The Creative Prison

Creative Thinking within the Prison Estate

"The way in which the buildings are designed, their state of repair and decoration are important to the management, staff and prisoners alike.

They can significantly affect the atmosphere of a prison."
Lord Woolf,
Prison Disturbances April 1990:
Report of an inquiry, 1991

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'A new approach is needed in order to break down the silos of prison and probation and ensure a better focus on managing offenders.'

Patrick Carter,
Managing Offenders,
Reducing Crime, 2003

Contents

Introduction..... 04
Background to the Investigation..... 05
The Critique..... 07
HMP Paterson..... 08
A Balance of Rights and Responsibilities..... 09
100% Employment or Training..... 11
The Individual Prisoner and the Levels of Community..... 15
Ground Plan..... 17
The Use of Shared Space..... 19
The Use of Private Space..... 20
Security..... 21
Relationships - Family..... 23
Relationships - Staff..... 24
Food Production and Catering..... 25
Money..... 26
The Weekday Regime..... 27
The Architect's Perspective..... 28
Building the Creative Prison..... 29
Appendix One: Alexander Paterson..... 31
Appendix Two: History of Prisons..... 32
About Rideout..... 33
Credits..... 34

'Need architecture to be a personal artistic expression?

Couldn't it be a collective art?'

Will Alsop

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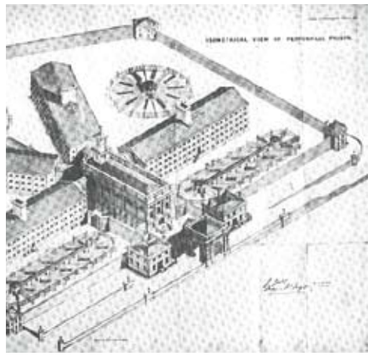

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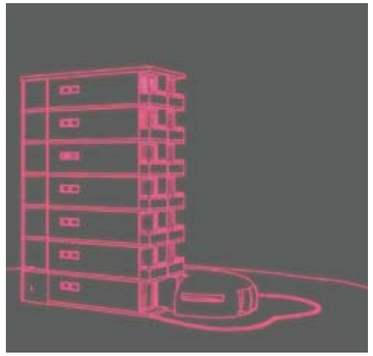

Tomorrow

Introduction

The Creative Prison sets out an alternative vision of what a prison might be. This vision is the result of an extensive consultation between Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation), SMC Alsop, Wates Construction Ltd and staff and prisoners of HMP Gartree.

Our current prison stock is characterised by ideas of criminal justice that are plainly outmoded and ineffective. In a twenty first century society, we want and require for our prisons to do more than simply incarcerate its inmates and inflict upon them a regime that cultivates distrust. Many prison governors and staff are endeavouring to create more humanitarian, learning-centered regimes. Alongside these endeavours, there have been a number of initiatives to curb suicides. But much of this good work is compromised, not just by unworkable criminal justice policies but by the legacy of old, Victorian prison buildings. New initiatives cannot any longer ignore the crucial relationship between mental health and environment. If prisoners are to leave prison and not return, their time inside must be spent in activities that are conducive to good mental health as well as to learning and rehabilitation. These issues are crucially informed by considerations such as light, views, space and appropriateness of architectural design to facilitate good staff-prisoner relationships.

When Rideout embarked on its consultation to explore the issue of prison design, we had a number of key questions to orientate us. It was these that we presented to our partners within and outside prison walls. They were;

How effectively do current prison conditions inform a desire to effect personal change?

What might a prison look like that made priorities of education and rehabilitation?

How would staff and prisoners imagine such a prison?

Some of the answers elicited are given here. Others can be found within the plans, films and sculptures that comprise the Creative Prison Exhibition.

HMP Gartree Interior

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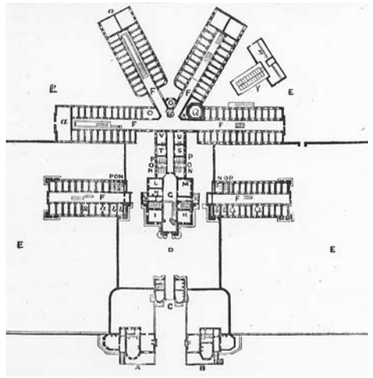
Background to the Investigation



Ground Plan of Holloway Prison

In December 2005, it was assessed that 67.4% of prisoners who leave prison, reoffend within two years. The figure is considerably higher, 78.4%, for young offenders[1]. It has been estimated by the Social Exclusion Unit that this level of reoffending costs the U.K. taxpayer £11b each year[2]. Yet still the government enacts legislation that ensures that more and more people are put in jail. Year on year, the figures rise inexorably. At the time of writing, the figure for the total prison population is close to 79,000. It is as if a car owner, having acknowledged that he is running a car that's mechanically flawed and probably dangerous, calls into the house for his entire family to go for a ride.

Suicides too, have increased over recent years. Although down in 2005, the number of suicides have grown since the early 1990s. This tells us that the issue of the mental health of inmates is a crucial priority. The Howard League for Penal Reform has observed a direct correlation between suicides and overcrowding[3]. In 2005, 56 suicides took place in 35 of the most overcrowded jails. As stated in the introduction, many prisons are taking measures to prevent suicides. These initiatives range from induction centres where a new inmate will go before entering the main prison, to a new care plan system that is currently being rolled out to all institutions.

But if the very buildings themselves are not within their architecture embodying these more humanitarian, enlightened principles of self-reliance, supportiveness and rehabilitation, their expression must be fundamentally compromised. As anyone visiting or working in prison knows, inmates regularly complain about their conditions. This happens so often that the complaining becomes institutionalised and neither staff nor prisoners necessarily expect complaints to be addressed. Part of our challenge in this project therefore, was to transform this complaining into realistic proposals for change.

As creative practitioners working in prisons, we at Rideout are consistently reminded of the critical issue of space availability within prison. For a prison to have a dedicated arts space is a rarity. For there to be even an education room where inmates may run around, lie down or engage in drama work, is very unusual. To run a creative session usually means working in the Chapel, often unpopular with the Chaplain, or the Gym, awkward because of the gym's heavy use, or a classroom - where chairs and tables dominate the small area. So there's a personal dimension to this project for us, our feelings of frustration confirmed by the study The Case for Space, published in 2004 by the then Unit for Arts and Offenders (now known as the Anne Peaker Centre for Arts in Criminal Justice) which forcefully argued for the importance of creative spaces. And the findings serve as a reminder also that prison design affects not just inmates and visiting artists but prison staff as well.

1 Home Office (2005) Re-offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort
2 Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit.
3 http://www.howardleague.org

So in 2004 we began searching for partners for the Creative Prison project. We knew that we needed to involve a prison where both staff and prisoners would be willing to run the consultation with us. We also needed an architect with the vision and curiosity to join the investigation. We found HMP Gartree and Will Alsop. Gartree is a prison for those serving life sentences - so we could be sure that prisoners would have a fair experience of different gaols. It was also likely that they would be able to commit to a project over several months. Will Alsop is an architect with an outstanding international track record. Until recently, nearly all his big commissions were in Europe, with his most famous British effort being the £4.5million Peckham Library and Media Centre, which won the Stirling Prize in 2000. He has more recently designed The Public, an arts and community centre in the West Midlands. We were subsequently joined by Wates Construction, the artists Shona Illingworth and Jon Ford who had worked with us previously, and many others who either contributed finance or otherwise made the project possible.

The Process

2004 Development of proposal

2004-5 Enlistment of partners

2005 Consultation with staff and inmates at HMP Gartree. During this process we facilitated a critique of the existing prison estate, drawing on personal experiences of participants. Concerns varied from those relating to the size of the beds and the bad design of the washbasins, to issues regarding excessive noise, disorganised labour movement and the declining state of prisoner-staff relationships.

2005 Associative, imaginative speculations around a different prison. During this stage, Will Alsop led a process in which the prisoners made drawings and speculated about possible alternative architecture. Some of these drawings feature in the exhibition.

2005 Design ideas as developed by Will Alsop and his team, based on the consultation, were presented for criticism and amendment. This process repeated until there emerged from the group a consensus around the architectural proposals.

2006 The generation of films and sculptures based on these proposals. The artists Jon Ford worked with the inmate group to create a range of sculptures. Shona Illingworth worked with them separately to create a new film work functioning as a meditation on the current experience of prison. In addition, architectural film specialists squint/opera developed a second film which portrays the imagined interior of the proposed prison.

June 2006 The Creative Prison Exhibition opens.

Jon Ford

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The Critique

HMP Gartree interior

Prior to articulating any ideas for an imagined prison, it was essential to critique the present prison estate – to gauge the responses of staff and prisoners to existing prison conditions. What surprised us immediately was the high level of agreement between staff and prisoners at HMP Gartree over the primary issues.

Both sides expressed views often supported by the other, particularly in respect of how current prison architecture failed to assist positive interactions between staff and inmates. The concerns here listed represent what these contributors perceived as the primary failings of the prison estate. It is these failings that the Creative Prison attempts to address. Identified were:

- ***the deterioration of staff-inmate relationships***
- ***the unnecessary stresses placed on staff***
- ***the depersonalisation of prisoners***
- ***the dehumanising means of lock-up***
- ***the lack of consistency in staff***
- ***the absence of meaningful work practice***
- ***the writing of reports on the prisoners based on inadequate information***
- ***the inadequate facilities within the cells***
- ***the poor design of houseblocks***
- ***the problem of noise pollution throughout the house blocks***
- ***the inability of prisoners to control lights in their own cells***
- ***the absence of work-to-employment courses***
- ***the poor design of basins, beds, tables, etc.***
- ***the problem of eating food next to an open toilet***

HMP Paterson

We have named the imagined prison after a less-well known prison reformer, Alexander Paterson (1884-1947), Prison Commissioner (1922-1947), a man we believe was motivated by concerns similar to those behind this project.

HMP Paterson is envisaged as a '*super-enhanced*' prison for adult males who are currently designated as Category 'C', relatively low-risk prisoners who had already been on 'enhanced status' for a significant length of time, probably a minimum of one year. This status of prison was chosen in order to explore how prison resources might be used in favour of prisoners who had demonstrated a willingness to engage with a more serious course of re-education. The prison would function like a '*Secure College*', operating on the basis of 100% education or training. For five days a week, inmates would engage full-time in one or both of those activities. The inmate attending would need to have at least two years to run on his sentence.

To enter the prison, prisoners would need to make an application from another prison, as currently happens if a prisoner wants a transfer to a prison with a therapeutic community within it such as HMP Dovegate. On arrival, the prisoner would stay for two days within the Induction and Resettlement Unit in order for the details of the educational and training elements within his sentence plan to be finalised, and to confirm consent to the obligations of the regime. *The basics of the education plan would already have been approved as part of the admission process*. This strategy goes further than the current PS Plus 2 Scheme[4] in that assessment begins prior to entry and is confirmed and strengthened within induction.

Attendance at HMP Paterson would be for two years minimum, three years maximum. Should a prisoner cease to comply with the regime rules or withdraw from the education programme, that inmate would, subject to procedures, be removed back to a mainstream prison. Once excluded, it would not be possible to return. It would be recognised that both Governors and staff also would need to be highly motivated and committed to the principles of this institution.

The key principles are identified as:

100% education or training
A balance of rights and responsibilities
The prison making a contribution to, not placing a burden on, the local community
Social integration achieved through the creation of managed 'micro-communities'
Security achieved through a balance between co-operation and compulsion
The use of technology to aid staff in their responsibilities
The maintenance of good staff-inmate relationships through effective design

Within prison, the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme means that a prisoner is on either Basic, Standard or Enhanced status. These levels determine a range of privileges including the number of visits that can be received and what an inmate may have in his or her cell. Good behaviour within prison means elevation from Basic to Standard to Enhanced.

4 PS Plus 2 is an employment project, based in prisons across the UK, which helps individuals leaving prison to access employment, training, education and accommodation opportunities in their local area.

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A Balance of Rights and Responsibilities

HMP Paterson acknowledges that if prisoners have little or no power to influence their environment, a sense of powerless may impede their rehabilitation. It is our view, to acknowledge Alexander Paterson, that punishment exists primarily in the sending of the offender to prison. This is as distinct from the exercise of punishment while inside. If prisoners are to be prepared for release, they need be entrusted with some measure of freedom within the prison and in negotiation with officers, determine their journey towards discharge. In return they must be expected to exercise responsibilities alongside. In this way, the prison reflects something of the balance of responsibilities and rights that are co-dependent in the outside world. If responsibilities are not fulfilled, the rights may be taken away. The ultimate sanction is removal back to a main prison.

If prisoners are expected to behave like responsible citizens on release, how can it make sense not to begin this process within? It can't be sensible to treat an inmate as untrustworthy and incapable of decision-making inside, and then expect him or her to become a miracle problem-solver on leaving. It's all very well to run Cognitive Skills courses in Anger Management and Problem-Solving, but if this approach is restricted to the classroom only, prisoners will tend to perceive these activities as characterised primarily by theory. The discussion of crime around the table can often appear sanitised and irrelevant, an exercise engaged with by prisoners in order to increase the chance of early parole.

The responsibilities of problem-solving, decision-making and managing resources need to be made real and live throughout the establishment in return for the relative freedoms offered. They will be kept live here through a number of means:

the responsibility of collectively managing the houseblocks with their attendant financial and other tasks.

the requirement to staff representative structures through which prisoners can manage their areas and influence the regime.

the requirement to fulfil positions including both 'Listener' and 'Mediator' positions. The former is well established through the Samaritans Listener Scheme. The latter would involve inmates being trained to function as mediators in the event of conflicts between prisoners, where appropriate working alongside prison officers trained in conflict resolution.

the responsibility of taking other jobs such as within the kitchens, the gardens and elsewhere, without which these micro-projects would not function.

In return for taking these responsibilities, the prisoners will have freedoms within the Creative Prison not necessarily available in comparable institutions:

freedom of movement within the prison grounds and within the houseblock.

freedom to negotiate a sentence plan that reflects the vocational aspirations of the prisoner.

access to the internet within the learning areas and intranet within the cells.

access to a higher standard of education with a wider potential range of courses through utilisation of the internet.

It is hoped that the existence of an institution such as HMP Paterson would, because of this unique balance of freedoms and tasks, generate positive outcomes not only for its inhabitants, but for those beyond as well. Inmates throughout the U.K. would know of the prison's existence and consequently many would aspire to achieve a transfer to it. The prison's presence therefore would act as a calming and positive incentive within other adult male prisons.

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100% Education or Training

Creative Prison workshop

Within the prison, education and training are conceived holistically, with the vocational needs of the inmate balanced with the needs of the work industries beyond the prison. Inmates participating in the Rideout consultation, along with staff, bemoaned the absence of educational programmes that were configured along the lines of the inmate's interests, and also of work practice that was non-robotic. Repetitive and mundane work was seen not just as demeaning but as a disincentive to more creative engagement with the world of work. The reason prisoners subscribed to such work programmes was solely for the meagre wages they offered. They wanted to earn money through working but found the monotonous, repetitious work of making light mouldings or packing socks dispiriting.

Within the consultation, inmates expressed the desire to explore subject areas that were closer to their personal enthusiasms. Emerging proposals for the education scheme centred around a number of ideas:

Education and training would acknowledge and anticipate the eventual release of the prisoner, from day one. This means not just orthodox learning and the acquisition of skills for employment as currently proposed within, for example, the PS Plus 2 Scheme, but also 'survival training'; issues of money management, banking, finding and renting accommodation, and dealing with civic authority structures.

Learning would be conceived as taking place throughout the prison, not just in the Learning Centre. Theory could as well be taught within the works area as within the classroom. The learning area too will have its practical workbenches. Issues of conflict resolution and social negotiation would be seen as part of employment training, not separate to it. The inter-relationship of theory and practice would be presented as something essential for personal development, without this being seen as rarefied or unusual.

Each inmate would negotiate a curriculum with the Head of Learning as part of his 'Sentence Plan'. Our inmate in the film created by squint/opera, studies not just plumbing and kitchen installation but aspects of kitchen design as well. He would look at colour theory and the role of the service industries. Whereas another prisoner studying communication skills, might also learn about the media, journalism and traditions of newsgathering. Education would in this way be conceived thematically with each inmate selecting a central thematic focus, that extended laterally into a range of related subject areas.

Learners would have internet access within the Learning Centre. The Council of Europe has argued that *'Education for prisoners should be like the education provided for similar age groups in the outside world, and the range of opportunities for prisoners should be as wide as possible.'*[5] The Forum for Prisoner Education in the UK has argued in its report Internet Inside that *'Prisoners must be empowered and encouraged to use the internet and email properly, as has been successfully done in Switzerland, Denmark and other countries.'*[6] With controlled and monitored internet access in the learning areas, the prisoner could upload study material to their in-cell terminal.

Each cell is part of a 'virtual classroom'. It would be possible for inmates to continue studying within the private cell. Each cell would contain a multi-purpose terminal that gave access to

- study material accessed within the Learning Centre and sent electronically to the inmate's in-cell computer.
- an email system allowing the prisoner to communicate with study tutors outside the prison, relatives and others beyond the prison walls. These emails would be subject to a similar level of scrutiny by Officers as occurs today in relation to letters.
- the inmate's Personal Officer as well as current teachers.

Certifications Prisoners would be able to work towards a wide range of accredited academic and vocational qualifications. The curriculum would be developed in association with the Learning and Skills Council and the Offenders Learning And Skills Service. Each prisoner would hold a 'Skills Passport' that recorded not just formal qualifications acquired but duties carried out within voluntary schemes along with other achievements. Such passports would need to be recognised within other prisons.

Relationships with local companies would be established, aided by the post of Community Liaison Officer. This Officer, based within the Learning Centre and with responsibility for maintaining links with local companies, would effectively create a bridge with the outside community. Working with the Workshops Manager, the Officer would organise training to reflect the needs of local companies, bringing in individual tutors or managers from those companies, for visits or classes. Such procedures would maximise the chance of an inmate achieving employment with that company or in that field, on release. This process will be aided by the consistent support of Jobcentre Plus as currently being developed by the Department of Work and Pensions. This aim is consistent with the view expressed in a recent report proposing the use of a 'Job Developer' to help identify local jobs suitable for those leaving prison.[7] The partnership between Nottingham Windows and HMP Ashdown is an example of the kind of collaboration envisaged. But the partnerships need not be industrially-based. It would be possible to establish links for example between the radio station and the local BBC station.

An inmate, sculpting words

5 Internet Inside, published by the Forum for Prisoner Education, 2005

6 Ibid.

7 Reducing Reoffending through Skills and Employment, DfES, 2005.

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Visits to the prison by inspirational speakers from industry, science, humanities and the arts. Professional visitors on a range of subjects would use the Debating Forum for presentations; for example, what it is to be an architect, an actor, a designer, a plumber, a receptionist, an aid worker or a care worker. A round-the-year programme of such talks would be arranged. The visits would be organised on an expenses-only basis rather than one of professional fees. The aim would be to communicate a 'real-life' sense of what such a career involves. This initiative would tie in with the newly-formed Reducing Re-offending Employer Alliance, launched in 2005.

Workshops would be managed by Workshop Managers who had the power to negotiate contracts with local companies. When the furniture repair workshop was closed down at HMP Gartree, it left the tutors regretting the loss of a scheme that had successfully balanced local need with vocational learning. Inmates had acquired skills in furniture restoration and carpentry. Chairs, tables, wardrobes and bureaus had been saved from waste disposal to function again within local households. Given scope to generate innovative prison-company relationships, Workshop Managers would have the opportunity to seek collaborations such as that between HMYOI Aylesbury and Toyota where the company has helped to established a modern, fully equipped training garage.

Workshop Managers would have enhanced powers to organise special projects. An area of the prison grounds would be kept aside so that it might be possible to construct, for example, 'buildings' in which all the skills of the building trade could be practised in a 'real-life' context. These could be pulled down and rebuilt each time with different learners - or even maintained to expand the prison.

Prisoners would be encouraged to address issues of professional self-reliance, anticipating departure from prison. Self-employment offers an obvious option for the ex-prisoner, especially the lifer or long-termer. Research has shown that 67% of those coming into prison are unemployed at time of arrest and 76% of those leaving prison, leave without paid employment ahead of them.[8] With this in mind, courses would run in business skills addressing all the key challenges of starting and maintaining a business. Alongside, the prison will house an Innovations Centre, the Dragon's Den (after the BBC television programme), to which prisoners could take their business ideas or inventions to regular surgeries. Here, volunteer business entrepreneurs would give advice on the viability of proposed schemes. This might be run in conjunction with the Business in Prisons Initiative, supported from the Small Business Service's Phoenix Development Fund.

Where appropriate, management of the institution would be coupled with mentoring programmes. It was evident from our consultations that staff regretted the demise of one-to-one mentoring whereby, for example, Works Managers would complete their responsibilities accompanied by trusted prisoners. Within HMP Paterson, works staff would be consulted about taking on mentoring roles in this way.

8 Reducing Reoffending through Skills and Employment, DfES, 2005.

Inmates are identified as not just learners but also teachers. Thousands of inmates throughout the country's jails have expertise, knowledge and qualifications that never get shared with those men or women that surround them. Inmates would be encouraged to give regular or occasional classes for which there would be token additional payments into their accounts. Applications to present these, and the selection and management of them, would be organised through the Learning Centre staff.

Creative Prison workshop

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The Individual Prisoner and the Levels of Community

'HMP Springhill is a shining example of an all-round approach to recycling, biodiversity and resettlement. 66% of their waste is recycled (the government target is 25%): shredded paper and kitchen waste is fed to a worm farm which turns it into fertiliser; packaging is sent to a recycling company and Springhill receives payment in return.

All around the premises are examples of prisoners getting involved in recycling and biodiversity, from tending vegetable gardens to separating different types of waste.'

Prison Service News
Feb/Mar 2006

To facilitate the inculcation of a sense of social responsibility, the prison is organised so that the individual's relationship to others is clearly demarcated. While within HMP Paterson there are greater freedoms available than in other prisons, there are also greater responsibilities. Not in the banal terms of cleaning corridors or working the gardens but in the task of finding social equilibrium with others through negotiating shared rules and procedures. This invariably means consistently having to gauge and negotiate with others who have different priorities.

A houseblock would number 12 inmates - or 13 if the ground floor cell intended for disabled access was occupied. This houseblock would represent the ***First Level of Community*** for the inmate. Each group of inmates within a houseblock – the micro-community – would have the shared right to determine certain aspects of their living arrangements. This would need to be done collectively. These aspects would include:

- ***the right to create rules for the block***
- ***the right to make decisions about the running of the shared recreational area***
- ***the right to control the shared provisions required such as decorations, cooking products, etc.***
- ***the right to control the garden area for growing of vegetables, flowers or for recreational use***
- ***the right to call houseblock meetings, adjudicated by the Houseblock Officer.***
- ***the right to spend money from the houseblock budget.***
- ***the right to elect a Houseblock Representative who will have access to the Governor via the Committee structure.***
- ***the right to initiate mediation proceedings in the event of conflict that could not be resolved another way. In this event, the Houseblock Officer would supervise a conflict resolution process.***
- ***the right to request the removal from the block of any inmate failing to respect the rules of the block. This would require a two-thirds majority and the process would be adjudicated by the Houseblock Officer.***

The houseblock group would have control of a sum of money, held within an account for disposal by the group. Each Houseblock Group would also have the right to elect a Houseblock Representative. These representatives would form a Prisoner Council that would meet in the Debating Chamber to raise wider matters regarding the management of the prison, and to put matters before the Governor who would be obliged to attend subject to availability. Representatives would be empowered to make proposals on prison matters such as the content of training in the workshops, organisation of weekend & evening recreational activities, and organisation of events.

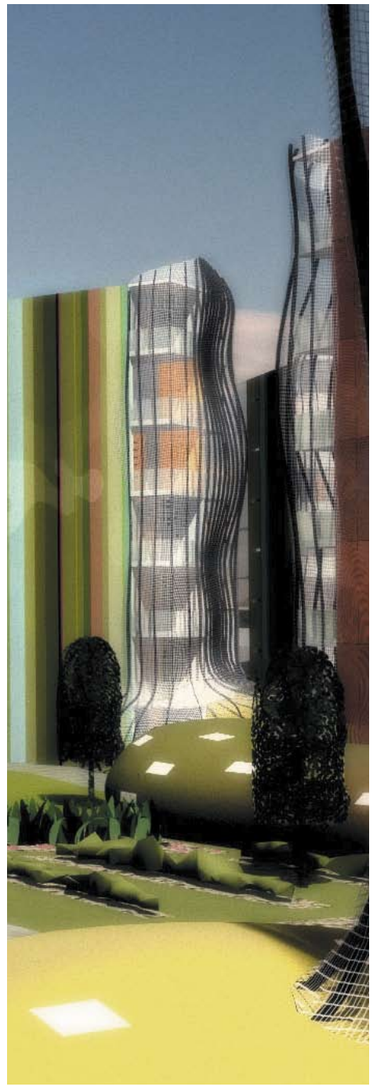
In the event of an inmate breaking the rules of the prison or earning the equivalent of a 'nicking', under certain circumstances this would redound to the disadvantage of all in his houseblock either by deduction of money or withdrawal of access to sports or recreational facilities for those in that block.

Houseblocks would be grouped into 'Clusters', each one representing the ***Second Level of Community*** for the inmate. There would be between 84 and 92 inmates in each cluster. The houseblock representatives would vote for two of their eight to be the Cluster Representatives. The emerging ten individuals would have access to private meetings with the Governor where a wider range of issues could be discussed including discipline issues, staffing issues, prison management and education. There would be an officer responsible for each cluster.

The Governor would run an incentive scheme on a monthly basis whereby the cluster group with the least number of reported infringements would earn that cluster an additional financial allocation to all the blocks within it.

The ***Third Level of Community*** would be the prison in its entirety. The modes of interaction with this level would be through weekend sport and recreational activities, the education and training programmes and the canteen. The individual inmate would also interact with others within the Debating Chamber where different topic-based events would bring together inmates on the basis of shared interest. The Debating Forum would exist for the whole prison, where issues key to the good management of the prison would be debated. Additionally the prisoner representative groups would function within this building. These different forums would not only feed back into the good management of the prison the views of inmates, they would also help to ferment skills in listening, articulacy, logic, debate, dialectics and reasoning. It would be possible for certain debates to be broadcast throughout the prison via the prison intranet and the cell monitors.

The ***Fourth Level of Community*** would be the community beyond the prison walls. It would be understood that prisoners had a responsibility to this community through the provision and maintenance of those facilities that are shared with the local population. These include the swimming pool, performance spaces, restaurant and training workshop. The performance centre will allow for prisoners to present performances to the community or to invite community groups for interactive workshops, perhaps those with special needs or disabilities. The recycling centre aims to offer a recycling service of goods in ways not provided by the local council. This might follow similar lines to those at HMP Onley where white goods are recycled in the ***Goods Again Scheme***. Of this the Prison Service Director General Phil Wheatley has said, *"Not only does it support the country's agenda of reducing waste but also the Service's agenda of reducing reoffending. I would like to see other prisons running projects like this."*[9] Or it might follow a model developed by Digital Links International which specialises in repairing and recycling computers for export to Africa.



9 Prison Service News Feb/Mar 2006

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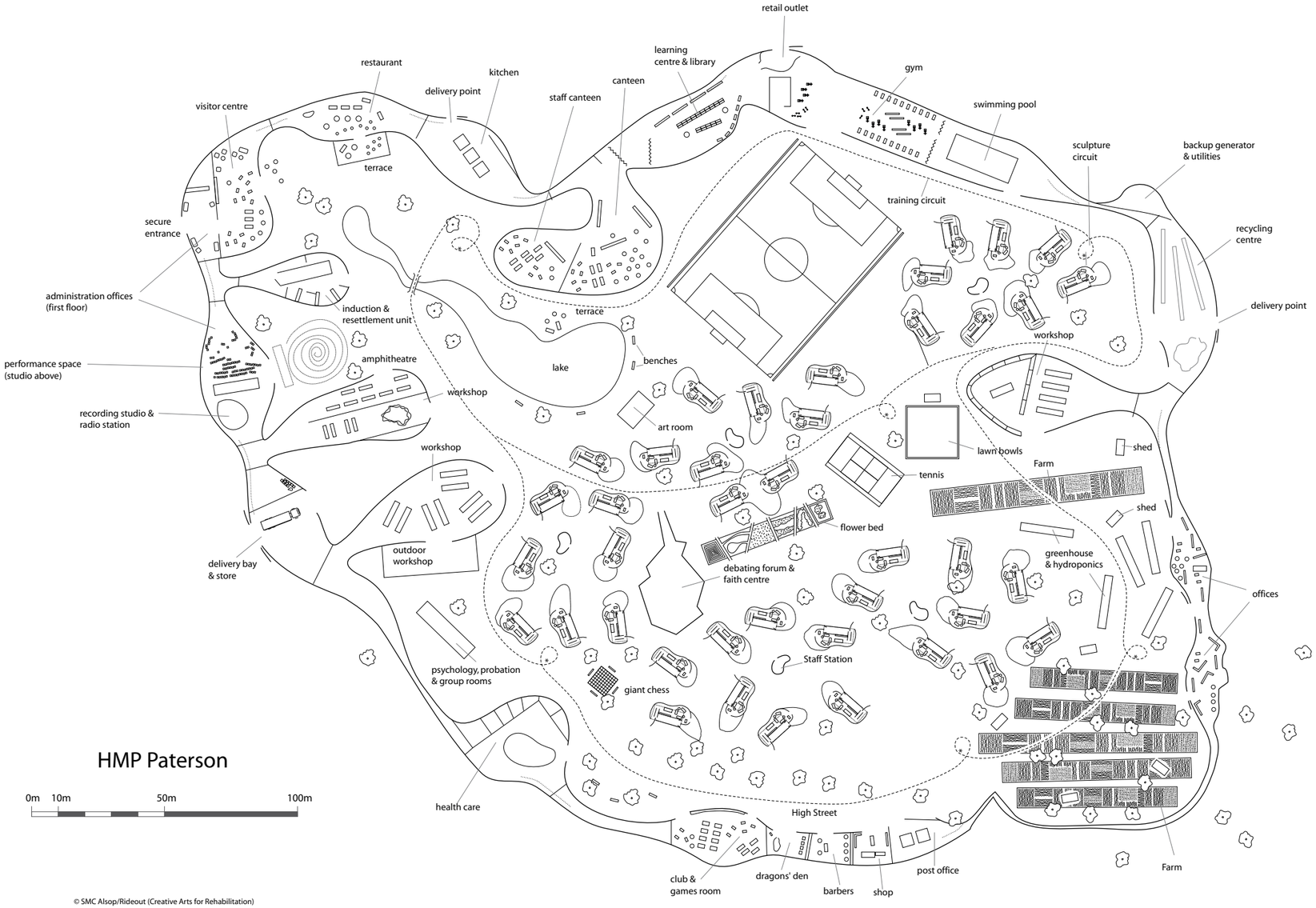
Ground Plan



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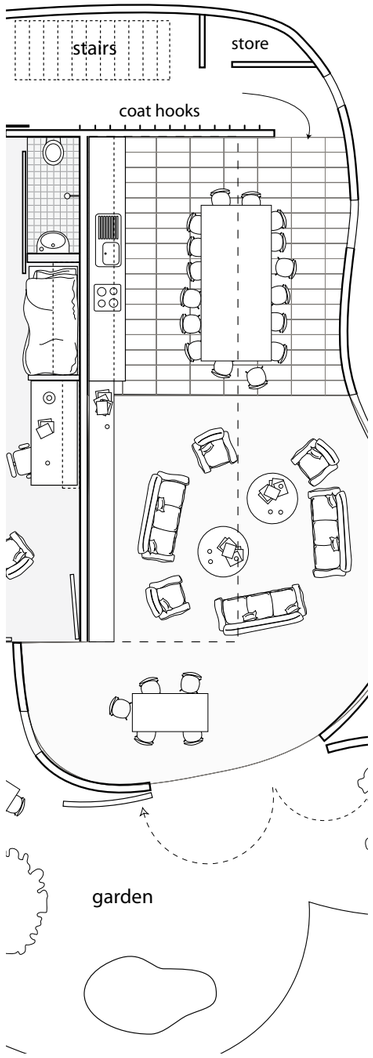


The Use of Shared Space

The denial of the right to move freely in society is a sine qua non of imprisonment. Yet there are few benefits to reducing use of space within prison to something inhumane. For such prevention leads only to a sense of resentment which will likely be expressed either there or on re-entry to society. Hence the emphasis within HMP Paterson on freedom of movement, while still providing society outside with the knowledge that these inmates are imprisoned. This freedom of movement is enabled by:

extensive use of cameras (surveillance)
a fob or wristwatch-style personal tag (active identification)
a measure of trust placed in the prisoner (reciprocity)

During the day, inmates are expected to attend allocated classes or workshops without escort using a 'free-flow' system of movement. Entry to the different buildings where classes or workshops are held, is made possible by each building door 'reading' the information held or worn by the prisoner, allowing entry to those permitted. Access would be denied to any prisoner not approved for entry to that building. If necessary, such procedures could be supported by fingerprint or iris recognition. While more expensive to install, such measures will reduce the number of staff required within the prison engaged in monitoring movement.

It would also be possible during the summer months at evenings and weekends for inmates to move around the prison grounds, again unescorted, in order to use the various facilities, e.g. giant chess, seating areas, sports facilities, etc. The use of cameras in conjunction with officer patrols makes this possible.

Within the houseblock, it is envisaged that prisoners will have some freedom of movement within the block. For example, the doors to the block will be shut at around 9pm. This time might vary according to the season. From that time, all inmates must be within their separate blocks until opening time the following morning at 7am. This means that in the evening, until the time of cell confinement at 11pm, inmates are free to use the association area or visit each others within the same houseblock. At around 11pm. inmates are confined to their cells by means of locked doors and in addition by means of a security mesh where appropriate that surrounds the houseblock.

Shared facilities within the houseblock on the ground floor would include

an association area with a communal table and chairs
a kitchen, adequately equipped with cooking and laundry facilities
a dining area
a few comfy chairs

The Use of Private Space

The cell proposed for the Creative Prison is significantly larger than conventional prison cells. The latter measure approximately 2.1 x 3.5 m floor area whereas within our proposed prison, the dimensions are 2.7 metres wide by 9.5 metres long with an additional 2 metres on the length for the balcony. The purpose of this enlargement is to diminish resentments that are often a by-product of cramped conditions. It also allows the inmate to carry out a wider range of activities within the cell; personal exercise, showering, reading and writing. The notion that cramped conditions exist as a further punishment was regarded as intellectually and morally unsustainable by our contributors. Notice was taken by the architect of needing to minimise costs without disadvantage.

'It's all very well taking your food back to your cell, but it doesn't really work when you have to eat it sitting next to the toilet'

Prison Inmate

Each individual (non-disabled) cell would contain:

a single bed approximately 2.2m by 1m (current beds sizes were found in our study to be grossly inadequate and failing to conform to prison guidelines)

a wet room for showering, washing and the use of a toilet (ceramic tends to get broken so resin would be used).

a table and chair, with the table large enough for books to spread, and shelving

a television / computer monitor with access to the intranet

adequate cupboard space for clothes, books, etc.

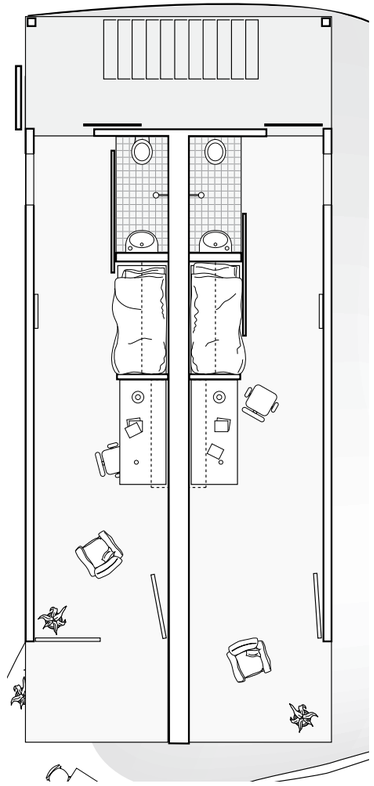
a view on to the prison grounds (not just on to the back of another building)

means to control the in-cell lighting

The disabled cell on the ground floor, adjacent to the association area. would additionally contain:

disabled toilet facilities with increased access to alarms
ergonomically designed fixtures and furnishings

Private space is also of course, potentially, a lonely space. The presence of a terminal within the cell allows direct contact on a 24 hours basis with appointed 'Listeners' in order to reduce depression or impulses to self-harm.



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Security

Wireless Identification Tag (W.I.T.)

As far as possible, the principle of security within the Creative Prison would be established on a basis of reciprocal *trust* between staff and prisoners. However, no contract built entirely on this basis would be regarded either as sound or realistic. So the strategy has to combine a number of elements, one of which is trust and others of which are *containment* and *regulation*.

The reason we would propose there are grounds for working to some degree on a measure of ***trust*** would be fourfold;

this is a prison for prisoners on 'enhanced' status; serious indiscipline would lead to transfer back to a main prison with loss of enhanced status privileges. It is our view that this would work as a considerable deterrent to serious indiscipline. After all, there are freedoms and privileges here that would be lost on transfer back. This notion directly builds on the success of the I.E.P. Scheme.

a measure of collective responsibility is awarded to members of each houseblock. To some extent therefore, there is a process of self-regulation operating. If an individual inmate is found to be guilty of indiscipline, it will redound not only to his disadvantage but may jeopardise the privileges of others in his houseblock. This will create a measure of collective pressure on individuals to support the regime.

the contrary of this is that if a houseblock acquits itself responsibly, advantages will accrue to its members. This can be reflected as additions to the houseblock financial account or in other ways.

regular houseblock meetings, supervised by the relevant Officer should function to throw up grievances or other issues that can be dealt with prior to these leading to consequences that are damaging to the individual or the prison.

Counterbalancing these measures of trust and providing insurance for the public, would be ***containment*** strategies. These would operate to ensure that there were no escapes from the prison and that outbreaks of violence or other disturbances would be prevented. These would be the strategies of containment:

use of cameras throughout the prison, ensuring that all areas except private cells were available to be monitored. Each cluster of houseblock would have a Staff Station where the responsibility for monitoring those eight blocks would be held. Each staff station would contain never less than two officers (except at night when there would be one), able to reach any block within that cluster within a matter of minutes. Additionally, there would be central Security offices where security information for the whole prison would be assembled.

use of technology to control houseblock and cell doors which could be controlled centrally by Security and over-ridden within the block in the event of emergency or malfunction.

reliance on prison walls designed to ensure a medium, Category C level of security while avoiding traditional 'fortress' style design.

use of a 'tag' system of identification, worn wristwatch-style in a way that would serve two functions; firstly to identify the location of the wearer via either a GPS system or an RFID system[10] (involving the positioning of readers around the prison). Secondly to admit the wearer of the tag (which would need to be secure and non-removable) into permitted areas and buildings. While no exact form of this dual-purpose tag currently exists, our consultation with security companies suggests the technology is now available albeit not yet utilised within this dual-function form.[11] While there were different opinions within our consultation group over the willingness of prisoners to wear a permanent 'tag' while in prison, this proposal did receive substantial support, given the freedoms it offered in return.

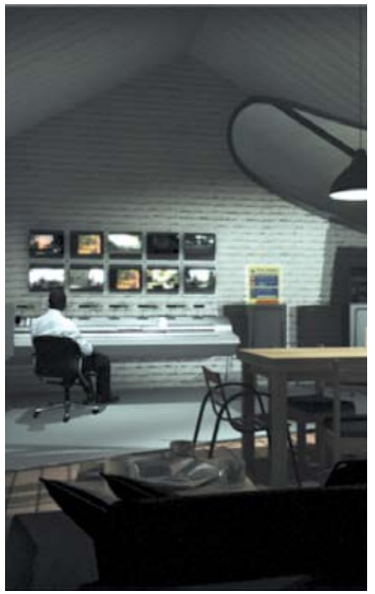
heat sensing equipment within the cell blocks would serve as an added security at night time to ensure the presence of inmates in cells.

A notable feature of the Creative Prison designs as developed by Will Alsop is *the use of the 'prison wall' as a multi-purpose building.* Within its confines are a restaurant, training workshops, a retail unit and sports facilities. The use of all these is shared with the local public. At such times as these facilities are used by the public, the line of security would 'pull back' to exclude inmates from those areas. Outside of public use time, the line of security would 'pull forward'.

Principles of ***regulation*** would include the following:

the 'tag' system of identification would permit inmates access to those parts of the prison they were entitled to enter as outlined above. The individual entrance doors would be programmed on a daily basis to admit entrance to designated individuals.

Inmates would have certain privileges available to them as a matter of course but these would be withdrawn in situations of adjudged indiscipline. Such rights would include; the right to sell made goods through the retail unit, the right to have access to houseblock association areas until 11pm, the right to extended visits, and the right to access sports facilities and the Debating Forum at weekends.



Staff Station

10 RFID - Radio Frequency Identification
11 Consultations took place with Pearce Buckle Ltd., Rosslare Security, and Cinario Solutions.

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Relationships - Family

Inmate sketch for visitor's centre

The role of family and friendship is seen as crucial within any evolving pattern of rehabilitation. The understanding that the prisoner exists within a web of relationships has to inform any evolving rehabilitation. For example, any father within the prison should have the option to take a parenting course.

To encourage steady and consistent contact with family, partner or friends, email addresses could be submitted for approval by an inmate to a Houseblock Officer. Prisoners could then send emails to and receive them from, these approved addresses. Emails would be monitored as letters are now. The use of email in this way will take the pressure of the need to gain access to a telephone. However, a telephone adapted for 'Oyster card' use would also be available in each houseblock.

Within the prison wall, the Visitors Centre would provide adequate facilities not just for able-bodied adult family members but for children and older people as well as the disabled. A designated area for children will be maintained and staffed to allow for a real bonding between parent and child. While clearly it is preferable for family to be local, it has to be recognised that this is not always possible. So above the Visitors Centre will be accommodation provided for those visitors who have to travel a long distance to the prison. Basic, hotel-style rooms with disabled facilities would be provided at a modest rate. Visits would take place during the weekends and evening times to allow for prisoner education to continue uninterrupted.

It would be recognised that the role of the Faith Centre is important in terms of helping maintain links between family members and those inmates attending services.

Relationships - Staff

On commencing consultations with staff and prisoners at HMP Gartree, we met initially with both groups separately. However, the very first point made by both sides concerned staff-prisoner relationships. Both groups felt that *the relationships had suffered as a result of poor decisions in both prison design and management of staff training.* A particular example cited in respect of the former, was the new wing offices within the houseblocks. These were designed in such a way as to inhibit any easy, manageable reception of inmates who were coming forward with queries. An example in terms of the latter was the way in which staff changed so frequently that the result was, relationships became characterised by impersonality and casualness. In our discussions, neither side particularly bore resentments against the other; it was rather that both held resentments against the system, which not only made relations difficult but also made these difficulties needlessly.

In our planning therefore, we looked at how design might complement the need expressed on both sides for *easy interaction and shared problem-solving*. At present a variety of interactions between staff and prisoners have to be initiated by the prisoner who has to go and find the officer concerned. At that time the officer may be engaged with other business. It's a flashpoint situation potentially. Many such requests could be handled electronically once the inmate has intranet access within his cell. Such requests might include:

applications for a visitor to visit the prison
the placing of an order for goods
the request to attend a particular class or event
to report a problem
to get information about goods ordered

This is not to reduce the level of staff-prisoner interaction but rather to give it a different focus. With routine matters taken care of electronically, it then becomes possible for staff-prisoner relationships to be freed of the stress of applications and other requests. Relationships can then return to what some officers remember in 'the old days' when a particularly characteristic of supervision was friendliness and constancy of relations. Some staff expressed the view that as staff they are now seen as 'providers' rather than 'mentors', involved in a demand and supply relationship rather than one of support and guidance.

In the event of a prisoner still needing face-to-face contact, the 'Staff Stations' would be constructed in such a way so as to easily facilitate these interactions.

'Given the technology was available, I would consider that the staffing group (in the Creative Prison) would be considerably smaller than in a regular Cat 'C' prison, with adequate control and decency still maintained'

Trevor Laud,
Principal Officer,
HMPYOI Swinfen Hall

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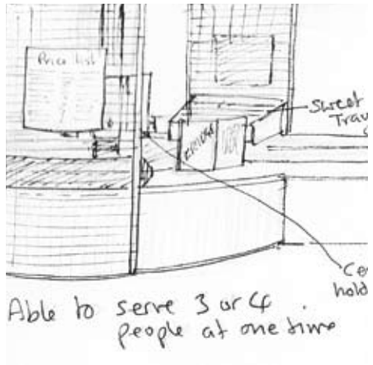
Food Production and Catering



The growing, management, preparation and consumption of food would be seen as areas for potential learning as well as self-sufficiency. Currently prisons import all their foodstuffs from outside the prison. Here the intention is to dent that reliance on outside sources by the establishment of a modest prison farm within the grounds.

The Farm

This would operate in order to grow potatoes, carrots, lettuces, greens, tomatoes and other vegetables. It would be managed by the Farm Manager who would additionally mentor a limited number of prison inmates. This teaching would operate more on a traditional, apprenticeship system with inmates taking on responsibility for the running of the farm during education hours under supervision. Issues of crop rotation, yields, horticulture and other issues would make up the curriculum. Produce from the farm would be supplied to the prison kitchens and to the prison shop for inmates to purchase. In the event of surplus, it could be sold at the retail outlet to the community. This proposal extends schemes currently operative at HMP Camp Hill, Werrington Juvenile Centre, and HMP Lindholme.

The Restaurant

The prison would run a restaurant catering to the outside community, extending the emphasis placed on high quality, chef-led training developed by HMP Highdown. The aim would be to provide a high quality meal at a low price to any visitors to the prison, either at the hotel or those coming from the local area. Here, inmates would learn food preparation, cookery of different kinds and the basics of restaurant management. Trusted inmates would be tested in what were effectively 'real' conditions. They would be able to achieve NVQ certification.

The Kitchens

These would serve both the staff and prisoner canteens as well as the restaurant. In the mornings and early evenings the kitchens would be centred around production of meals for the prisoners. In the latter part of the day the kitchens would be geared to production of food for the restaurant.

The Houseblock Kitchen

At weekends inmates would have the choice of either eating in the canteen or buying food from the prison shop and preparing it 'at home'. Inmates preferring the canteen system would pay for their meals on that day. This helps to encourage inmates to think creatively about saving or spending money. Each houseblock kitchen would be supplied with the basics for cookery but all foodstuffs would need to be bought out of the houseblock budget. It would be an option for the houseblock group to acquire additional equipment for their kitchen such as coffee makers or woks through the purchasing system.

*This emphasis on greening and sustainability will chime with the recently-established **Prison Service Biodiversity Plan** in which staff interested in such issues are identified, and a committee established with the local wildlife trust.*

Money

The individual inmate would have a personal account into which could be placed income achieved while in prison.

All inmates would receive a basic 'wage' commensurate with levels within the prison service, irrespective of their education programme. In addition, a modest amount would be added by the Prison Service in order for the inmate to participate within the 'market' existing within the prison. This would be paid for by savings made elsewhere and by income achieved through the prisoner's purchases. For example, the prisoner could choose at weekends either to purchase meals at the canteen or to buy food at the prison shop. Films would be available for download via the prison intranet, accessible from the cell. Other possible purchases would include

items of décor	***toiletries***
snacks	***stationery***
music	***books***
clothes	***items from the electronic catalogue***

A proportion of the inmate's income would be set aside compulsorily for the inmate to receive on release. This would amount to approximately one tenth of each week's income from within the prison. A second amount would be compulsorily allocated to the houseblock group for collectively determined spending. For the remainder, the inmate would be issued with an 'Oyster-style' card, indicating the amount of money available to him to spend personally. At the time of each purchase, money would be deducted from the card. His account could also encompass money transferred from private funds. There would be considerable savings for the inmate in the provision of email facilities, taking the pressure off the need to contact friends and family by phone.

The houseblock group would also hold an account into which deposits would be made each week from the individuals within the block. As with the inmate's personal money, this would be held on an 'Oyster Card' style system. The Houseblock Representative could order goods for the houseblock via the intranet. Money for the group could be spent on:

bathroom and kitchen cleaning items
food & cookware
furniture & furnishings
board games or other recreational resources
replacements for broken items

The houseblock would also be able to achieve additional funds for its own spending through incentive schemes run by the Governor.

'On average, prisoners earn around £7 a week. This covers many expenses and the most important is probably phone calls to the outside world, vital for people needing information, advice or contact with their lawyer. For many people, it is the only contact they have with family and friends. The Prison Service currently has a £100 million contract with British Telecom to provide phones in prisons. Calling from a phone in prison is five and a half times more expensive than from a normal BT payphone.'

www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk

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The Weekday Regime:

HMP Paterson Weekday Routine

Time	Number	Action
7:00	520	Houseblock rooms open
7:30	15	Kitchen Workers to Kitchen
7:30	2	Library Orderlies to sort and deliver papers
7:30	2	Staff Canteen Orderlies to work
8:00	501	Houseblocks open
8:45	50	Prisoners to Gym
8:45	160	Prisoners to Learning Centre
8:45	310	Prisoners to work areas and/or other activity
8:45		Prisoners for Healthcare
11:30	10	Servery Workers to Canteen
12:00	246	Prisoners to Canteen for Lunch
12:00	247	Prisoners to Houseblocks (including those from Gym)
12:45	246	Prisoners from Canteen to Houseblocks
13:00	247	Prisoners from Houseblocks to Canteen for Lunch
13:45	275	Prisoners to work areas and/or other activity
13:45	178	Prisoners to Learning Centre
13:45	50	Prisoners to Gym
16:30	50	Prisoners from Gym to Houseblocks
16:30	10	Servery Workers to Canteen
16:30	148	Prisoners from Learning Centre to Houseblocks
16:30	265	Prisoners from workareas to Houseblocks
17:15	240	Prisoners from Houseblocks to Canteen for Dinner
17:30	15	Kitchen Workers to Houseblocks
18:00	240	Prisoners from Canteen to Houseblocks
18:00	2	Staff Canteen Orderlies to Houseblocks
18:00	120	Prisoners from Houseblocks to Library, learning centre and art classes
18:00	30	Prisoners to Visits Centre
18:00	240	Prisoners from Houseblocks to Canteen for Dinner
18:45	240	Prisoners from Canteen to Houseblocks
19:00	10	Servery Workers to Houseblocks
20:45	120	Prisoners from Library, learning centre and art classes to Houseblocks
20:45	30	Prisoners from Visits to Houseblocks
21:00	520	Houseblocks Close
23:00	520	All prisoners in rooms

The Architect's Perspective

By Will Alsop, SMC Alsop

If you are sent to prison, the punishment is to be taken out of the everyday world we occupy. Sadly there are some that believe that the experience should be as uncomfortable and difficult as possible. This is punishment on punishment which I believe is unreasonable.

Rehabilitation should start on day one of the sentence and not be delayed until the last one or two years by which time the prisoner has become institutionalised, resentful and therefore more difficult to integrate back into society. My time with the inmates of Gartree was intended to give me and them the opportunity to rethink what a prison could be that would be less reliant on an evolution of Victorian thinking. I asked them to describe and then eventually draw their ideas which gave me the basic starting points to conceive the essentials of a concept.

When I arrived, there was no contradicting the fact that I was in a prison. Of course this was mainly signified by the wall and the razor wire. This observation gave rise to an idea of the wall becoming a continuous collection or ring of buildings which would enclose a garden. The buildings themselves would house the major facilities and support functions for the prison. The administration and reception are obvious, but the inclusion of performance space, gymnasium and visitor's hotel represent, amongst other examples places where the public can interface with the prison community, thereby breaking down a part of the intrigue and mystery of this 'life' spent apart, as well as giving a little more interface between 'in' and 'out'.

Gartree prison is currently divided into 5 cell blocks of approximately 100 cells each. Because this is perceived to be a significant number capable of starting a riot, at night when there is reduced staff, the prisoners are 'banged up' (locked in their cells) at 8.00pm until 8.00am. They spend 12 hours incarcerated in tiny spaces that are too hot in summer and too cold in winter. They look at a lavatory from their pillow which lies on a bed which is too short, with no space for a proper table to draw, read or write. This is not good enough.

We have developed an outline scheme that proposed a series of much smaller cell blocks of 12-13 people. At the base of the prison villa there is a sitting room, kitchen, large table, secure external garden area and television. Each cell would have its own balcony where the growing of plants is encouraged. In this way a sense of ownership and responsibility is created within a group that is small enough to relate to. These villas are distributed within the landscape surrounded by a secure boundary.

My intention is to introduce above all a sense of beauty to the prison campus because ultimately it is the raising of spiritual values which leads to better citizenship. Outside, in the so called real world, we can observe that ugliness generally leads to bad behaviour, but sadly the powers that be consider this to be expensive. It is of course not.

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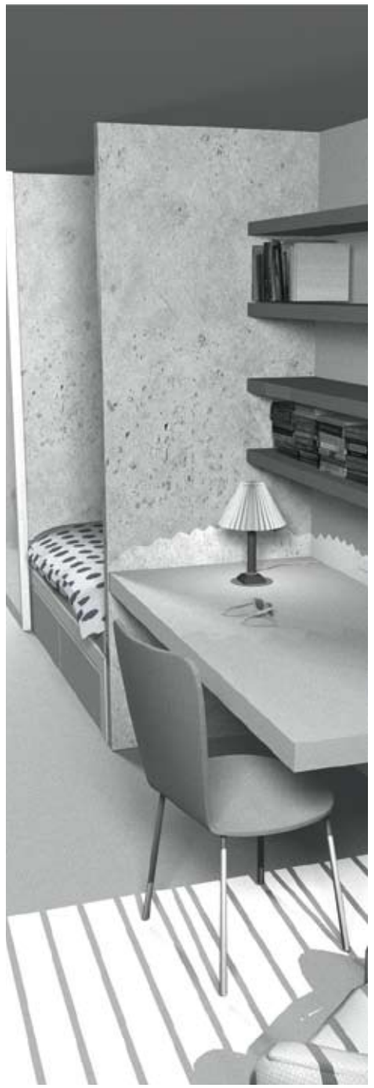

Building the Creative Prison

by John Eynon, Wates Construction Ltd.

I've been involved in the Wates team working on the Prison Service Constructors Framework virtually from the start almost two years ago. I've been 'inside' a number of times, but never had to outstay my welcome, so I can only begin to imagine the reality of life as a prisoner. So meeting with the group of lifers at Gartree, for me has been quite an eye opener. For the first time I saw these guys as people rather than statistics.

I have been so impressed with their commitment and contributions to the project. Some of the discussions regarding the ideas, and the thinking behind various aspects of the designs have been very deep and thought provoking. I've always come away touched by the humanity of the group, but also aware that but for the grace of God or whatever deity, there go I.
A simple mistake, in the heat of the moment, and you or I could be there, in a small cell, locked up sometimes for 18 hours a day, with views of a brick wall, and a radio for company.

Statistics can be misleading but with regard to the prison community there are some simple facts.

Firstly the capacity of the prison estate is extremely close to bursting point. Secondly a majority of the prison population are re-offenders.

Hence the current programme of major works by NOMS[12] to increase capacity and also to provide more facilities for education and for prisoners to learn working skills. It is against this background that the Creative Prison project has evolved, and Wates have been privileged to be involved and to provide support where we can.

Economics, value management and sustainability.

On first sight, the designs by Will Alsop are breathtaking. There is a genuine wow factor here, but once you look beneath the surface of the presentation gloss, it is possible to see what I think is essentially a practical buildable scheme with great potential. It is worth noting that it is the ideas here that are important. This is a discussion about the future of prisons in this country. How to reduce re-offending. How to enable prisoners to retake their place in community and society as worthwhile individuals. It would be easy to get side tracked by the colours or the furniture or the size of the new cells and balconies.

This project isn't just about the final design but more about the ideas and discussion behind the designs. The scheme itself is still really at a conceptual design stage. A process of further detailed design development is required to investigate issues such as finalising structural and cladding solutions for the mini house blocks, and also developing layouts for the perimeter shared facilities.

12 NOMS-National Offender Management Srvice

The mini house block is the most evolved element of design and a great deal of thought and discussion with the group went into the design solution. The size of the block community, the height of the blocks, the cell design and facilities, and the impact on the group were big considerations. However in terms of buildability, even at this stage, the mini house block is a viable design. It is eminently suitable for a predominantly prefabricated construction solution. This might be a precast concrete or metal framed volumetric pod style system. The units would come to site with internal finishes and fittings completed and most of the services ready for connection. Elements of the external cladding would also be pre-installed.

The advantages for this are several. Through repetition of standardised units, economies of scale are achieved, reducing costs but maintaining quality of build. The block has a small footprint and so in terms of land use can be flexible in terms of location, which could be useful in existing prisons where land is at a premium.

Sustainability is high on the NOMS agenda. This scheme could prove to have a high sustainability profile. For example the mini house block could have high insulation values, improving energy efficiency. The block could have photovoltaics (solar panels), and wind generation, producing some of its own energy. Rainwater could be recycled and used to reduce water consumption. The scheme as a whole could also be less intensive on site infrastructure. Externally a variety of cladding finishes and colours could be used, whilst still being very economical. This would introduce variety and colour into what have been traditionally fairly drab landscapes.

In terms of value its difficult to be specific on costs at this stage. However, considering the potential of the scheme in terms of standardisation and off site construction, this scheme should at the least be comparable to current prison building solutions. In addition, integration of sustainability and greening issues will help NOMS in achieving its goals. The impact on the well being of the prison community is where the real impact of the scheme will count.

The quality of life for prisoners should improve, resulting in a less stressed environment, which should then enable the prison staff to manage more efficiently. Learning opportunities for prisoners to gain useful skills should also be increased in this model. This then results in the big win of hopefully a reduction in re-offending.

We hope that the Creative Prison project provokes a positive debate about the future for prison design. NOMS has taken a great step in setting up the Strategic Alliance of framework constructors to deliver the next generation of prisons and we hope that these ideas can somehow feed in to that process.

Improving the prison environment may not be popular in some quarters. However if this project can impact on the life of prisoners, and improve the working life of prison staff, then that will be a real benefit. A reduction in re-offending would have a hugely beneficial impact on the prison system in this country both economically and in the general well being of our communities.

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Appendix One:

Alexander Henry Paterson (1884-1947)

Prison Commissioner (1922-1947)

Although Alexander Paterson was never Chair of the Prison Commission, many writers have suggested that his influence on penal policy during the inter-war period was greater than that of any other single individual. Indeed, his participation in the formulation of what was to be the Criminal Justice Act 1948 means that his influence extended well beyond his lifetime. Following his death in 1947 Alexander Maxwell, who had been Chair of the Prison commission (1928-32), wrote of him, 'To his imagination and inventive force we owe almost all the schemes of penal reform which have been developed in this country in the last 25 years'.

Alexander Paterson was in many respects a man of his time and brought his avowedly Christian and idealist beliefs and ethics with him into the Prison Commission when he was appointed in 1922. He believed that no man was a criminal and nothing else and that younger offenders especially could be rehabilitated. For Paterson, the greatest moral force in this process was religion, which represented a 'clear-cut system of right and wrong'. The uniformity of nineteenth century prisons, he asserted, conflicted with 'God who made men different'. Prison conditions were not to compose punishment, as in Paterson's well-known phrase 'Men come to prison as a punishment not for punishment.' If the fact of imprisonment was deterrent then it was possible to remove features designed to emphasise deterrence without impairing the impact of prison on the individual. Hence he worked to develop the borstal system and open prisons. Payment to prisoners for their work was first introduced during his time at the Commission. He also placed great emphasis upon training and education as well as improving aftercare and also prison visiting, with which members of Toc H[13] became involved.

Despite Paterson's detailed plans for reorganisation to bring about the closure of old prisons like Dartmoor and Pentonville, these prisons remain in use today inhibiting efforts to make prisons a more positive force or at least to reduce the damaging impact they can have on inmates. Paterson achieved a great deal in difficult circumstances, however his vision of prison reform, the well-ordered prison of the 1920s and 1930s with its workshops and industries, libraries and lectures, prison visitors and more refined classification was fragmented in its implementation, wedged into systems and routines that had been developed in the first half of the nineteenth century and into buildings just as old.

In the new year honours of 1947, he received a knighthood for his 'lifelong enthusiasm for social service and penal reform'.

Alyson Brown (University of Edge Hill)

13 Toc H is registered charity committed to building a fairer society by working with communities to promote friendship and service, confront prejudice and practice reconcilliation.

Appendix Two:

History of Prisons

1816 Construction of convict prisons began under the direct responsibility of the Home Office with the penitentiary on Millbank
1838 Prison for juveniles opened at Parkhurst.
1842 Pentonville prison opened. During the next six years 54 new prisons were built, most of them on the Pentonville design, providing 11,000 separate cells. This met the requirement of the so-called 'separate' system under which prisoners were isolated from their fellows.
1850 The Convict Service is established. This gave the Secetary of State the authority to appoint Directors of Convict Prisons
1877 As a result of continued poor standards in prisons, legislation was passed to transfer the powers and responsibilities from the local justices to the Home Secretary who also took over from local rate payers the cost of the system
1878 Prison Commission set up under Sir Edmund du Cane, Chairman. The Commissioners immediately closed 38 out of a total of 113 local prisons. Within 10 years another 15 had closed. The regime, which Du Cane imposed in the local prisons, was based on the principle of separate confinement, which was justified on the grounds that an offender was more likely to see the error of his ways if left to contemplate his crime alone. Prisoners worked tediously on the crank, tread mill or picking oakum.
1895 The Gladstone Report recommended a move away from punishment and deterrence, to deterrence and reformation. The Prison Act followed in 1898 to include the phasing out of unproductive labour like the crank and wheel
1902 Borstal System introduced.
1939 Prison Officers' Association began. The Second World War resulted in the release of many prisoners to convert premises to other uses.
1940 Third remission introduced to ease overcrowding when the prison population began to rise.
1945 Average daily population of prisoners was 14,708 compared with 10,326 in 1939. This unexpectedly high population caused problems while the Service was still significantly understaffed.
1947 A report by the Education Advisory Committee led to a large expansion of educational facilities
1948 The Criminal Justice Act introduced two new types of institution: the detention centre and the remand centre.
1952 Staff training which since 1935 had included courses at Wakefield prison was extended with the development of the Staff College at Wakefield and expansion of initial training:
1955 Last woman executed (Ruth Ellis)
1963 Prison Commission dissolved and Prison Department of the Home Office was established.
1964 Last two executions, Liverpool and Manchester
1965 Capital punishment for murder is abolished
1966 Mountbatten Report addressing Prison security is published
1967 Criminal Justice Act introduced parole and suspended sentences
1969 Children and Young Persons Act introduced juvenile courts, supervision orders and care orders.
1971 Board of Visitors appointed by Home secretary to provide a uniform system of independent oversight of prisons
1981 First HM Chief Inspector of Prisons appointed
1990 Disturbance at Strangeways Manchester
1991 Woolf Report
1993 Prison Service becomes an agency of the Home Office
1995 Learmont Report with recommendations following the Whitemoor and Parkhurst escapes
2002 Decency Agenda launched
2004 Publication of Patrick Carter review of Correctional Services

The Book(9PT).indd 31-32 24/5/06 11:48:46

About Rideout

Rideout was established in 1999 by Saul Hewish and Chris Johnston in order to develop innovative, arts-based approaches to working with prisoners and staff within U.K. prisons. We've retained a special emphasis on working in the Midlands where the company is based.

Rideout's function is to develop and run programmes that explore the impact of criminal behaviour on offenders, their families and others. Primarily this is achieved by working with offenders themselves, exploring with them the causes and consequences of the actions that have led to prison. The programmes themselves vary from the more recreational, usually drama-based activities leading to performance, to programmes that analyse and challenge recurring destructive behaviour. Within the latter, the personal histories of the inmate become the content of the programme. These are discussed and drama methodologies are used to explore the secret archaeology of the behaviour in question: what factors led to the criminal action, could different decisions have been taken? Who suffers? What are the underlying drives?

Underlying all this work is the notion that individuals have the capacity to respond in different ways to pressures from friends, families or environment. It is our assertion that crime is not always an inevitable consequence of personal difficulties. Nor can it be validated as a career option. Other strategies are always available. To access and understand these however, requires the offender to use imagination, to deconstruct and critique what is familiar, and to envision alternative behaviours. The creative and performing arts have a particular appropriateness in offering a language within which these arguments and speculations can take place.

The Creative Prison project takes these investigations into a wider remit, looking not just at the micro-moment of the dialogue between artist and offender, but at the wider architectural context in which these dialogues occur.

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All Images SMC Alsop except
Pages 3 (Top), 5: NCCL Galleries of Justice
Pages 3 (Middle), 4, 8: Shona Illingworth
Pages 3 (Bottom), 22: squint/opera
Pages 6, 11, 12, 14, 21: Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation)
Pages 23, 24: M

Rideout
Chris Johnston • Saul Hewish
Shona Illingworth • Jon Ford

SMC Alsop
Will Alsop • Tim Thornton • Julia Feix

squint/opera
Ollie Alsop • Alice Scott • Jules Cocke

Wates Construction Ltd
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HMP Gartree – Prisoners (Core Group)
Keiron Carpenter • Alvin Covington
Jamie Franklin • Stephen Hoppie
John Allen • John • Jong • M

HMP Gartree – Staff
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Sue Foreman • Alan Beesley
Keith Tiplady • John Hurley
Peter Lovell • Colin Boileau
Brain Saunders • Sylvia Walton-Allen
Jan Stevens • Emma Ogley
Richard Copeland • Jonathan Auty
Adam Megicks and all the uniformed staff who provided escorts

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The Arts & Business New Partners programme is designed to help businesses try something new with the arts.

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'The significant thing for me was that the Creative Prison Project engaged our prisoners from start to finish during the six months it ran at HMP Gartree.

Not a single prisoner dropped out and each of them contributed in a different way.'

Paul Johnston
Head of Learning and Skills
HMP Gartree

'Magic! Next time we'll reform the Health Service'

Prison Inmate

The Book(9PT).indd 33-34 24/5/06 11:48:51