

# **HMP & YOI Brinsford Drama Workshops and Creative Interventions Evaluation Report June – November 2021**



## Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the participants who gifted their time, effort and passion during the workshops and creative interventions. Without their commitment and resilience, none of this work would have been possible. We also give our thanks to all the staff at HMP & YOI Brinsford, whose wisdom and benevolence guided us throughout this, sometimes challenging, but always rewarding, project. The support of operational staff, Offender Management, Education, Activities and Senior Leadership, to name a few, enabled Belong to see the success of its services; for that we are grateful.

“Prison-based artists and artists from beyond the prison walls have long used creativity as a way of tapping into human potential”

**Cox & Gelsthorpe, 2012**

# Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Aims and Intentions.....	3
2.1 Established Delivery and KPIs.....	3
3. Implementation and Service Delivery.....	4
3.1 Recruitment Process and Participant Selection.....	4
3.2 Drama Workshops.....	5
3.3 Creative Interventions.....	7
4. Data Collection and Evaluation Methodology.....	8
5. Service Outputs.....	9
5.1 Attendance and Engagement.....	9
5.2 Demographics .....	10
6. Service Impacts .....	11
7. Recommendations.....	13
8. Future contact.....	13
9. Appendices.....	14

# I. Introduction

**Belong: Making Justice Happen is a registered charity, whose staff and volunteers work with children, young people, and adults, in prisons and in community settings.**

Belong aims to reduce crime and the harm that it causes. We deliver long-term individualised responses to crime. Through our interventions, we enable positive development amongst offenders, with a particular focus on those that are hard to reach. Many of the people we work with have mental health problems, learning difficulties, and are affiliates to or members of gangs.

HMP & YOI Brinsford is a young offender's prison holding sentenced prisoners, alongside providing a remand function for the West Midlands courts. Population age range is 18-28. The maximum sentence length is 4 years remaining to serve, and average length of sentence is currently 6-8 months remaining.", should read "The maximum sentence length is 4 years remaining to serve, and average length of sentence is currently 6-8 months remaining. Its population capacity is maximum of 577, with a current population of 436 (4th November 2021). The service was funded by HMP & YOI Brinsford as part of the prison's commitment to providing meaningful activities to residents, as well as reintroducing group interventions since the start of the Covid-19

pandemic. The service was implemented by two Creative Practitioners whose responsibilities were to design and deliver the drama workshops and creative interventions. As agreed between the buyer and supplier prior to service delivery, both practitioners had prior experience of working in prisons and secure settings in the areas of learning support and creative facilitation. Practitioners worked in accordance to agreed aims and intentions in order to provide residents at HMP & YOI Brinsford the opportunity to participate in high quality, bespoke workshops which would surmount in small-scale productions and a portfolio of creative work.

The aims of this evaluative report are: to firstly outline how drama workshops and creative interventions were implemented, evaluating the process of delivery and assessing engagement levels; to secondly critically evaluate the service outputs in accordance to the aims and intended outcomes proposed by HMP & YOI Brinsford and to finally identify patterns in participant responses and behaviour in order to establish how Belong's services impacted those who engaged.

# 2. Aims and Intentions

In an attempt to provide meaningful and purposeful activity to residents, HMP & YOI Brinsford sought a service with the following requirement, reflective of relevant HMPPS specifications.

HMPPS specifications state:

*“...to develop a range of different themed productions based around issues that are relevant to those who live here. These could include, but not limited to: psychoactive substances, gang violence, bullying, domestic violence, self-harm and mental health.”*

In response to HMP & YOI Brinsford’s request, the proposal detailed how the supplier<sup>1</sup> would meet the requirements of the HMPPS specification requested by the buyer through strategies exclusive to Belong:

- Practitioners will take steps to create an enabling environment, where workshops can be delivered with a therapeutic, needs-focused, trauma-informed approach.
- Practitioners will offer participants the choice to engage in a range of creative techniques reflecting on themes such as psychoactive substances, gang violence, bullying, domestic violence, self-harm and mental health.
- Practitioners will seek to recruit all individuals including those who have not engaged in other activities, on ACCT documents or CSIPs.

Through acknowledging the specification and understanding the needs of HMP & YOI Brinsford’s demographic, Belong’s practitioners agreed further intended outcomes for the workshops, deemed to be integral to enabling sustained engagement and trusting working relationships over the course of the executed contract:

- Support the development of communication skills, confidence, self-esteem and stagecraft
- Build an inclusive and safe environment for expression and discovery
- Provide fun, enjoyment and fulfilment through purposeful activity

Overall, the intended outcome of the service established by the supplier, and agreed to by the buyer, was to “help young people to process experiences of trauma; improve communication and conflict resolution skills; improve their mental and emotional well-being; learn to express and manage difficult thoughts and feelings.” Thus establishing the basis upon which this evaluative report measures the impact of the services delivered; the evaluation correlates with the above bid agreements and relevant HMP & YOI Brinsford action plans.

## 2.1. Established Delivery and KPIs

Following the advisory of the buyer’s specification and relevant Covid-19 regulations, the logistics of delivery were established. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the prison was expected to operate within a restricted regime, with group sizes limited to a maximum of 6 prisoners (at stage 3), or maximum 10 (at stage 2); groups from within the same residential unit and spur. Therefore, it was agreed that there would be a minimum of 2 workshops per unit, equalling a total of 10 workshops, to be run over a six-month period; each workshop should be for a 1-week period, with two running per month. The structure of the workshop would run as follows: 9 sessions per workshop running Monday to Thursday in the morning and afternoon and Friday in the morning; total hours of delivery should be 21.5.

The following KPIs were agreed between the buyer and supplier as a metric to be used once the contract had ended to measure the impact and effectiveness of Belong’s services:

- 90% of learners remaining on the course<sup>2</sup>
- 85% of learners reporting satisfaction<sup>3</sup>

---

1 When using the word supplier, this refers to Belong, the supplier of service to the buyer, HMP & YOI Brinsford.

2 This will be referred to and measured as engagement.

3 This will be referred to and measured as impact on service users.

# 3. Implementation and Service Delivery

## 3.1. Recruitment Process and Participation Selection

Belong were keen to optimise opportunities for residents in HMP and YOI Brinsford to engage in drama and creative interventions, and therefore, took numerous approaches in marketing the service. Initially, the workshops were advertised to residents and staff through leaflets and posters<sup>4</sup> which were displayed within residential areas. It became apparent that advertising the service directly to residents- predominantly during Association hours or in passing- proved to be more effective and encouraged residents to engage with the charity. Advertising drama via word of mouth increased the rate of interest for the following reasons:

1. Creative Practitioners provided an overview of the workshop content, structure and objectives for each workshop week which a poster could not achieve.
2. Individuals who had queries regarding the workshops could receive clear answers prior to applying.
3. Participant had the opportunity to express any anxieties and/or challenges they felt they would encounter prior to engaging in the workshops.

In addition to the advertisement, participants were invited to attend one-to-one interviews in which they were asked the following questions:

1. Has the young person engaged in a similar activity?
2. Why the young person wishes to engage?
3. What has prevented the young person engaging in education in the past?
4. What the young person wanted to achieve if they were allocated?

These questions were asked in an effort to understand a participants' expectations, demands and identify any barriers to

engagement. Practitioners found one-to-one interviews particularly beneficial as a method of establishing boundaries, encouraging participants to ask questions in a confidential environment, and discover any conflicting priorities that may prevent them from attending i.e., activities, education, visits and appointments.

This model of recruitment evolved over the time; practitioners introduced application forms<sup>5</sup> and distributed these to individuals who had restricted regimes, ensuring that all prisoners in HMP & YOI Brinsford were provided with equal opportunities to engage.

In the event that a prisoner was interested in attending the workshop, practitioners conducted risk assessments<sup>6</sup> in line with security, equality and inclusivity requirements. Determining an individual's risk level was based on a range of factors, including but not limited to recent observations from staff, security issues, vulnerabilities and behavioural challenges; and as agreed in the specification- "all participants will be checked for non-associates and appropriateness for allocation" – communication surrounding risks, intelligence reports, and suitability with security was considered of utmost importance. Personal information, as well as details of their custodial sentence, were sought from liaising with prison and probation service teams.

Practitioners worked with up to 6 prisoners in a workshop capacity at one time. Prisoners were selected based on their risk levels, willingness to interact and seeking opportunity to participate. Practitioners did not deter from selecting individuals who were considered "challenging" in custody, and therefore, would prioritise individuals who had a history of disengagement from activities, mental health challenges, and previous incidents of negative behaviour in custody.

Prior to allocating, a confidentiality agreement<sup>7</sup> was made between practitioners and the prisoner, outlining Belong's procedure in relation to

---

4 See Appendix A

5 See Appendix B

6 See Appendix C

7 See Appendix D

confidentiality and safeguarding. Practitioners made prisoners aware that any information which they disclosed- in relation to breaches of prison security, individual risk or harm, or the prevention and detection of serious crime- would be shared with the prison. In addition, summary information about a prisoner's engagement was disclosed to prison and probation service teams. Practitioners also made prisoners aware of their right to be informed of information collected for recruitment purposes.

## 3.2. Drama Workshops

Workshops were initially intended to reflect the requirements of the specification, running for a minimum of 25 hours across 4.5 days, which was facilitated for the early parts of the contract. However, it became apparent that as HMP & YOI Brinsford adapted its regime to the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, practitioners found it necessary to make changes to the planned implementations of the service by moving to part-time delivery. Despite the adjustment to the programme, practitioners were still met with a high level of interest.

Practitioners designed bespoke workshops involving numerous exercises to strengthen participants' engagement, confidence levels and self-esteem. Practitioners would plan content in advance which could be adapted throughout the course of a session. As part of the contracted requirements- "workshops should consist of a rehearsal and practice sessions and a final show as part of the last session, ideally to an audience"- practitioners aimed to conclude each workshop with a small-scale performance devised by participants, and to be performed in front of staff.

““ Drama can be anything you want it to be.”

Over the course of the executed contract, the drama workshops evolved in accordance to the demand and feedback received from participants, whereby practitioners adopted a user focused, *generative approach*<sup>8</sup> resulting in co-intentional learning whereby the outcomes of the workshop were not fixed at the outset but process orientated, with the content negotiated. It was discovered that allowing participants to take some direction over the workshop granted them space to learn, experiment and express themselves individually; participants became facilitators and active

contributors in the exercises. During conversations with prisoners in HMP & YOI Brinsford, practitioners asked the following: when you hear the word 'drama', what comes to mind? Answers varied over the five months, as did the outcomes of each workshop; 'drama' generated experiences which were individual and personal.

Though it had been detailed in the specification that workshops may reflect on themes relating to psychoactive substances, gang violence, bullying, domestic violence, self-harm and mental health, it is important to acknowledge that no workshop could have been firmly structured around a specific topic due to the fact that some participants wouldn't be able to relate to some of the themes discussed or some challenging or triggering issues may not be appropriate. It was therefore vital for participants to have agency in the creative process and structure the content to relate directly to their interests. Ultimately, Belong's workshops became related to whatever issues services users faced and felt that they wanted to explore.

““ With my disabilities, I prefer things being hands on. So, through role play and improvisation, I learnt more that way than in mainstream Education”

In order to illustrate the magnitude of Drama, practitioners utilised a variety of resources, engaging each group in activities and exercises to spur creative thinking, collaboration and problem solving. Inspired by leading charities in the UK- all of whom have worked in various corners of the criminal justice system- the combination of high-energy and mindful exercises were introduced in accordance with participants' engagement levels and support needs. The range of exercises and activities delivered gave participants an introduction to the spectrum of Drama. With a combination of relaxed activity, as well as high-energy, collaborative exercises, practitioners worked closely with each service user to enhance their skill sets and develop confidence levels for potential group performances.

Encouraging self-expression was essential to sustain engagement levels; practitioners aimed to build a space where talents were appreciated and acknowledged. Aware of the stigma associated with "Drama", practitioners highlighted various creative avenues which possessed an element of

---

8 Preston, S (2016) "Practices: Doing and Performing" in *Facilitation: Pedagogies, Practices, Resilience*. pg 44

performance- for example spoken word, rapping and improvisation. participants were encouraged to demonstrate their talents, as well as explore avenues which complimented their existing skill set. As aforementioned, granting participants the creative freedom to initiate directorial decisions encouraged further, individual experimentation and discovery.

As in most custodial settings, practitioners were conscious of group dynamics and relationships during each workshop. Nether the less, each cohort proved to be respectful and supportive of their peers, with participants consistently encouraging one another's participation. This was assessed on a case-by-case basis and monitored through peer-to-peer interactions in and outside of the workshop.

“ We built confidence together. Especially for the performance. I was very nervous but proud for doing it”

The performances at the end of each workshop were opportunities for participants to demonstrate their learning and collective talent to audiences. Though it had been encouraged in the specification that workshops may reflect on specific themes, and the productions were devised as a result of these findings, it was important that the participants' ideas built the foundations of the performance with practitioners offering advice, feedback and facilitation. Through active contributions, participants demonstrated creative leadership, ownership and collaboration, emphasising the main ethos of the workshops: drama could be anything they wanted.

During the devising process. Practitioners would facilitate discussions about their objectives for the performance, asking “what do you want to show an audience? What do you want them to be thinking?” Intentions varied over the 5 months, as did the premise of each performance. As well as the themes put forth within the contracted service, participants explored additional topics which they felt were representative of their lived experiences, including but not limited to peer pressure, gang culture, imprisonment, release and school. During some performances, participants chose to adapt their individual talents of rapping and creative writing for each performance, ultimately presenting a high calibre of work.

## Individual service user experiences

Within 5 months of delivery, practitioners conducted numerous case studies for certain individuals who had engaged in the workshops, highlighting the findings from a participant's interaction .<sup>9</sup>

## The outcomes

In conducting thematic analysis across the varied behaviours and responses from participants, several commonalities were identified:

1. Participants' skill sets had expanded throughout the week, in particular utilising confidence which enabled them to perform.
2. Improved relations with peers; strong peer engagement and encouragement.
3. A functioning, democratic working environment.
4. Participants' expectations of and attitudes to the concept of drama had evolved.
5. Participants enjoyed themselves and reported satisfaction from taking part.
6. Reflection on previous decision making and changing thought processes.

Hard work and determination from both parties enabled the smooth running of the workshops. Participants provided a range of perspectives, demonstrating individual discoveries and group responses from working on the programme:

“ If you're nervous that's good. I'd rather go in nervous because the practitioners show you how to be confident”

“ I've learnt to describe myself in positive ways”

“ I can do well in quick situations. In the classroom, conflict de-escalated really quickly, and you don't see that in jail. I learnt that things can be resolved without violence”

---

9 See Appendix E

“ Since doing Drama I’ve felt more relaxed. I no longer feel like it’s the “end of the world”

“ I liked the atmosphere; I felt like a civilian”

### 3.3. Creative Interventions

Belong and HMPPS agreed with the following requirement in the event that HMP & YO1 Brinsford would return to a restricted regime under Covid-19 guidelines:

*“In the event that the Prison re-enters a lock down scenario, the successful bidder may be asked to provide an alternative service delivery”*

Due to the ongoing demand for drama workshops, practitioners did not establish creative interventions until mid-way through the contract. Creative interventions were implemented following a conversation with an individual on residential unit 2. It was apparent that restricted regimes, mental health issues and mobility challenges impacted a service user’s engagement, and in this individual’s case, prevented him from performing in a workshop capacity. *Pen to Pad* was introduced to meet these demands and provide equal creative opportunities for residents.

From August to October, practitioners facilitated 2 one-to-one classes, running for a minimum of 1.5 hours per session across 5 days. Towards the end of the contract, as positive Covid-19 cases within the prison began to increase and individuals were instructed to isolate, practitioners saw a demand for these interventions to be delivered as in-cell work. Practitioners distributed in-cell activities across the establishment.

During the one-to-one interventions, practitioners provided a combination of low-intensity Drama and creative writing exercises inspired from Theatre in Prisons and Probation (tipp)<sup>10</sup> and small performance adventures<sup>11</sup>.

Activities included creative writing, drawing, in-depth conversations and therapeutic exercises using objects. Participants provided individual reflections surrounding challenging themes, some of which were demonstrated in pieces of writing and other pieces of work<sup>12</sup>.

*Pen to Pad* exceeded practitioners’ expectations in terms of outcomes. Satisfaction was not only measured through the completion of the intervention, but aspects of self-discovery. For some participants, *Pen to Pad* generated a level of escapism which separated them from prison culture, as well as improving cases of mental health, well-being and peer interaction. Having a space to explore their lived experiences through creative, therapeutic avenues, as well as general conversation, further encouraged participants to provide insight into their lives, often in the form of writing and poetry.

One service user provided his perspective of the work completed and the outcomes of the intervention:

“ Belong have talked to me, helped me to reflect, and discover the problem. I’ll deal with an issue now that isn’t expected of me. People expect me to fight; now I’ll write it down. I loved the creative writing exercises which had a reflective approach. I wouldn’t think about the little things about myself, but now I’ve realised that they’re important. If you hadn’t approached me in the first place, and if I hadn’t had taken the opportunity to do some work, I would be in the CSU by now. I’m in a different place”

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.tipp.org.uk/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://smallperformanceadventures.com/>

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix F. Consent was obtained from service users prior to including in this report

# 4. Data Collection and Evaluation Methodology

In the months running from June to November 2021, 11 workshops and 2 creative interventions were conducted, engaging a total of 66 participants in Belong's services. The workshops generated a wealth of both quantitative and qualitative data to be evaluated in accordance with the outcomes in the aforementioned Aims and Intentions.

The evidence detailed in the below service outputs is divided into numerical data; attendance, engagement and demographic related statistics – and non-numerical data; attitudes and behaviours of participants. The non-numerical, qualitative data, referring to the opinions and experiences of participants, was extracted through primary data collection.

The method of data collection involved an ethnographic approach – observing the participants in the workshop setting – combined with semi structured interviews and reflective 1-1 sessions that asked questions relating to participants' attitudes towards and experiences of the workshops/creative interventions. This chosen method of data collection was appropriate as ethnographic data collection fulfils the aims to assess how drama workshops and creative interventions impact a service user's attitude and behaviour from within the space and gains the most authentic responses from participants. Furthermore, the combined method enables the effective measure of outcomes relating to fun,

enjoyment and fulfilment which cannot always be evidenced in numerical data or observation alone and must be supported by the experiences and attitudes of participants in their own words.

The initial chosen method of evaluation was the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) and self-esteem measure to be conducted with participants before and after the workshop; any changes on this scale were intended to show improvements in mental well-being after participation. However, due to the fact that the workshops ran on a short-term basis, rather than a long-term intervention, it was felt by practitioners that any impact on one's wellness could not be accurately measured using this scale; it would be challenging to measure any significant changes at all given the time frame of the intervention. Therefore, it was decided that this was not the most effective or appropriate means of evaluation. Instead, the method of evaluation chosen was thematic analysis across the qualitative data obtained, identifying and interpreting patterns in service user responses<sup>13</sup>.

**FROM JUNE TO  
NOVEMBER 2021**  
**ELEVEN  
WORKSHOPS  
WERE CONDUCTED**

**FROM JUNE TO  
NOVEMBER 2021**  
**TWO CREATIVE  
INTERVENTIONS  
WERE CONDUCTED**

**IN TOTAL  
66  
PARTICIPANTS  
WERE ENGAGED IN  
OUR SERVICES**

---

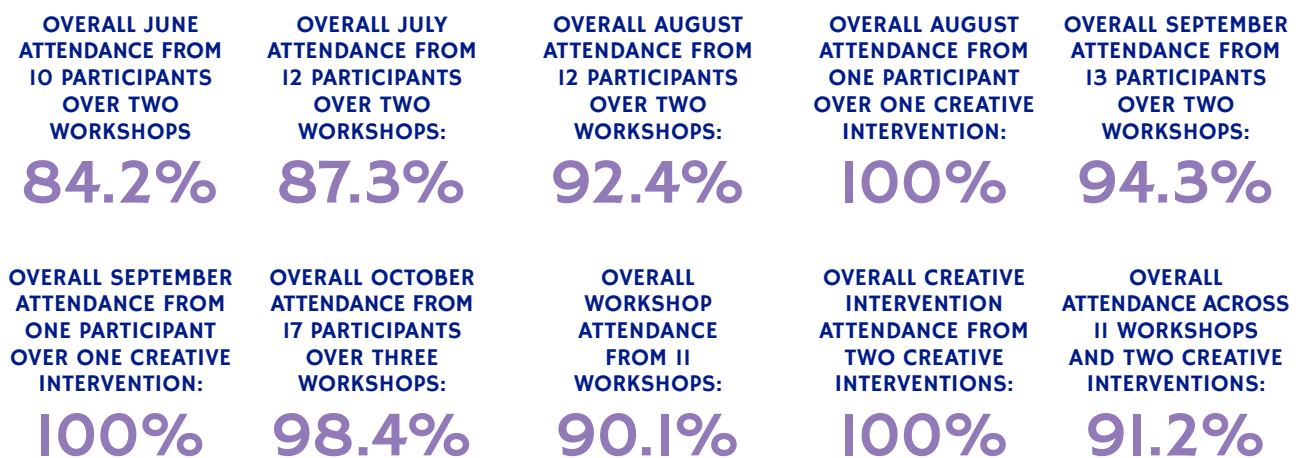
<sup>13</sup> Note that all evaluation processes were GDPR compliant.

# 5. Service Outputs

## 5.1. Attendance and Engagement

As agreed in the contract, one of the aims was to achieve 90% of learners remaining on the course, ensuring that throughout the course of a workshop, participants' levels of engagement were sustained and that attendance rates remained high.

The attendance for each workshop is:<sup>14</sup>



Attendance rates sat well above 80%, and for the majority of the contract exceeded the goal of 90%; this resulting in a mean average of 91.2% and thus exceeding the agreed aim. The absences can be explained in accordance to changes and challenges within the prison regime including staff shortages, appointment clashes and wing lockdowns. In a minority of cases, participants did not attend for personal reasons be it poor health, lack of confidence or clash of commitments; this being said, there were few instances of sustained absence as participants made efforts to attend some sessions with the support of practitioners.

The incline in attendance from June until November can be explained by: the sustained rapport between operational staff and practitioners; increased presence and positive image of Belong's services across the prison; participants seeing the personal benefits of attending and with their peers, and practitioner engagement and support outside of workshop hours.

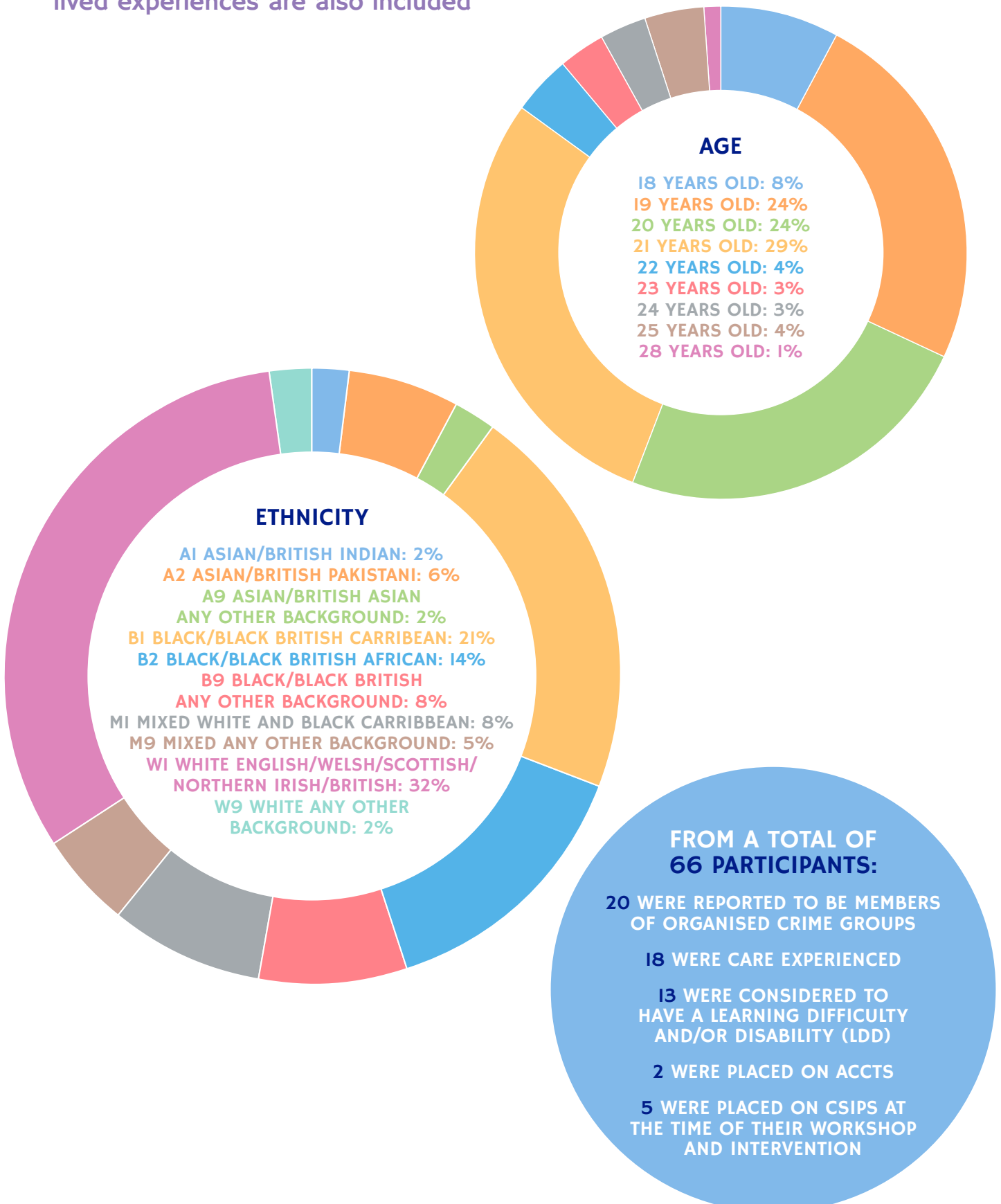
As mentioned prior, the workshop structures were altered to fit within the prison regime to ensure optimum output. Relevant changes made included: liaising with activities and allocations to create an unlock list rather than providing an isolated list created by practitioners; meeting with participants outside of workshop times to perform wellbeing check ins, in order to motivate participation, and plenary style discussions and evaluations at the end of each session.

In order to further improve the above figures, practitioners would seek participants earlier than the week prior to the workshop starting, in order to allocate them sooner and avoid clashes in appointments and education/employment related commitments. To conclude, amongst an inexhaustible list of contributing factors, the adaptations made between June and November facilitated the sustained attendance and engagement of participants.

<sup>14</sup> For a comprehensive breakdown of attendance figures, see Appendix G

## 5.2. Demographic Related Statistics

A full breakdown of demographic related statistics, predominantly in relation to age and ethnicity. Further statistics surrounding learning needs and lived experiences are also included



# 6. Service Impact

Seeking a suitable evaluative method to assess the rate of success, impact and effectiveness was challenging to acquire. In order to meet the intended KPI target of 85% satisfaction amongst participants, practitioners experimented with a variety of evaluation and measurement tools to capture this outcome.

It is worth reiterating that these outcomes could not be evidenced through data or observation alone, and ultimately, "success" is difficult to determine. However, practitioners were able to identify a pattern of reaction from participants in regard to engaging in the workshops. Participants generously provided positive feedback through one-to-one conversation and isolated statements, which contributes to the evaluation of Belong's impact.

## Positive outcomes

In conducting analysis across the varied responses, participants were able to identify and articulate a range of positive outcomes that they personally attributed to the intervention, including personal development, confidence, self-worth and enjoyment:

“I’ve developed my anger management. I have built confidence in certain situations”

“I’ve learnt how to be more interactive. I can have conversations now. I’ve learnt not to take things too seriously, but how to be vulnerable”

“I’ve learnt more people skills, and realised that arguing is pointless”

“I can be punctual. I defied the Res staff’s expectations in terms of my behaviour”

## Rehabilitation

The opportunity to reflect on lived experiences was not mandatory for participants, but eventually became an important aspect of the workshops. Having a space to assess the nature of a crime through issue-orientated conversation and recognising the impact of individual behaviours became a valuable experience for many. One participant in particular explained that receiving his sentence, his self-worth and character in prison was determined by his index offence. However, from engaging and investing in meaningful activity, he discovered a new-found determination to avoid re-offending:

“I have a natural talent, and it’s made me realise that I need to use it instead of resorting to violence”.

Numerous changes in attitudes and perspectives became a regular occurrence. Practitioners noted an increase in the ability to value things, and provide a reflective approach towards their offences:

“I reflected a lot. I shouldn’t have done what I did. Not thinking has put me in jail. Always think before you act. Drama made me rethink my actions.”

“I’d love to leave and be the opposite of a bad person. I’ve had enough of all of that; I want to sort things out”.

Practitioners were unsure whether engaging prisoners in short-term activity would impact their attitude to reoffending or support their rehabilitation. However, given the wide range of benefits which drama and creative interventions can offer, practitioners found that granting participants the space to reflect, challenge and question pre-existing responses to their conviction could, in turn, contribute to a change in attitude upon release.

## Mentors

From August, practitioners welcomed two experienced participants to join the workshops as Drama Mentors. Both individuals had prior involvement in Belong's intervention, but changes in their behaviour warranted an alteration in their IEP status and, at times, moving across the prison establishment. Practitioners utilised their experiences of the workshops to support the recruitment process, as well as giving the individual responsibilities whilst in the workshop- these included the facilitation of exercises and mediating group conversations. Both mentors were eager to prove these responsibilities to practitioners, which contributed to improvements in behaviour, engagement and rapport with prison staff. Providing this opportunity appeared to establish routine and behavioural improvements; both mentors were allocated to wing jobs and had their enhanced IEP reinstated after completing the workshop.

## Practitioners and Audience Responses

Throughout the contract, practitioners witnessed an increase in audience members and peer support. For one cohort in particular, staff invited 3 prisoners from the same residential unit to spectate, and provided feedback:

*“...the performance was very good. That stuff should be shown in cinemas! When I was there, I thought it'd be funny, but it was interesting to see how deep it got. Moral of the story: you don't have to be influenced by what other people say”.*

Staff's decision to invite alleged high-profile offenders to watch and support their peers highlights HMP and YOI Brinsford's goal to dismantle barriers to engagement, enhance support, and remove the stigmas associated with certain prisoners. For practitioners, it reinforced the power of inclusivity.

Further comments from audience members are:

*“It's really nice to see people in a positive light. Don't underestimate how this can help you when you are released”*

### Offender Management

*“I would like to express my thanks to the quality and bravery of the students. To encourage our residents into purposeful activity and have responsibility for output is something we need more of at Brinsford”*

### Operational staff

*“In my opinion, this is one of the best services we currently offer as part of our regime. They have been fun, emotive and insightful and helpful in developing trusting and improved relationships. On behalf of Brinsford I thank the practitioners for their commitment, enthusiasm and inspiration”*

### Senior Leadership

# 7. Recommendations

From conversations with participants and professionals in HMP & YOI Brinsford, practitioners have generated recommendations that are summarised here, both in terms of delivery as well as further services. These may be of use to Belong, HMP & YOI Brinsford and other organisations or establishments considering developing such a service

1. Consider the extension of group workshops and creative interventions
2. Consider introducing an accredited programme which develops creative leadership skills
3. Maintain the close and supportive relationship established between practitioners and participants. Continued support was a significant factor in participants' wellbeing
4. Consider structural changes to the workshops to fit alongside education and activity regimes
5. Work with the prison to avoid disruption and restricted sessions due to room allocation problems
6. Continue to include third party services in prisoner facing interventions and appointments i.e ACCT reviews, SIMM meetings
7. Consider the expansion of Drama Mentors who can offer support to prisoners
8. Increase the range of meaningful, vocational activities across the prison establishment to improve behaviour, prisoner-staff relationships and personal development.
9. Continue to advocate the importance of applying a relational approach, proving how trust, empathy and engagement combine to generate change in the workplace

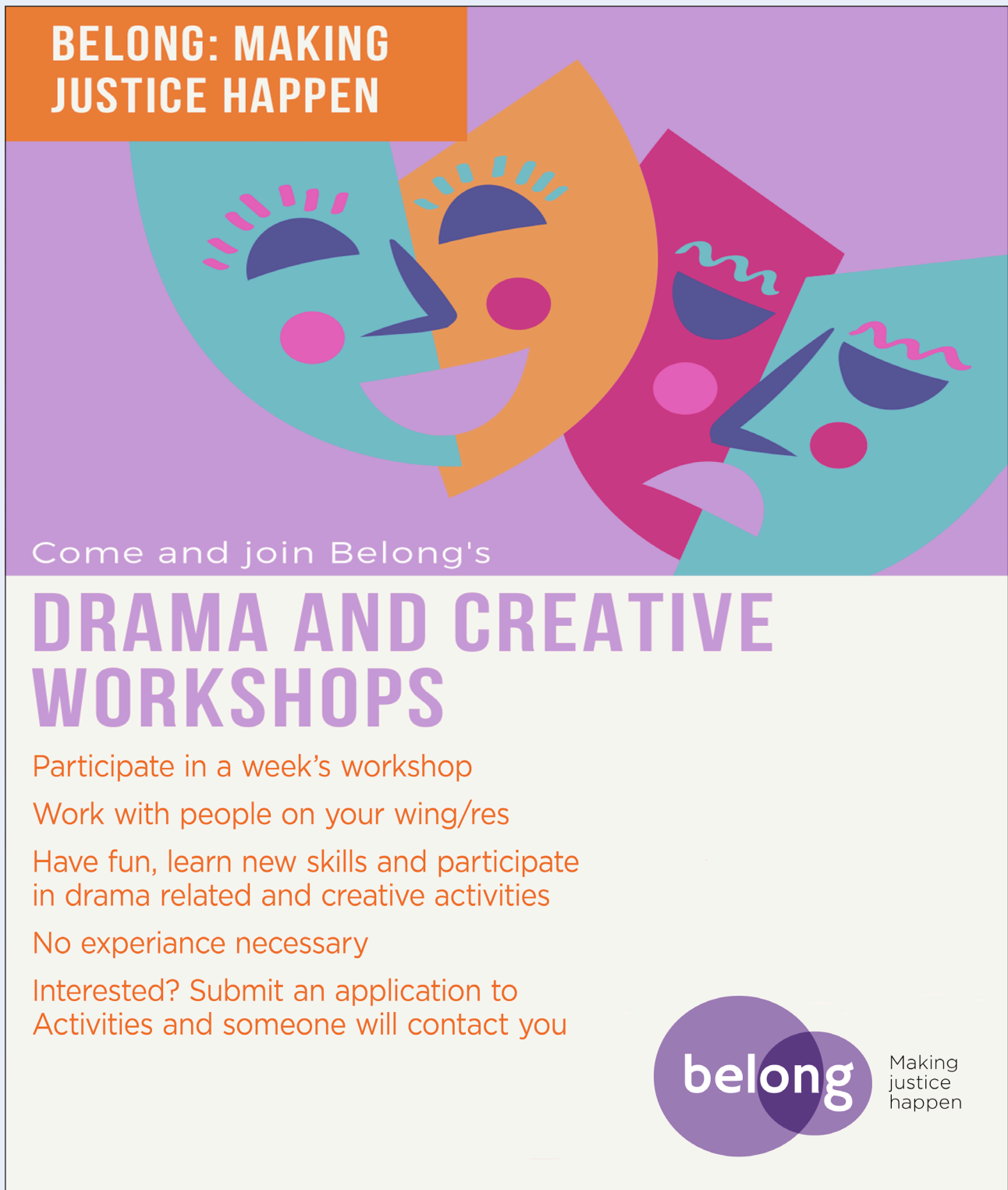
# 8. Future Contact

Contact us at [enquiries@belonglondon.com](mailto:enquiries@belonglondon.com)  
Or visit [www.belongmakingjustice.happen.co.uk](http://www.belongmakingjustice.happen.co.uk)

# 9. Appendices

## 9.1. Appendix A

Appendix A consists of the poster advertising Drama workshops which were marketed across the prison establishment. Each poster gave an overview of the intentions of the workshop:



**BELONG: MAKING JUSTICE HAPPEN**

Come and join Belong's

# DRAMA AND CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

Participate in a week's workshop  
Work with people on your wing/res  
Have fun, learn new skills and participate in drama related and creative activities  
No experience necessary  
Interested? Submit an application to Activities and someone will contact you


**belong** Making justice happen

## 9.2. Appendix B

Practitioners designed an individual application form, distributed to prisoners who had separate regimes, and could not always engage with practitioners on a one-to-one basis:

\*\*\*\*\*

# Drama and Creative Workshops



Belong: Making Justice Happen are recruiting participants for Drama and Creative Workshops, starting: **Monday 4th October**

It's a week of peer interaction, engaging in activities and having some fun whilst exploring creativity! If this sounds like something you're interested in, speak to Belong staff during Association.

Name:..... Prison ID: :.....

Are you currently working/in education? If so, what are you doing?

.....

.....

.....

.....

\*\*\*\*\*

## 9.3. Appendix C

Prior to allocating a prisoner, practitioners completed risk assessments in line with security, equality and inclusivity requirements. A prisoner's risk level was determined through a combination of factors detailed below:

### Part 1

#### Dates & Venue of Drama Workshops

Workshop Dates: .....

Room held in: .....

#### Service User Details:

*From Nomis*

Name: .....

D.O.B: .....

Ethnicity: .....

SU address: .....

Wing: .....

Prison Nomis Number: .....

PNC number: .....

SU release date: .....

CRD: .....

SED: .....

Conviction date: .....

Prison Offender Manager: .....

Community Offender

Manager/Probation Officer: .....

### Part 2

#### Key considerations in Determining Risk Level:

1. Does the SU have any physical or learning disabilities, mental impairment or ill health, which may affect their participation in the intervention? If yes, please detail these and describe how these are managed in custody, including any self-help methods or medication that the SU uses, and support the SU receives in custody?  
.....

2. Does the SU have any substance misuse issues? If yes, please detail these and outline how they could impact their involvement in this scheme? Are they working with the substance misuse team?  
.....

3. What was the SU's index offence?  
.....

4. Was there a sexual element to violence used in the index offence and any other previous offences? If yes, please detail.  
.....

5. Is the SU associated with or part of a known group/gang?  
.....

6. Has the SU been a perpetrator in incidents of violence or intimidation during this or other custodial sentences? If yes please detail incidents and where possible include dates, triggers of incident, harm caused, punishment applied.  
.....

7. Has the SU been a victim of any incidents of violence or intimidation during this custodial sentence? If so, please detail.  
.....

8. Has the SU been affected by any recent incidents during this custodial sentence that would prevent him from participating? If yes, please detail and discuss his suitability with a member of staff and SU.  
.....

9. Any further notes/ comments which influence this Risk Assessment:  
.....

#### Overall assessment of risk

1. Risk of harm to the Service User during programme  
.....

Reasons for this assessment: .....

2. Risk of harm to other Service Users during programme:  
.....

Reasons for this assessment: .....

3. Risk of harm to Staff Members during programme:  
.....

Reasons for this assessment: .....

Signature of person completing assessment  
.....

Date of assessment: .....

Intelligence systems used and interviews undertaken as part of this assessment: NOMIS

## 9.4. Appendix D

Privacy Notice Forms were signed by all participants prior to attending the workshops:

### Privacy Notice for Service Users

Dear Service User,

So that Belong can comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (UK GDPR) we are providing you with our Service User's Privacy Notice to ensure that you have full details of how your data is collected, used and shared.

Please sign the declaration at the end of this notice to say you understand this information and confirm that you are happy for us to keep and process your data as detailed below.

### Why do we keep information about you?

We keep and process personal information about you in line with Article 6 of the UK GDPR, in order to perform our charitable objectives that are carried out in the public interest with a clear basis in law. This is called the "public task" lawful basis for processing data. We keep and process special category information about you in line with Article 9 of the UK GDPR, in the course of our legitimate activities in connection with our charitable purposes. This is called the "not for profit bodies" reason for processing data.

We process and keep data regarding criminal convictions and offences in accordance with Article 10 of the UK GDPR, only under the control of official authority such as that held by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, or when this processing is authorised by UK law for example:

1. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Policing and Crime Act 2009)
2. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2014
3. The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

We put appropriate safeguards in place to ensure that personal, special category and criminal convictions data are not disclosed to third parties without your consent, unless we have a clear need or duty to disclose this information as outlined in this policy.

### What are Belong's charitable objectives?

Our charitable objectives are carried out in the public interest and have a clear basis in law. They are:

1. To promote for the benefit of the public in the UK and its communities, with a view to the preservation of public order, the provision of services for mediation and conciliation between people, organisations and groups who are involved in disputes or conflicts where that dispute or conflict results from or may lead to acts of antisocial behaviour, crime, vandalism, racial abuse or breach of the peace.
2. To promote for the benefit of the public in the UK, the provision of services for mediation and conciliation between victims of crime and offenders, with a view to the preservation of public order, and for the preservation and protection of the well-being of such victims and the rehabilitation of such offenders.
3. The promotion of social inclusion among prisoners, ex-offenders, and their families who are socially excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of their past or current involvement in the criminal justice system or the involvement of a family member(s) by:
  - providing information to support to enable prisoners, ex-offenders, and their families to identify and access education, employment, training and/or recreational opportunities;
  - providing mentoring support to enable prisoners, ex-offenders, and their families to develop self-confidence, self-awareness, empathy and life skills such as budgeting, communication, conflict resolution, goal setting and reflective thinking
  - providing psychotherapeutic support to enable prisoners, ex-offenders, and their families to process experiences of trauma, better manage emotional and mental health problems and improve their emotional and mental wellbeing.

### What type of information do we keep and process about you?

The personal, special category and criminal convictions information we collect about you includes:

- Full name, date of birth, ethnicity, address, prison location(if applicable), contact details
- Where applicable, NOMIS and PNC numbers
- Full details of offending background where applicable, including and not limited to information regarding offence types, conviction dates, sentence dates and lengths, circumstances surrounding offences, victim and witness statements, risk assessments, pre-sentence reports, ASSET reports, psychiatric reports.

- Full details where applicable of incidents whereby you have been a victim of crime or antisocial behaviour including and not limited to dates of incidents, court hearings, victim and witness statements, psychiatric reports.
- Names and contact details of other agencies working with you including offender managers, offender supervisors, substance misuse workers, mental health practitioners, victim liaison officers, police officers, mentors.
- Details about health needs including information about diagnosed or suspected learning disabilities, mental health problems, emotional wellbeing, physical disabilities or health problems, incidents of self-harm, treatment plans, use of medication.
- Details about support needs including and not limited to information about previous/current gang involvement, educational history and circumstances, work history and circumstances, family history and circumstances.
- Full details, where applicable, about custodial behaviour such as information regarding actual or suspected involvement in violent/antisocial behaviour/disorder incidents, actual or suspected involvement in extremism, adjudication records, IEP records, support plans.
- Monitoring and evaluation data including records of interventions, service user feedback forms, completed CRIME PICS 2 questionnaires, completed CRIAQ questionnaires, completed self-esteem and wellbeing questionnaires, evidence and information regarding reoffending and resettlement post release from custody.

## Your right to be informed

You have a right to know what types of information we collect about you and why. Belong provides all service users with a statement regarding the personal, special category and criminal convictions data held about them. This outlines all the types of data Belong holds and processes about you, the reasons for which the data is processed and the lawful basis according to which the information is held. In addition this outlines how long we will keep this information, who the information will be shared with and the rights you have in relation to the information being held.

## Your right to access

You have a right under the UK GDPR to access certain personal data being kept about you either on computer or in certain files. If you wish to exercise this right you should make a request in writing and submit it to the Data Protection Officer,

who is currently Belong's Director. Belong aims to comply with requests for access to personal information or rectification of data as quickly as possible, but will ensure that it is provided within one month, as required by the UK GDPR.

A copy of the information will be provided free of charge. However, we may charge a reasonable fee, based on the administrative costs of providing the information, when a request is manifestly unfounded or excessive or if it is a request for further copies of the same information.

Where requests are manifestly unfounded or excessive, we may refuse to respond to the request. Where we refuse to respond to a request from you, without undue delay and within one month, we will explain why and inform you of your right to complain to the supervisory authority and to seek a judicial remedy.

Belong has a legal responsibility under the Official Secrets Act 1989 not to disclose official information about security and intelligence and official information that might lead to the commission of crime. Any information of this nature relating to you that is kept or processed by Belong will therefore not be accessible to you if you request access to it.

## Your right to rectification

You have a right to have inaccurate personal data rectified, or completed if it is incomplete. A request for rectification of information can be made verbally or in writing. Belong will in most cases respond to such a request within one calendar month. We may extend the time to respond by a further two months if the request is complex or we have received a number of requests from you. If we do this we will let you know without undue delay and within one month of receiving your request and explain why the extension is necessary. We will only refuse a request for rectification in certain situations, outlined below.

When we receive a request for rectification we will take reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that the data we hold is accurate and to rectify the data if necessary. We will take into account any arguments and evidence you provide to us. In deciding what steps are reasonable we will consider the nature of the personal data and what it will be used for. The more important it is that the personal data is accurate, the greater the effort we will put into checking its accuracy and, if necessary, taking steps to rectify it. For example, we will make a greater effort to rectify inaccurate personal data if it is used to make significant decisions that will affect you or others, rather than trivial ones. In deciding what steps are reasonable we may also take into account any steps we have already taken to verify the accuracy of the data prior to any challenge you have

made. We will restrict the processing of the personal data in question whilst we are verifying its accuracy. Personal data will be deemed to be inaccurate if it is incorrect or misleading as to any matter of fact.

If we are satisfied that the personal data is accurate, we will contact you and tell you that we will not be amending the data. We will explain our decision, and inform you of your right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office or another supervisory authority; and your ability to seek to enforce your rights through a judicial remedy. We will also place a note on our system indicating that you challenge the accuracy of the data and your reasons for doing so.

We may refuse to comply with a request for rectification or request a reasonable fee to deal with the request, if the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive. If we do this we will justify our decision and base reasonable fees on the administrative costs of complying with the request. We will inform you without undue delay and within one month of receipt of the request about the reasons we are not taking action; your right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office or another supervisory authority; and your ability to seek to enforce this right through a judicial remedy.

## Your right to object

You may object to your data being kept and processed by Belong. If you object, we will stop processing the data unless

1. We can demonstrate compelling legitimate grounds for the processing, which override your interests, rights and freedoms; or
2. We need to process the data for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims.

## Our duty to disclose information

Belong fully exercises its legal duty to disclose some information including:

- Any information suggesting that a service user is at risk or harming themselves or others; information about this must be shared with the relevant agency for example the prison service, the police service and/or the local safeguarding authority. Please see our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for more information
- All issues relating to concerns about a child or young person having been abused, being abused or being at risk of being abused; information about this must be shared with the local authority's Children's Services, the police service and/or another relevant agency. Please see our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for more information

- Allegations that a volunteer or staff member of Belong is not suitable to work with children or young people or vulnerable adults, or that a volunteer or staff member has behaved harmfully towards a service user; information about this must be shared with the local authority's Children's Services, the police service and sometimes with other agencies. Please see our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for more information
- Information pertaining to suspected, alleged or actual drug trafficking, money laundering, serious criminal offences, acts of terrorism or treason will be disclosed to the police.

Staff members, volunteers or service users of Belong who believe that an illegal act has taken place within the organisation must report this to the Director or Trustees of Belong who will report it to the appropriate authorities.

## Retention of data

Belong has a duty to retain some of your personal data for a period of time following your engaging with Belong, mainly for legal reasons. Different categories of data will be retained for different periods of time as appropriate. In accordance with the UK GDPR, Belong does not store personal data indefinitely; data is only stored for as long as is necessary to complete the task for which it was originally collected.

## Your declaration

I (name) .....  
declare that I understand that:

Belong keeps and processes my data in order to perform its charitable objectives, and undertake its charitable activities.

My data is kept and processed in line with Belong's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.

- Criminal convictions data about me is kept and processed only under the control of official authority such as that held by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, or when this processing is authorised by UK legislation
- Belong will not share my data with any other third parties without my consent, unless the law requires the organisation to do so.
- My rights in relation to the data kept about me are outlined in this privacy notice

Signed: .....

Date of signature: .....

## 9.4. Appendix E

This appendix gives detail to one case study, conducted after completing a workshop. Case studies were forwarded to Activities management and the individual's assigned Offender Manager:

### “Jason”

Jason is a 21-year-old who was sentenced in July 2019 and is set to be released in May 2022. Prior to attending the drama workshops, Jason appeared very reserved, making it clear he did not want to lose face on the wing and from the outset expressing an unwillingness to participate in anything that involved performing in front of people. However, as he engaged in the sessions, he was quick to get involved in the majority of exercises, particularly enjoying fast-paced activities and creative writing. Jason became increasingly open and honest in discussions surrounding identity and was not scared to admit that his lived experiences had made him who he was. Jason was able to demonstrate this through a piece of creating writing «My Name», and articulately detailed his beliefs of who he was.

It was evident that Jason's life experiences influenced the direction of the workshops.

Through admitting that his crime was partially due to being in the «wrong place at the wrong time» during a group forum, the group conducted a script writing activity with this topic in mind; when Jason improvised the movement of the scene, he told practitioners that the activity was «actually fun». Jason's life experiences built the foundations for Friday's performance. Jason supported practitioners and his peers in writing a short scene titled «Wrong Place, Wrong Time» and enjoyed directing and devising with his peers. During the performance – at first apprehensive to perform in front of a big audience – Jason immersed himself in the theatrics. He said he «really liked people clapping for him» and stressed his thanks for being given the opportunity.

Overall, Jason showed huge progression in his willingness to engage in activities stating that he learnt «how to work in a team» and valued the importance of stepping outside of his comfort zone. It is evident that the support from the practitioners and creative interventions during this drama workshop effectively facilitated Jason to reflect upon and utilise his lived experiences to create a positive product that enabled him to overcome his preceding anxieties and vulnerabilities.

## 9.4. Appendix F

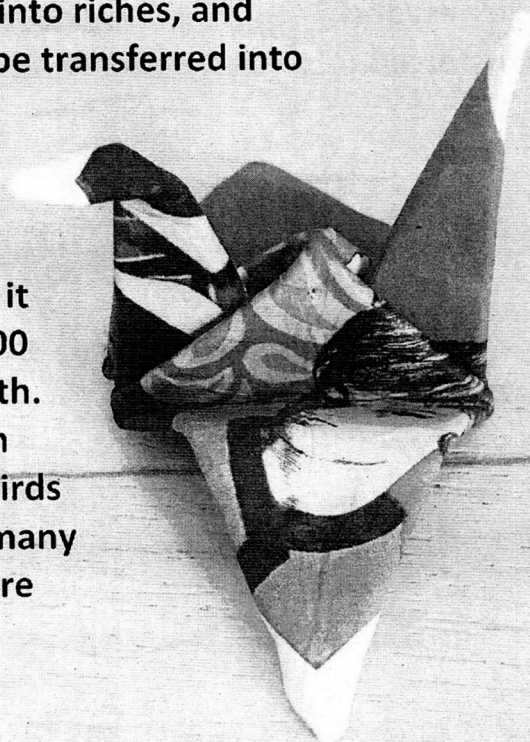
A collection of work completed during the drama workshops and *Pen to Pad*:

3 times in Jail no bail Just mail locked in a cell 23 hours Roasting like hell the gobs don't come when I press the bell the server food is disgusting and smells Jail is not the one I ~~want~~ go home and you see me in another one I did alot of bad things made my family sad but when I get out it's time to make them proud being in prison gives me alot of tales tell scars tell stories 3 me out da Jail

this job and I are a match  
Starting gun im gone in a flash  
I can run as fast as lightning  
and my finishing times are frightening  
Starting line opponents composing  
Olympic dreams gold medals and ~~trophy~~ trophy  
Im hoping  
Judges tally and runners pray  
hoping that it's a medal they leave with  
today  
today dreams Diamond League hopes  
maybe even one day beat Usain Bolt  
run with Blake and race with Getlin  
Sprinters sprint past Jyng Javelins  
this is my dream and always have  
Please give me a chance to grab a medal  
up for grabs  
the young generation want to be like me

**This is an origami bird. When you pull its wings, it will grant you 3 wishes. You can wish for something that can be transferred into riches, and wishes can be transferred into love.**

**People who use it are limited to 100 wishes per month. There's a built in speaker in the birds so I know how many wishes people are wanting...**



**I would distribute these birds to the poor. I want equal playing fields. This will change the world; I'm giving less fortunate people the same rights that the Queen has. And we could market it to the NHS, so it can cure serious conditions.**

## 9.4. Appendix G

A comprehensive breakdown of attendance figures, themes addressed and exercises delivered was compiled into monthly summary reports which were forwarded to Activities management and Senior Leadership:

**Number of workshops run in August: 2**

### Number of attendees per workshop

**Workshop 1:** 5 attendees

**Workshop 2:** 6 attendees, 5 attendees from Tuesday

### Workshop 1

Overall attendance from 5 participants: 93.3%

**Monday AM:** 5 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Tuesday AM:** 5 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Wednesday AM:** 5 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Thursday AM:** 4 attendees, **PM:** 4 attendees

**Friday AM:** performance, 4 attendees

### Workshop 2

Overall attendance from 6 participants on Monday, changing to 5 participants from Tuesday onwards, to 4 plus 1 new allocation from Wednesday: 91.5%

**Monday AM:** 6 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Tuesday AM:** 5 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Wednesday AM:** 3 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Thursday AM:** 4 attendees, **PM:** 5 attendees

**Friday AM performance:** 5 attendees

**Overall August attendance from 12 participants over 2 workshops:** 92.4%

### Further Comments:

During the first workshop week we risk assessed and recruited 6 participants to take part in the workshops from B2, however due to intel from staff, 1 participant was removed prior to the start, and instead 5 participants completed the workshop with excellent attendance and engagement. 1 participant decided to leave drama from the Thursday, as he was worried about losing his wing job. 4 participants took part in the final performance.

Prior to the second workshop week we risk assessed and recruited another 6 participants

to take part from G2. After attending Monday morning, 1 participant decided he would prefer to continue with his wing job. After attending Tuesday morning, another participant was then allocated work, and so could no longer attend drama. We then allocated a further 1 participant to drama from Wednesday, to boost group morale and enthusiasm within the workshop. This worked well and, with the exception of 1 participant having a visit on Wednesday morning and an appointment on Thursday morning and 1 other participant having education on Wednesday morning, we had full attendance from everyone allocated for the rest of the week, with all 5 taking part in the performance on Friday.

### Topics covered in workshop 1

Commonalities, lived experiences, and individual talents all emerged as themes within this workshop, and participants utilised body language, dialogue, use of prompts, team building, critical thinking, and imagination to devise their own performance. The performance involved audience interaction and focused on showcasing individual talents. Positive affirmations were used between the group, and one participant reflected on this afterwards, stating; *"I haven't had compliments like the ones on Friday in a while"*.

### Topics covered in workshop 2

This workshop explored lived experiences, stigma, criminality, different perspectives, alcoholism, and debt, using techniques such as character building, imagination, expression, storytelling, improvisation and freeze frames. The final performance focused on self-reflection, and participants directed and acted out one another's semi-fictional characters, enabling participants to decide the outcomes of their own stories, and building confidence and self-esteem.

### Feedback from participants attending workshop 1

“ I really liked being around people. The performance on the Friday was a highlight”

“ I saw my peers in a different light”

“ I’ve learnt more people skills, and realised that arguing is pointless”

“ Thanks for being good teachers”

“ I’ve learnt a lot about improvisation and mediation”

“ It’s a nice get away. It’s very relaxed environment. It’s fun, you learn new skills, and you work with 2 nice teachers” F

### Feedback from participants attending workshop 2

“ I liked the atmosphere; it was something. I felt like a civilian. I’ve not done drama before.”

“ I think I’m good at improvisation to be honest. I got my first certificate in jail!”

“ You both helped me and brought me out of my comfort zone.”

“ It’s a positive thing to do!”

“ It was lit! The highlight was creating characters and switching the character. I saw people step out of their comfort zones.”

### Additional Updates:

This month we have carried out a Creative 1-1 Intervention in addition to the workshops, with 1 participant who had expressed an interest in taking part in the drama workshops, however, was unable to do so due to his mobility and mental health. We delivered a range of creative activities over 4 sessions, enabling the participant to express himself, explore his thoughts and feelings, reflect on his sentence and lived experiences, and to engage in creativity.

We have also considered feedback we received from the workshops we delivered in July; “*You should have a Drama Mentor or Orderly!*”. Whilst we prioritise giving people who have not yet taken part in drama the opportunity to do so, we had an additional space in our first workshop this month, and so we allocated a participant who had previously taken part in our workshop as a mentor for the week. Although we started with 6 new participants for our second workshop this month, 2 had left due to work allocations by the Tuesday, and so we chose to allocate another previous participant as a mentor from Wednesday onwards for this week too. In both cases this decision proved to positively impact the sessions, and mentors were keen to lead on activities and teach skills to their peers. Mentors increased motivation within the cohort, built a strong rapport and were positive role models for other participants.



