

## 1. 'PAN' WING [Visual Arts]

*You cannot put a rope around the neck of an idea: you cannot put an idea up against a barrack-square wall and riddle it with bullets: you cannot confine it in the strongest prison cell that your slaves could ever build."*

*Sean O'Casey*



### **PAN Prison Arts Network (2006-9)**

*[Funded as a Grundtvig Network through the Socrates programme of the EU]*

Coordinator:	Dr Alan Clarke, City College Manchester/The Manchester College
Partners involved:	15 partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, UK (England & Northern Ireland)
Conferences:	2007 Dublin, Ireland (with EPEA); 2008 Sofia, Bulgaria (with <i>The Will to Dream</i> ); 2009 Skanderburg, Denmark (with <i>Movable Barres</i> )
Partner meetings:	2007 Manchester; 2007 Malta (Steering Group); 2008 Netherlands (Steering Group)
Publications:	'pARTners' online journal (4 editions)
Outcomes:	Website; database; research findings; travelling exhibition

*PAN was an interactive network aimed at bringing together organisations and individuals involved in delivering arts education in European prisons. It undertook a range of activities including organising conferences, seminars and workshops; identifying policies and practices in prison art education; supporting in-service training; highlighting good practice and innovative approaches; identifying opportunities for inmates to gain qualifications and discover vocational opportunities; encouraging local partnerships; supporting the development of new European projects; and publishing and disseminating information concerning arts education in European prisons.*

PAN CELL 1

**Travelling art exhibition in Old Horsens Prison, Denmark**

*[published in pARTners 4]*



The short story, *The Empty Prison*, was inspired by an event during the final conference of the PAN Prison Arts Network in Denmark in June 2009. One of the most ambitious outcomes produced by PAN was a Travelling Exhibition, made up of art-work created by inmates from prisons across Europe. The Danish organisers of the Conference, led by Niels Bak, had acquired the use of the de-commissioned Horsens Prison and they proceeded to fill it with these works.

There were paintings, drawings, sculptures from across Europe on easels, on the cell walls or simply plaid out on the floor. They depicted a multitude of subject matter and moods. Dark and shadowy reflecting the negative aspects of life behind bars or vibrantly colourful reflecting the hope of a better future outside. Some were of animals, domesticated pets like dogs and cats, or wild creatures like giraffes or birds. Many were of landscapes, real or imagined, isolated or crowded with people. And numerous self-portraits - many grim-faced or questioning.

One picture particularly caught my attention: the artist's depiction in simple cartoon images of the journey from committing a crime and being imprisoned to using the time behind bars in learning and creating to finally achieving a welcome release.

The overall impression as I wandered from one art-filled cell to another was that those who had been incarcerated there had left behind the most positive aspects of themselves. Later I learned that the disused Horsens Prison reopened a few years later as a prison museum.



## **The journal of the PAN European Prison Arts Network**

One of the first tasks that the Network undertook was the establishment of a website, organised by Per Thrane from Denmark. In its first 3 months it received over 20,000 hits, an impressive number at a time when such publications were relatively new, and over PAN's 3 year existence more than 200,000 hits were registered. Useful as the website was in providing a contact centre for existing and new contacts, it has its limitations, especially in being able to focus and summarise the information it receives and so the Steering Committee decides to establish alongside it an online journal, *pARTners*.

The advantages of such a journal, edited by Per Thrane and Alan Clarke and designed by Legs Boelen were that it could provide regular overviews, highlight and preserve important examples of good practice, give opportunities for longer, more reflective articles and introduce information from outside the Network.

In its four issues, alongside detailed accounts of the Network's activities, conferences, etc., *pARTners* published articles on policy issues from the UK, Cyprus, Denmark and Bulgaria; a research summary on the re-socialisation of prisoners from Lithuania; items on art education from Belgium, Bulgaria, Poland and the Netherlands; examples of prisoner art-work from Cyprus, Portugal, Ireland, the UK and Rumania; reflections on drama activities from Germany and Malta; film reviews from Northern and Southern Ireland; coverage of IT in prisons from Sweden and Denmark; accounts of Shakespeare workshops in US penitentiaries; and a historical look at interned theatre during the second world war. The wide range of subject matter from so many countries reflected the impact that PAN had during its three-year existence.

*POSTSCRIPT: The journal format was repeated in The Will to Dream project (1 edition) and later in the PriMedia Network (see Wing 5) with its fourth edition doubling as its final report.*

PAN CELL 3

**"Policies and Approaches in European Prison Art Education"**

A presentation to the 2nd PAN Conference

by Valentina Petrova, SEEC, Lovech Prison, Bulgaria

*[published in pARTners 3]*



**Arts & Creative Activities in Prisons**

**PRISONS** are non-public places which are part of the public space!

+++++++

**ARTS CAN**

- fulfil basic needs
    - inform
    - build
    - nurture
  - improve
  - mobilize
  - inspire
  - change
- educate

**Positive Impact of Arts Activities on Offenders**

**Direct Benefits:**

- ◆ An increase in writing and drawing skills
- ◆ Arts Activities provide a more human environment inside the prison
- ◆ Inmates can explore their creative talents and personal voice

**Indirect Benefits:**

- ◆ Arts in prison connect with the outside
- ◆ Through the arts inmates have to face up who they are
  - ◆ Arts help break criminal stereotypes
- ◆ Arts help inmates to change their attitudes toward themselves and others
  - ◆ Inmates learn how to work as a team
  - ◆ Increasing self-confidence
- ◆ Many prisoners are finding "something to believe in"
- ◆ Participants in arts activities are less likely to re-offend after release

## A WING: PAN

*"We love that PAN workshop because we could sit around, and share stories, and paint, and be human beings with one another. For a little while we were not convicts anymore because you respected us."*

*N.M.*



*"Why didn't I have this opportunity before? I just found school to be boring and with nothing challenging. If I knew that magical power of the colours, then I probably wouldn't land in the prison..."*

*S.K.*

### Key Lessons Learned

- **Public awareness** of the purpose and range of arts activities in prisons is very low and both arts providers and prisons are wary of seeking to raise it, for fear of a negative response
- **The different parties** involved in the arts in the criminal justice system - artists, prison staff, teachers, policy makers - need to work more closely together to increase the range, quantity and quality of arts & creative activities
- **More studies** are needed to collect evidences of the positive impact of art & creative activities on offenders
- Offenders should have **opportunities** to engage in artistic activities as part of the regime in prisons

### The corridor of a Bulgarian prison - decorated by its inmates

**Before**



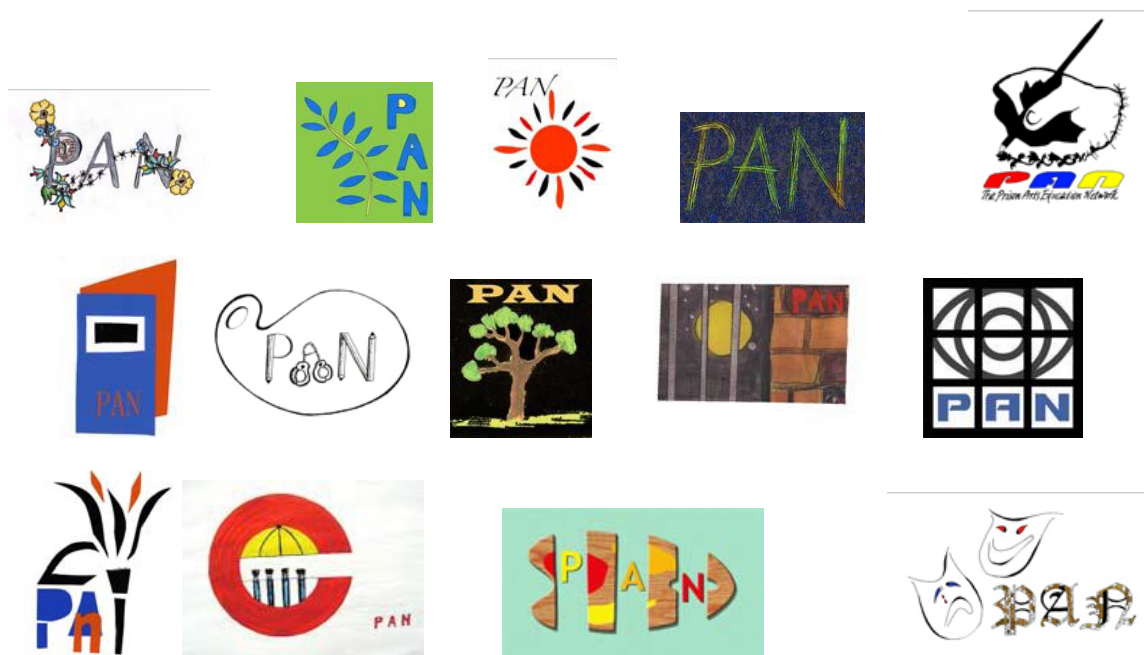
**.....and after**



PAN CELL 4

**PAN LOGO COMPETITION**

*[published in pARTners 1]*



Although the main objective of the European projects covered here was to support those delivering prison arts, all of them tried to involve prisoners in their activities wherever possible. The first opportunity was the creating a PAN logo and partners were invited to get their students to submit designs. This had a number of benefits for the inmates; it encouraged them to actively develop their creative side and to become part of an initiative outside their limited environment; it also gave them an opportunity for their work to be recognised and valued by a wider audience. The quality of the final short-list bore witness to the talents amongst them.

It had been agreed that the choice of logo would be decided at the first PAN conference in Dublin in June 2007. In order to bring the project as quickly and effectively as possible to the attention of educators, artists and facilitators the European Prison Education Association agreed to let PAN hold its first major event in conjunction with their bi-annual conference in Ireland. Not only did it provide PAN with a recognised international platform to launch itself but also the opportunity for promoting and demonstrating the important role played by arts in prison education, as Eleanor Jones, an art teacher from Mountjoy Prison, Ireland, and PAN partner described in the first edition of *pARTners*:

## A WING: PAN

*"A rainy Dublin in June saw what was to be an engaging and illuminating first conference for the PAN European partners. This event was run alongside the 11th EPEA Conference, and with this collaboration an enormous extra wealth of professional expertise, experience and enlightenment was enjoyed by around 170 delegates from all over Europe and beyond. The coming together of this diverse international group, all of whom have an interest in improving education in prison offered an ideal opportunity to compare, contrast and share our experiences and plans. It also proved an excellent platform from which to observe contemporary practices within the prison educational system internationally and to participate in workshops of a varied and exciting nature.*

Supporting the many workshops and performances, the PAN coordinator was able to introduce the project at the Conference opening and open the exhibition of prisoner logos in the main Conference hall. He was also given the opportunity to announce the competition winner at the final banquet - suitably created by an inmate at Mountjoy, with another entry selected by *The Will to Dream* project (see 'B' Wing) to be adapted as their logo. All the contributors, not just the winners, were sent special certificates - for many this was the first time they had received any formal acknowledgement of success.

*POSTSCRIPT: The idea of prisoners' designing the project logos was continued into other initiatives, including the Movable Barres project and the priMedia Network (see entries below - the winner from the Avlona Prison School in Greece is the first one on the left).*





PAN CELL 5

**"The Role of Arts in European prisons"**

by Dr. Michael Hadjidemetriou, Head of the Cyprus Prison Department

*[published in pARTners 3]*

*At the second PAN Conference held in Sofia, Bulgaria in conjunction with The Will to Dream project, the keynote speech was given by, then Head of the Cyprus Prison Department. Below are some excerpts from this speech.*



*Michael Hadjidemetriou addressing a plenary session at the Conference*

"My interest in involving prisoners in art-work originates from the time when I was a teacher myself. ... before joining the police and the penitentiary system, I was a teacher in a school for special education for the mentally handicapped in Cyprus. My experiences as a teacher have aided me to the appreciation and usefulness of education in prison and especially as a mechanism in altering human behaviour. ..."

**I have reached the conclusion that ... art is the "free constructive expression of work which is governed by emotional rules." ...**



## A WING: PAN

"Whatever the motive or drive for prisoners to participate in art, I as a prison director feel content and pleased because a number of my targets have been met:

- Prisoners are kept occupied and do not generate discontent
- Prisoners receive instruction and tuition
- Prisoners are on the road towards rehabilitation
- Prisoners earn money
- Prisoners are entertained
- Prison personnel are satisfied that prisoners do not pose a problem or threat
- Politicians are satisfied that the prison is fulfilling its role."

"To summarise, the prison must create the right environment so that prisoners can feel free in order to be able to express themselves through art. ... art should be the tool to assist both the mental and social rehabilitation of the individual. On the other hand it is illusive to think that rehabilitation can be achieved only through art."

"My answer to those who believe that vocational training will solve the crime issue or is a panacea to rehabilitation is that this is rather an elusive concept. Teachers are needed to pass basic social and communication skills, psychologists are needed to see changes in temperament, and social workers are needed in order to facilitate family and social issues. Therefore the issue of the rehabilitation of a healthy individual back into society is the concern of a multidisciplinary approach and not a single responsibility. That's why the arts in prison play an equally important role as the above mentioned areas. "...

"Today it is widely understood that prison and prisoners are society's last concern of the and unless we - the administration and all other agencies concerned - make the first move in the prison debate, then I'm afraid that we'll allow misguided politicians to decide about prison activities. **Promoting works of art can be used as a tool to promote the idea of rehabilitation and help change of the public attitude towards prisoners."**

PAN CELL 6

**The Second PAN Conference**

SPA Centre Tsarsko Selo Hotel, Sofia, Bulgaria

14-18 May 2008

*[published in pARTners 3]*



*Sava Kostadinov and Legs Boelen present the results of their collaboration*

The PAN Conference in Sofia combined with *The Will to Dream* project was a success in every way - a celebration of good practice in prison arts across Europe. With over 80 participants from 21 countries, the event proved a strong stimulus to those involved in delivering prison arts education, as well as providing an important milestone in a country struggling to provide its inmates with more creative experiences behind bars.

An exciting range of workshops, performances, exhibitions and visits emphasised the Conference theme of identifying good practice. The temporary exhibition of prison art displayed in the main seminar room and the range of presentations during the "*OFF Limits*" *European Offender Film Festival* provided a wide variety of exemplary art and media work from offenders and ex-offenders across Europe.

The practical application of prison art education was pursued in the wide range of workshops alongside which were a number of spontaneous happenings, including an open-air portrait painting session between the Bulgarian ex-offender Sava Kostadinov and the Dutch prison art teacher, Legs Boelen (SEE PHOTO ABOVE), as well as improvised evening music sessions led by Niels Bak from Denmark.

## A WING: PAN

Particularly important in keeping the work of prison teachers in perspective, were the visits to the two Bulgarian prisons. Sofia Prison is a traditional institution in an old building, with a major overcrowding problem. The governor took the Conference delegates on a tour of the prison and was keen to emphasise the efforts being made to improve the situation for inmates, despite the limited opportunities on offer.

The visit to Lovech Prison was a complete contrast and probably the highlight of the week. The prison entrance itself had been decorated by the inmates and provided a positive encouraging atmosphere. Inside the delegates witnessed the first prison theatre performance in Bulgaria directed by a professional practitioner, funded through *The Will to Dream* project (see Exhibit 15 in "W" Wing). Later in the city of Lovech itself an *International Exhibition of Prison Art* in the Art Centre Gallery was opened by Legs Boelen and the PAN coordinator Alan Clarke.



*Alan Clarke with an interpreter opening the exhibition of prison art in Lovech*

Back in Sofia, a fitting climax to the Conference was the final plenary session when Mike Moloney from the *Prison Arts Foundation* introduced an Irish ex-offender, Mike Diamond, who spoke of the importance of music in his rehabilitation and performed some of his songs. This was followed by a productive discussion on the role of arts in European prisons, when many positive proposals for future action were suggested.

**Personal accounts of the PAN Conference in Bulgaria**

***Eleanor Jones, art teacher, Mountjoy Prison, Dublin***

We arrived in Sofia to (a warm) welcome from our gracious host Valentina Petrova, who presented each participant with a specially made logo encrusted conference bag designed by art students from Lovech Prison ... and for me a special bag with a hammer inside for the workshop in glass that was scheduled over the next few days. It was clear from the start that this was going to be an enlightening, busy gathering with every moment timetabled with events, workshops, prison visits and discussion. Our only concern being what lunchtime to forfeit in order to benefit from the luxury therapeutic treatments the spa on location had to offer!

Michael Diamond , from Northern Ireland, a self confessed ex- career criminal , not only shared his brilliant musical singing and song writing talent with the group , but in an awe inspiring live interview with Mike Maloney, explained that teachers in prisons DO make a difference. He said that prisoners remember every encounter they have and any encouragement, however small can do a huge amount of good in raising self esteem and helping damaged people get out of their rut.

***Niels Bak, prison teacher at Sdr. Omme State Prison, Denmark***

Creativity and professionalism were keywords on the Sofia Conference. There were inspiring workshops, excellent video-productions on what is going in the field of artwork in European Prisons, and the various drama performances were magnificent. Especially ex-convict Mike Diamond's performance, playing his own songs, made a great impression on me.

Personally I think the "highlight" of the Conference was the full day trip to Lovech. We got to see some of Bulgaria's beautiful countryside, and the visit to Lovech Prison School where Valentina works was very interesting. What really "made the day" was of course the fantastic drama performed by Inmates in Lovech Prison. Even though I didn't understand a word of what was said during the show, the acting was so good that I was able to follow the plot anyway. I really had a good laugh.

I think the conference was a big success. The program consisted of a good mix of activities and still there was time in between to "network" Personally I returned from the conference with a lot of inspiration and new ideas I can use in my daily work.

**"Art education in Dutch prisons"**

*Learning from the past on our way to the future.*

by Legs Boelen, art teacher, Vught Prison, the Netherlands

*[published in pARTners 1]*

*For the first edition of pARTners, Legs Boelen wrote a detailed account of how prison arts developed in his country, describing both the policies and the practices which led to its then status within the Dutch Prison Service. Here are some extracts from his article.*

***"You won't know a country until you know its prisons", Dostojevsky***



"In about the same time as I started my career there were employees in several prisons who, after having finished their education in art, marked a new era in prison art activities. Some years before, in the late sixties, a number of artists and prisoners together had made a painting on a wall of Scheveningen prison, supported by the Prins Bernardfonds, a fund for all kinds of cultural activities. These were probably the first activities undertaken by artists in the prison system, excepting of course the artists who themselves were prisoners at any time."

"In the mid eighties a new era began. 'Prison warden' was to be the name of a new and more humane kind of occupation, and artistic education would be the means to that end. ... A result of this ambitious plan was the artistically trained staff getting closer to the prison inmates, which had a positive effect on establishing a more humane regime. From these days on I was convinced of the desirability of getting the wardens involved in the art courses. There are no better ways of guidance than by participating in the lessons, in order that all may be able to experience for themselves what the effects of art may be. Hereby the relationship of officers and prisoners is very much improved, as has been shown in these last few years. Really involved members of the staff encourage the prisoners to join the classes because they know their positive effects. Officers like it when inmates make art: "We can make easy contact with them and they are quiet."

"Obviously there are huge differences between teaching art in prison and teaching it in a school or art centre. In the first place the abilities of the prisoners individually may differ vastly. Moreover it is hard to work with groups with continually changing members. John joins the group, Jack leaves; this makes it hard to work as a group or to achieve something together unless you are able to use this relay-energy to your advantage. Products that have been left unfinished by some may be completed by others. Inmates who have acquired some skill may pass their knowledge on to others, thereby enhancing their self-esteem as well."

"Most prisons provided well-equipped studios from the moment these professional art teachers made their entrance. Prison art of the highest standard was a possibility from these days on. Because of their wide experience teachers have a suitable offer for every prisoner. A new development is the differentiation of prisoners. Especially in the last ten years there has been a growing variety of inmates, all with their own possibilities and impediments. This made it necessary to increase the professional level of the art teachers as well as make an adaptation of equipment and methods."

**"Prison art exists as long as there have been prisoners"**

PAN CELL 8

**Arts Education in Polish Prison**

by Hubert Skrzyński, Polish prison teacher

*[published in pARTners 4]*

In Poland there are over 150 prisons, 21 of which have got schools within prison walls. Some of the schools are bigger, some are smaller but they all have certain common features – they are all public schools for adults (though at different levels of education) and they all have to follow a certain pattern of providing education, a common curriculum. The prison education curriculum is more or less the same as the curriculum of the “outside” schools. One of the drawbacks of the pattern is a complete lack of any arts education. There are some elements of arts education in such subjects as Polish or History, for instance, but this is very fragmentary and only taught as theory. No practical activities at all!!!



The only way of providing inmates with some arts activities (whether it is visual arts, any kind of writing or DVD/CD recording) is through extra additional activities. Some of the possibilities are organising workshops, arts competitions, poetry sessions, acting classes etc. This does happen in most prisons and is implemented by so called cultural education departments that exist in almost all prisons. The aims and objectives of these departments are to provide inmates with optional “entertainment”, different from what they may have in their cells (i.e. TV or playing with games consoles) or from what they may do in their free time (i.e. going to school, taking part in sporting activities, etc.). Of course the range of such activities and their amount may differ from prison to prison but the assumptions are always the same everywhere.



## A WING: PAN



The school where I work got involved in a European Grundtvig Learning Partnership project in 2006. The title of the project was "VIP - Visiting in prison" ([www.visitinginprison.com](http://www.visitinginprison.com)). One of a number of activities within it was to publish books meant for the children of the inmates who come to visit their fathers in prison. The books were illustrated with drawings and paintings made by the inmates, specially for the purpose of creating these books.\* An additional Polish contribution was a CD with poems and short fairy tales, recorded by inmates for their children. In addition we also organized an art competition. The art-works which the inmates prepared for it are still decorating the walls of our school.



It is a big shame there is no centralised programme for arts education within the prison system in my country. There are so many people gifted in the arts behind prison walls who could truly benefit from such opportunities. The usual excuse for the lack of such activities is always a lack of money. Fortunately, there exist other possibilities that we have to look for and use as much and as often as possible.

*NB The illustrations are from an exhibition of prison art in prison in Poland*

PAN CELL 9

"Art for me in Mountjoy"

A 'lifer' in Dublin's Mountjoy prison reflects on the importance of art & PAN

*[published in pARTners 2]*

When I first came to prison I was in a terrible state. I couldn't relax, my mind was pushing me in the wrong direction and I was full of negative energy. This was getting me into lots of trouble. I didn't like school as a kid so when a friend suggested I try the prison school I told me that it wasn't for me. He kept at me to go with him. ... So about ten or eleven months ago I came. I was made to feel very welcome. My first efforts were only red angry smudges and dark depressing streaks on bits of paper. ... I nearly gave up.

But I did have two fantastic tutors, Eleanor (Jones) and Mags (Maggie Byrne) and they helped me to understand what these pictures were about. They encouraged me to stick at it and told me I had great talent. Last year ... they got the whole class together and told us what the PAN project was trying to achieve through art in prisons. ... PAN was coming to Ireland to hold a conference and we ... did a big mosaic based on the Irish legend The children of Lir. Everyone in the class got involved and it got us together as a group. It didn't matter where you were with your art, whether you were Van Gogh or Joe Ryan there was a place at the table for everyone.

From being one person we became a group of friends that are now planning a mural in the yard. Our prison is an old Victorian building that was built in 1850. We don't have grass, trees, flowers, even weeds won't grow here.. Our buildings are a cold grey and the ground we walk on is a colder concrete and black macadam. But in a few weeks, when the weather is better we will have trees, mountains, rivers, and dazzling flowers burst "Art for me in Mountjoy" into life on the yard. Eleanor and Mags keep us informed about what is going on with the rest of the prisons ... We now know what is happening in other prisons around Europe and we are being inspired to do loads of stuff. I have a patch on the wall and the red smudge will be the Western sun setting on Galway Bay and I can't wait to see it for the first time in eight years.

Mick Fogarty (Foggy), Lifer at the Medical unit , Mountjoy

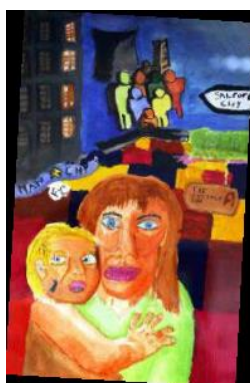
PAN CELL 10

**Prisoners' Art in Court**

An article by Jessica Bell in the Manchester Evening News,

*[published in pARTners 4]*

PRISONERS have made another appearance at court - in the name of art. Paintings by inmates from HMP Manchester have gone on display in Salford Magistrates. The artwork was produced as part of an educational programme provided by City College Manchester and funded by the Learning and Skills Council. The prisoners from the Strangeways jail were asked to produce an image which explained what the word 'community' meant to them. The paintings can be seen in the public waiting rooms in the Magistrates' Court in Bexley Square.



Pauline Holt, Chairman of Salford Magistrates' Bench said the paintings bring a touch of colour to the waiting rooms and make them more relaxing. She said: "I'm very pleased with the results, each one portrays community in a positive light, no litter or graffiti just lovely open spaces with people getting on with their lives."



**Influence** Community Justice is a problem-solving approach to antisocial behaviour and crime. In a pilot scheme in Salford, members of the public have an influence on what sentences are handed out to offenders. It is expected the idea will be expanded to other courts in Greater Manchester Community Justice Communications Manager at Salford, Caroline Earle said:

"The learners are justifiably proud of the work they have produced; their contribution is significant and can be enjoyed for years to come. The pieces will be on display at the court before being loaned to community groups for display in other public areas."



Former City College Manchester's Art Co-ordinator, Vivienne Calaverley, said: "Community Justice Salford wanted prisoners to get involved with making the courts more welcoming. The work is now on display and looks fantastic, each piece is very individual and holds its own essence which is personal to the artist and demonstrates how diverse different peoples' perception of community is." City College Manchester is the largest single provider of offender learning, delivering education to more than 40 prisons all over the country. The education department at HMP Manchester is passionate in its aim to provide high quality education and training for prisoners that will improve their employability and ability to be a useful member of society on release. The art work is part of a nationally accredited course which allows individuals to express themselves through different types of art.

