cannot know just how [governance] infiltrates our subjective worlds or affects our daily routines and with what consequences for the participation of some and the exclusion of others unless we study these matters in situ and in detail.” (Loader and Sparks 2007:94-95)

As academic scholarship into the relationship between charity and punishment on a macro or sectoral level has been forthcoming in England and Wales and internationally (Tomczak 2017, Abrams et al 2016), this work takes our knowledge and understanding of this nexus in an increasingly marketised penal field a step further. It utilises the theoretical insights from governmentality ‘from above’, including government strategy and policy making and combines such insights with ‘governmentality from below’, seeking to highlight how such policies are translated into the everyday realities of those individual actors in the charities themselves (Shoshana 2011, Lippert and Stenson 2010). Subsequently, the research combines analysis of both levels of governmentality to offer original insights as to how successive government attempts to marketise and outsource the probation and rehabilitation field have been received and translated. This has been undertaken firstly, by an analysis of an important actor in the penal voluntary sector in St Giles Trust and secondly, by research into ex-offender peer mentor volunteers delivering interventions to those leaving prison or deemed at risk of criminality. By adopting a research methodology ‘in situ,’ incorporating observational methods, semi-structured interviews with staff and volunteers complemented by an analysis of government and St Giles

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Trust discourse, the research findings chart the multiplicity of ways by which Government techniques of control of the penal voluntary sector and ex-offender peer mentors, have touched upon 'techniques of the self' or the various ways that those leaving prison ascribe to or reconfigure various conceptualisations of the ex-offender peer mentor role. The research methodology concords with Loader and Sparks assertion (2007:94) that "there remains much to be said for research strategies that continue to attend to such things as experience, beliefs, values, sensibilities, and feeling and furthermore, that there is much to be gained from seeking to grasp aspects of global, social and political change microscopically - through ethnography and observation and talking to people about the lived texture of their everyday lives". Importantly for Loader and Sparks (2007) and in the research methodology here, an analysis of macro level changes, such as the implementation of neoliberalism in the penal field, filters into the lives of organisational and individual actors in ways which are "uneven and never entirely predictable, and which cannot simply be "read off" from the texts and tenets of social theory" (Loader and Sparks 2007:95).

In order for future research to fully appreciate the changing contours of criminal justice and to avoid key developments slipping through the net (Zedner, Hoyle and Bosworth 2016:5), charitable organisations need to become more frequent sites of empirical and semi ethnographic criminal justice research. As a result there remains limited knowledge about the everyday workings of charities in the penal sphere and thus far our knowledge of the relationship between philanthropy and punishment often remains boundaried by charities' own strategic ambitions and policy documents.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation and programme (publication date)</th>
<th>Summary of programme</th>
<th>Effect on the one year proven re-offending rate</th>
<th>Effect on the frequency of one year proven re-offending</th>
<th>Effect on the time to re-offending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caritas Care (August 2016)</td>
<td>Caritas Care is a voluntary sector organisation and uses one-to-one mentoring to help offenders overcome barriers to rehabilitation such as homelessness, mental health problems, substance misuse, worklessness/inactivity and offending behaviours. This intervention takes place both in prisons and in the community throughout North-West England. It provides a holistic service that addresses the complex needs of its participants. For prisoners, support from a project worker usually begins up to three months before release, and through-the-gate assistance is provided when they re-enter the community.</td>
<td>The one year proven re-offending rate for 257 offenders who received the intervention was 46%, compared with 42% for a matched control group of similar offenders from England and Wales. This difference is not statistically significant.</td>
<td>The frequency of one year proven re-offending for 257 offenders who received the intervention was 2.05 offences per individual, compared with 1.60 offences per individual in the matched control group. This difference is not statistically significant.</td>
<td>The average time to first re-offence for 118 offenders who received the intervention, and who re-offended within a one-year period, was 117 days, compared with 138 days for those who re-offended from the matched control group. This difference is statistically significant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women's Centres throughout England (May 2015)

This analysis is based on information that has been supplied by 39 Women's Centres throughout England to the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). Women's Centres offer a range of services and opportunities to women in the community, including those that have an offending history across the UK. The Centres are not centrally managed and so will have different ways of working and main areas of focus, however they will share the common aim of helping to support, encourage and enable women to improve their quality of life and well-being. Individuals seeking support from Women’s Centres will have a variety of needs and will sit across a spectrum of risk. It includes women who were referred to Women’s Centres through various routes including; probation officers, social services, community drugs team, a statutory order as part of their sentence plan, to complete an accredited programme, or self referred to the service, and received support between 2010 and 2012. The engagement of these women with the services provided will have varied.

This analysis looked at the impact of receiving support provided by Women’s centres throughout England. The analysis shows a reduction of between 1 and 9 percentage points compared to a matched control group of similar individuals from England and Wales.

The frequency of one year proven re-offending for 597 offenders who received support provided by Women’s centres throughout England was 1.12 offences per individual, compared with 1.29 per individual in a matched control group of similar individuals from England and Wales. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the frequency of re-offending is not statistically significant.

The average time to the first offence within a year for the 180 individuals that were matched, and re-offended, after receiving support provided by Women's Centres throughout England was 140 days. This compares to 136 days for the 97,750 individuals who re-offended from a matched control group of similar individuals from England and Wales. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the time to first re-offence within a year is not statistically significant.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Inside Out (formerly known as Wormwood Scrubs Community Chaplaincy)</th>
<th>Inside Out (formerly Wormwood Scrubs Community Chaplaincy) is a venture for the public benefit, aiming to promote the care, resettlement and rehabilitation of ex-offenders to enable them to take control of their lives and remain free from re-offending. The mentoring scheme is a voluntary intervention, so prisoners can decide whether or not they want a mentor. This analysis relates to offenders who participated in the mentoring scheme run by Inside Out whilst in custody and into the community between 2007 and 2012.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>This analysis looked at the impact of participating in the mentoring scheme provided by Inside Out on re-offending. This analysis is currently inconclusive as the one year proven re-offending rate is between a 18 percentage point reduction, and a 14 percentage point increase compared to a matched control group of similar individuals from England and Wales. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the frequency of re-offending is not statistically significant.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The frequency of one year proven re-offending for 42 offenders who participated in the mentoring scheme provided by Inside Out was 2.14 offences per individual, compared with 1.94 per individual in a matched control group of similar individuals from England and Wales. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the frequency of re-offending is not statistically significant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The average time to the first offence within a year for the 21 individuals that were matched, and re-offended, after participating in the mentoring scheme provided by Inside Out was 154 days. This compares to 128 days for the 41,517 individuals who re-offended from a matched control group of similar individuals from England and Wales. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the time to first re-offence within a year is not statistically significant.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancashire Women's Centres (October 2014)</td>
<td>Lancashire Women’s Centres offer a range of one-stop-shop services and opportunities to women in the community, including those that have an offending history. The centres aim to help support, encourage and enable women to improve their quality of life and well-being. For those women with offending histories, Lancashire Women’s Centres work to address the underlying causes of offending behaviour with issues being explored in both a practical and therapeutic sense. This analysis includes those women who were referred to Lancashire Women’s Centres through several routes and received support between 2010 and 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Footprints Project (March 2014)</td>
<td>The Footprints Project charity provides a mentoring service to individuals leaving custody or serving a community sentence in the Dorset, Somerset and Hampshire areas. Footprints aim to reduce the risk of re-offending by helping offenders re-integrate into their local community, offering a “through-the-gate” mentoring service. Many of the individuals that Footprints work with have mental, physical, social, and educational/employment issues, alongside difficulties with relationships, substance misuse and housing. Trained volunteers from the community act as mentors by guiding and supporting individuals with various needs, often signposting them to where they can further access particular support that they need including accommodation, finance, health services, substance misuse agencies and access to training/voluntary work. This analysis refers to those individuals who received mentoring provided by The Footprints Project when leaving custody between 2009 and 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project (January 2014)</td>
<td>The West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project is an independent resettlement organisation, based at HMP Leeds, which provides “through-the-gate” support for prisoners, both in prison and post-release in the community. The support works as a mentoring scheme for offenders, providing role models, advice, and intensive support where necessary with the hope that the offenders will resettle back into community and re-offending will be reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation (December 2013)</td>
<td>Foundation is a charity that provides a support service for offenders, adults with drug and alcohol problems, women suffering from domestic violence, the young and the vulnerable, the homeless and people at risk of homelessness. Foundation supports offenders in the five “Every Child Matters” outcomes and provides a holistic service that includes current circumstances that facilitate criminality. This includes addressing issues such as unemployment and other areas around social exclusion. It also includes support needs around substance abuse.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Prince’s Trust is a charity which aims to help disadvantaged young people. One pilot service they provided was “through-the-gate” support for young adults nearing the end of their prison sentence. Each offender willing to participate was matched with a mentor who had previous experience of being in prison and who would mentor the offender around 3 - 6 months before release, and continue doing so for 3 - 6 months post release. The aim of the service was to help the offenders break the cycle of crime and progress into positive outcomes, for example education, training and employment. This analysis relates to offenders who received mentoring between 2007 and 2010 in South West (Guys Marsh, Portland) and South East (Reading, Winchester, Lewes), UK.

This analysis looked at the impact of “through-the-gate” mentoring provided by the Prince’s Trust on re-offending. This analysis is currently inconclusive as the one year proven re-offending rate is between a 24 percentage point reduction, and a 12 percentage point increase compared to the matched control group.
The St. Helens Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programme identifies and targets offenders in the community and in custody who commit the highest volume of crime and disorder in the St. Helens area, using a range of multi-agency partners to offer support to address the seven offending 'pathways' on a case-by-case basis; these include issues around accommodation, employment, mental/physical health, drugs/alcohol, finance, family and attitudes and behaviours.

This analysis looked at the impact of a programme provided by the St. Helens Integrated Offender Management on re-offending. This analysis is currently inconclusive as the one year proven re-offending rate is between a 3 percentage point reduction, and a 20 percentage point increase compared to the matched control group.
| HMP Swansea Community Chaplaincy Project (October 2013) | The Swansea Community Chaplaincy Project is a service delivered by the Chaplaincy Department at HMP Swansea. The project works with prisoners who volunteer to engage with the chaplaincy department, but working with individuals especially who are known to have particularly complex needs, and who are at very high risk of re-offending. The framework for engaging with prisoners is to work together for the six weeks prior to their release and for 12 weeks after their release (however there is some flexibility depending upon needs). The project does not specifically target prisoners’ needs but aims to work alongside and enable the prisoner to engage with ‘target set’ agencies as required by the prisoner. The project will work with individuals with multiple interventions as is deemed necessary by the prisoner. The Project has been running since 2001, but this analysis is on interventions run in 2009 and 2010. | This analysis looked at the impact of the Swansea Community Chaplaincy Project on re-offending. This analysis is currently inconclusive as the one year proven re-offending rate is between a 7 percentage point reduction, and a 16 percentage point increase compared to the matched control group. | N/A | N/A |
Appendix 2: St Giles Trust Projects 2012-2013

**Housing Information and Advice Service (HIAS)** are London and Thames Valley prisons based contracts. The HIAS carried out 1,400 housing interventions to offer advice and, securing temporary and permanent accommodation so prisoners have somewhere to go upon release. The housing advisers are ex-prisoner peer mentors trained as caseworkers to undertake the housing information and advice service and prevent homelessness for those released from prison.

**Peer power and Peer Advice Project** are a number of peer mentor prison and community based support programmes which represent the mainstay of St Giles trust core work. These projects were usually commissioned by individual prisons in London and offered ex-prisoners advice on housing, welfare rights and broader resettlement issues. The mentoring programmes are often renamed and reconfigured as a result of the loss and the securing of new funding schemes and as such the interventions can seem fluid in nature and scope. The peer mentor’s projects all emphasise the prisoners own agency in determining their own future with the help of someone who has been there. St Giles have had success at recruiting peer mentors whilst they are in Prison by advertising and word of mouth and once released into the community the peer mentor can provide advice and guidance beginning with meeting newly released clients “at the gates” and offering intensive and bespoke guidance to resettle.

**In Here and Out Project** offered serving prisoners who were gay or bisexual emotional and psychological support, benefits advice, local housing and private rented support for those clients likely to become homeless on their release from custody and general ETE support. The project was running in 5 prisons when funding could not be found to continue the work which highlighted a need in the penal system in England and Wales. The project was funded initially by St Giles Trust as a pilot programme.

**Wire Project** - Developed from June 2010 Women’s Information and Resettlement for ex-offenders is a service run by female ex-offender staff and volunteers that works closely with female offenders to guide them release, assist with resettlement issues and reconnect them to the community. The service aims to offer stability and forward planning to a chaotic and complex client group who were very much part of a prisoner group noted for their propensity to be part of the revolving door. Most of the women in contact with the WIRE project has been referred by the Housing team at
the local prison as preparation for release. At the time of the research there were three female advisers involved in this project which was offering an advice telephone line and on going support to female prisoners. I interviewed two of the staff with respect to this project.

WIRE provides a women’s ‘through the gate’ service for London returners released from HMP Send and Downview and a community floating support service for women at risk of offending as well as re-offending. The service is led by female ex-offenders who meet women, prior to release and on the day of release to support them in a holistic manner. WIRE prioritise: Women with Children, complex needs, those identified as Vulnerable and who are sex workers. The key support includes finding safe accommodation, accessing benefits, education, training and employment, and support women to re-establish contact with friends and family. The Project is delivered by specially trained female ex-offenders who have first hand experience of rebuilding their lives.

An evaluation by The Social Innovation Partnership in 2012 a basic re-conviction evaluation of 2104 women in the project found that those in the project had a reconviction rate of 42% compared to a national female average rate of 51%. In addition the frequency of recidivism was noted as halving to 2 offences in 12 months in comparison to 4 in the national average.

SOS Project is a targeted intervention for helping young offenders stay clear of crime and gang related activity. It began life in October 2006 after an innovative idea and drive by Junior Smart who had been released from prison for gang related activity and wanted to set up a project led and run by ex-gang members for gang members who wanted to lead a different life. At the time of the research the SOS gang project was becoming one of the most high profile and successful gang related intervention in England and Wales. It is some way represented St Giles ‘Jewel in the Crown’ of interventions attracting interest both nationally and internationally and regularly featuring in national and London newspapers.

The project has developed considerably over a 10 year period. By 2016 the SOS project works across 12 London boroughs and has 27 frontline staff and volunteers that offer practical and emotional support to help young people overcome barriers and make a permanent exit from gang life. The project has expanded its remit by offering support in partnership with the Royal London Hospital. Whilst the Project has obviously developed over time increasingly necessitating close working relationships with statutory agencies and the employment of ex-police officer gang specialists the central
core of St Giles remains. Smart states “SOS has always been and remains an ex-offender led project. There is simply no-one better qualified at understanding the complex realities of our clients. To an irrational problem, we are the most rational solution.” (http://site.stgilestrust.org.uk/news/blog/sos-a-rational-solution-to-an-irrational-problem). Similarly, the project has developed into a range of broader interventions including preventative work. SOS+ offers preventative work with young people at risk of gang crime, with the aim of preventing them becoming caught up in this lifestyle. Ex-offender volunteers trained through St Giles Trust work with schools in London to inform students on the dangers of getting caught up in gang crime - particularly with regard to weapons – de-glamorise the lifestyle, challenge myths and raise awareness. It also aims to equip young people with knowledge and skills to stay safe.

**Peterborough One Project - World first social impact bond**

Began in September 2010 the One Service was a high profile project launched by the then Justice Minister Ken Clarke as a payment by results pilot. The project was led and coordinated by a financial intermediary Social Finance who raise private capital of £5 million to undertake interventions with offenders leaving Peterborough Prison. Significantly, Social Finance raised private capital to tackle and address a social problem and specifically tackle the 60% recidivism rate of those who served short term sentences. The MOJ and the Big Lottery Fund would make a financial payment to the funders if either recidivism rates reduced by 7.5% across a cohort of 3,000 ex-prisoners leaving HMP Peterborough against a matched control group, or if the project achieved a 10% reduction in any of the three cohorts of 1,000 ex prisoners. Investors could achieve a return of up to 13% per year if they could demonstrate these statistically significant reductions in recidivism. If the targets were not met then the initial One Project capital outlay was at risk. As part of the research 3 days were spent in Peterborough at the One Project interviewing all members of staff and peer mentors employed on the project at that time.

A number of voluntary organisations were involved however St Giles trust provided the main staffing with professional and peer mentor interventions in the project.

The project aims were to mentor 3,000 male prisoners leaving Peterborough prison who had served sentences of less than a year predating the similar government initiatives in the Breaking Cycle and Transforming Rehabilitation strategies. In April 2014 after the publication of the TR strategy the Peterborough One project Social Investment bond was closed with the MOJ and the then Justice Minister Chris Grayling stating that alternative
funding mechanisms under the new government outsourcing agenda. As part of the research 3 days were spent in Peterborough at the One Project interviewing all members of staff and peer mentors employed on the project at that time.
## Appendix 3: Respondent data

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Appendix 4: Thematic Network (Attride-Sterling 2001) for Chapter 5: The Penal Voluntary Sector, Crime Controlled

- Crime controlled; PVS expanding penal power
- Statutory Funding shaping organisation mission practice
- Payment by results shaping mission and practice

- Becoming the state: Correctional practices and values
  - Conditionality in provision; (n=43)
  - Risk and need logic shape practice (n=20)
- Multi-agency working
  - Enforcing licences and orders (n=20)
  - Replacing the State/Adding to statutory resources (n=29)
- Conflict between client need and crime reduction work
  - Targeting risk and caseload management (n=47)
- SIB Powerful; commercial interests shape practice
  - Practices shaped by others

- Multi-agency working
  - Enforcement of licences and orders (n=20)
  - Information sharing and joint supervision (n=11)
- Conflict between client need and crime reduction work
  - Targeting risk and caseload management (n=47)
Appendix 5: Thematic Network for Chapter 5: Controlling and reconstructing the charitable mission
Appendix 6: Thematic Network for Chapter 6: Governmental and subjective construction of ex-offender peer mentor volunteers

STAGE ONE war, weapon, soldiers, arsenal, against recidivism

STAGE ONE peer mentoring as 'quality' in custodial environment

as weapon in a war against recidivism

as improving penal system

as active and responsible/self correcting

GOVERNMENTAL AND SUBJECTIVE CONSTRUCTIONS OF PEER MENTORING

Instrumental Subjectivities

'getting ahead'

Desisting from crime

STAGE ONE as real me as new me

Subjective Constructions of Peer Mentoring

improving paid employment opportunities

Peer mentoring as power absence of moral tone or redemptive scripts

STAGE ONE Peer mentor as active, and responsible

sense of worth, fulfillment, cycle of care, reciprocality

STAGE ONE-wise fiends, old lags, best placed, as idiosyncratic and replicable

Generative and care subjectivities

CHAPTER 7 PEER MENTOR AS NEW KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

as active and responsible/self correcting

STAGE ONE Peer mentor as disciplinary (changing) and surveillant (watching and finding, police, camera)
Appendix 7: Thematic Network for Chapter 7: The peer mentor as the professional ‘ex’-offender

- Subjective constructions of peer mentor knowledge
  - Competing plural knowledges in marketised probation
    - Primacy of everyday knowledge over professionalised
      - Competing knowledge and impact on statutory supervision
        - Non compliance with statutory supervision
        - Self interested
    - Statutory probation officers as outmoded, tick boxers
      - Limits to values
  - Limits to knowledge

- The Professional ‘ex’ - experiential expertise from ‘having been there’
  - Utility of previous criminality
    - Avoid deception tricks and deceit
  - Using everyday knowledge to access resources/gaming the system

- Governmental constructions of peer mentoring knowledge
  - Knowledge from service user and involvement of non government actors
  - Trained peer mentors competency VQs

peer mentor as professional ‘ex’-offender