

The Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme

Self-Employment Opportunities For Female Ex-Offenders

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The Griffins Society

Working for female offenders

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The Griffins Society

The Griffins Society is a voluntary organisation working for the care and resettlement of female offenders, including those with a history of mental illness and violent behaviour. The Society was set up in 1966. At that time there was little residential provision for women offenders and the Society concentrated its efforts on filling that gap by providing specialist hostel and move-on accommodation. Those residential projects were transferred to another voluntary organisation in 1997 and the Society decided to alter the focus of its activities. This change of emphasis included establishing the Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme in the Social Policy Department at the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2001.

The Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme

The aim of the Fellowship Programme is to provide ‘thinking space’ for those working in the criminal justice system or allied fields who wish to study a particular aspect of the circumstances or treatment of women offenders. Applications are welcomed from anyone with an interest in female offenders, such as magistrates, probation officers, staff of supported accommodation, drug/alcohol counsellors. In keeping with its origins, the Griffins Society welcomes applications from the voluntary sector, as well as statutory organisations. Fellowships are not awarded to people in academic employment, or studying for a degree. Each Fellowship runs for one year and Fellows are awarded a grant. Academic support and supervision is provided by Dr Judith Rungay, Director of the Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme. Fellows have full access to all facilities at the London School of Economics.

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Abstract

Self-Employment Opportunities For Female Ex-Offenders

by Juliet Dempster

This study aims to investigate and identify the self-employment opportunities available for female offenders on release from custody and in the community. The research involves women in custody, business support organisations, financial institutions and entrepreneurial women who have had experience of the criminal justice system.

In addition to reporting my findings, I hope to present the information in a guidebook format for the use of women in custody and the community. By doing this I hope to increase access to information, raise aspirations and confidence in female ex-offenders.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Findings & Outcomes
4. Summary Conclusion and Recommendations

Appendices

- In Business Questionnaire
- Custody Questionnaire
- Agency/Organisation Information Request
- Respondent Breakdown of Questionnaire to Women in Custody

1. Introduction

On release from prison, Home Office statistics show that fewer than 20% of women have employment to go to in the community. This is mainly due to family, childcare and accommodation commitments as well as coping with reintegration into the community after custody. Self-employment offers a flexible opportunity to returning to work, where a specific skill or service can accommodate their family commitments allowing them flexible hours or to work from home.

It is difficult for any individual to start a business but for individuals with convictions there can be advantages. While in custody, the time can be used constructively, developing ideas and plans as well as gaining theoretical knowledge from short courses and visiting outside agencies. When in the community, the self-employment option can avoid the stigma of explaining gaps in employment history or issues around convictions. Having your own business provides flexibility in relation to location, hours and domestic arrangements and in addition to this a positive focus to boost morale, provide a challenge and help prevent recidivism. Human resource specialists predict that 50% of the workforce will be self-employed by 2010, if this trend becomes reality it is now that we need to explore the possibilities and make the opportunities accessible to all communities.

Although when I applied for the fellowship I was not working directly with female offenders, I was working with many universal issues and in HMP Wormwood Scrubs I initiated a four-day business start-up course for prisoners prior to release. This involved Portobello Business Centre and the Princes Trust.

My role within Nacro has changed and part of my new responsibility includes project management of the Women Into Work project. This focuses on empowerment and employability of women in custody and post release and as you can imagine has provided great access to women, agencies and information, which has been invaluable for this research. I really enjoy making people aware of positive opportunities available and it is often in marginalized groups in society that access to information is the only barrier.

Rationale And Aims Of The Study

The main aim of this research is to identify the existing resources available and the work that is currently in progress for women in custody and in the community. I would also like to interview a number of women in custody to find out if they consider self-employment to be a realistic option on release and if not why not.

As part of this I want to identify examples of good practice as well as female ex-offenders who have had first hand experience of starting a business. I also want to show the practicalities of starting your own business and show that the information assembled actually works in practice, how difficulties can be overcome and most importantly the level of commitment involved. I aim to involve organisations, establishments, individuals and policy makers within England but limiting the geographic areas by the response from the organisations available. I would like to make this work relevant to women throughout the UK so I aim to include at least the three categories Midlands, North of England and South of England, as I will be limited by resources, time and size of study. The ethnicity, race and age group of the candidates who will be involved will also be determined by the respondents willing to take part.

As with any research, a report and recommendations are produced. It is extremely important to me that the research has practical relevance and I have the ability to produce the findings; along with further work, in a guidebook on business start-up for women with experience of the criminal justice system. The guidebook should have evidence that it is pitched at this particular group with views and examples of peers with success stories. It should also support that the preparation is supported while in custody and there will be consistent fluid support on release, which takes into account the numerous issues women face on release before considering employment options. In all, the publication should be motivating and inspiring for women experiencing the difficulties of custody and release. It should help them reflect on their abilities and consider self-employment as an option and in some cases encourage them to take the ideas forward. Although the publication defines the target group at which it will be pitched, it does not define the readers and will reflect that each reader is an individual who has common experiences but personal aspirations.

2. Methodology

What Information Was I Hoping To Find?

My main objective was to gather information required to create a guidebook for women seriously considering self-employment in custody and in the community. Within this I hoped to identify sources of advice and support, if women in custody consider self-employment, their business ideas and successful women with similar experiences.

Who Was Involved?

- Women in custody
- Women's centres
- Gender specific support organisation
- Business start-up agencies
- Social enterprises
- Female entrepreneurs
- Banks

The research methods I used to get this information were qualitative and literature based and on the whole I managed to reach all the groups I intended using the following methods:

- Questionnaire to women in custody
- Information requests to business start-up and support organisations
- Poster requesting support and information sharing (mailed with above)
- Questionnaire to women in business
- Enquiries to banks
- General background research mainly web based.

Questionnaire To Women In Custody

Carried out on five women in each of these establishments HMP Send, HMP Holloway, HMP Edmunds Hill and HMP Bullwood Hall. The reason for using these establishments was due to access via Nacro workers. I used establishments outside London catchment areas to gain views from a wider cross-section geographically and also from women who are from areas of low employment and rural economies. Self-employment may be an option but the product or service could be dictated by the community rather than individuals choice.

The contents of the questionnaire were designed to look at background, motivation, previous and proposed business ideas, types of interventions and support required in custody and finally the basic requirements to start a business.

Initially, I designed this questionnaire with multiple-choice questions but changed to open ended questions as Dr Rungay advised that it might restrict the respondents. I also had to adapt the questions after my first group at HMP Send, as some of my questions were repetitive. This was only highlighted when respondents were completing the questionnaire a number of questions required the same answer. I found this interesting as when reading over questions it was not apparent. The amendments were made and carried out at the other three establishments. I kept my sample size at five for each establishment as I requested time during other activities and larger numbers would have had an effect on normal activities and prison regime.

Poster & Information Requests To Business Start-Up And Support Organisations

The information request was in the form of a two-page questionnaire and designed so the information provided could easily transferred into an entry in the guidebook. The poster, which is included in the appendices, was included to request information from organisations and individuals on experience of self-employment. I hoped to gain contacts for the case studies of the women entrepreneurs who have experience of the criminal justice system. Both were mailed with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the study to 28 organisations with wide geographical coverage and advice/support remit. I designed and produced all items within the pack.

For an entry in the guidebook I had to think in terms of the needs of women in custody as well as those in the community. By this, I mean I have to be careful not to make assumptions that everybody has access to telephones and the Internet and also highlight which organisations were already actively promoting their services within prisons.

Geographical Challenges

This is where I realised that I may have been over ambitious in the area I had chosen to cover and the number of organisations I could include in the research. Internet research proved that there are many organisations out there both active in prisons and the community. I had to restrict the numbers I was to include in my mail shot to allow me to work within the allocated time frame. It was at this point I realised, that the depth of information I wanted to include in the guidebook was going to take much more time and effort than planned. I feel it is important to concentrate on quality of information and the quantity should reflect different community needs

within the North of England, Midlands, London and the South of England. Very often guidebooks offering this type of advice concentrate on metropolitan areas, London especially and can be de-motivating for the reader if local or regional representation is not included.

Questionnaire To Women In Business

In addition to the information request poster I also registered my work on notice and discussion boards within specialist website, these covered women's social and business support issues. I was able to get two case studies and then arranged to visit each of the women to carry out a formal questionnaire and spend some time getting to know their background, business and motivation.

The questionnaire consisted of eight questions and was designed to give an insight into the reasoning, methods and effort, which was involved in the business set-up and running for the two women entrepreneurs.

I had hoped to get more than two case studies but many women in these circumstances do not want to share their experiences and feel they have put this stage of their life behind them. This is understandable but the best motivation for women in custody is evidence that an individual with similar experiences has been able to successfully fight the barriers and start a business.

In my current role at Nacro, I have had the opportunity to attend seminars and conferences on self-employment for ex-offenders. This has enabled me to make more contacts suitable for case studies and I plan to visit them in early 2005 in my continued work on the guidebook.

Enquiries To Banks

I took a more informal approach in questioning the banks and did not use a questionnaire. I visited the banks without appointment for two reasons;

- To find out the service available in the branches, appropriateness of information and how supportive and knowledgeable the staff were.
- The second reason was to prevent any assumptions to be made about my background and to measure reaction when I asked if there were any additional requirements if I had a criminal conviction.

Once in the bank, I asked to speak to an adviser on starting a business and also asked about setting up a bank account and acceptable banking references for use with suppliers.

I used this approach to replicate what it would be like for a woman who has left custody and find out if the experience would be intimidating or inviting. I visited three high street banks and for the development of the guidebook hope to visit all the high street banks and identify telephone or internet contact banking support for those based in more rural communities.

General Background Research Mainly Web Based

This has been continuous throughout my research and has supplied endless valuable resources. The information attained will supply the majority of the content of the guidebook and the source of the features or case studies of the organisations and agencies, which offer business start-up advice and support. The information requires to be categorised then split into regional and national services. Two main categories to be included are;

- Prison-based agencies and support
- External organisations/agencies and support

Sub-categories will be required within each of these and can be highlighted with a key or colour coding for easy reference for users. The sub-categories will be dictated by the range and remit of the organisations included.

Although the title of this research focuses on female ex-offenders it obviously includes the needs of female offenders while in custody. In addition to this the guidebook should include organisations whose remit is business start-up or women and not specifically those with convictions. This will also allow the guidebook to express progress and a sense of move on which is particularly important for women who have spent time in custody.

3. Findings & Outcomes

The majority of the methods employed in the research, detailed in the previous section, were effective and provided me with the information I required. In addition to this, I was made aware of a great deal of current activity and work in progress around the area of self-employment and offenders.

I will continue to describe my findings by detailing the outcomes of each method employed and detail the relevance to the guidebook and additional activity or support information uncovered.

Questionnaire to Women in Custody

I started this work as soon as found out I had been selected for the Griffins Research Fellowship as I was aware from previous fellows that this was sometimes the most difficult part – finding willing participants. I took advantage of my role within Nacro to access small groups of women in custody when working at establishments.

I was extremely fortunate that all parties asked to participate were pleased to take part and contributed more than requested. This included both negative and positive views about self-employment, its realism, support available in prison and in the community and the basic needs to get the business off the ground.

The respondent breakdown is included in the appendices giving details of each respondent, I will highlight some of the significant points that came out of the questionnaire in the bullet points below:

- It was a 50/50 split between BME and white female respondents.
- The average age of the respondents was 34.5 years, the oldest being 63 and the youngest 22.
- Sentence length varied between 12 months to 11 years with two respondents on awaiting sentence.
- Six out of the 20 respondents admitted to having drug or alcohol issues prior to custody, the remainder answered no with three declining to answer.
- 45% of respondents were returning to London, 10% Jamaica, 5% Ireland and the remaining 40% from outside London.
- 45% of respondents had previous experience of being self-employed and of the percentage 65% were from BME groups.
- 75% of respondents were interested in self-employment on release and some had completed business plans and seeking advice.
- 5 respondents were not interested in self-employment and 3 out of 5 had previous drug or alcohol issues with one not disclosing.

All women interested in self-employment stated their future business interests, which are detailed on the respondent breakdown. The business ideas ranged from traditional female occupations such as hairdressing and beauty services to non-traditional occupations such as plumbers and landscape gardeners. One of the women wanted to explore social enterprise by setting up a support centre for victims of domestic violence. I find this very encouraging that from the small sample used that women are recognising the opportunities and benefits of social enterprise. Considering a service of this nature after experience of custody indicates to me that this woman has remained strong willed and has become empowered through the recognition of the needs of others.

The majority of respondents had access to self-employment support and advice when in custody but felt the information could be more consistent between establishments as effort can often be wasted after being transferred to another prison. They were also well equipped and aware of the self-employment support information and how to access it on release but many mentioned that home life can take over and they neither have the time or concentration to commit to the business idea on release.

The main barrier to self-employment for the respondents is money, but many were confident in identifying sources but not so confident in being able to acquire it due to criminal record. This also identified the issue of surviving while getting the business up and running, it being a well-known fact where the first few years are the most difficult financially. A few who had run their own business in the past had said they had to close due to this but it also made them determined to try again.

The advantage of self-employment were seen as,

- *“Being your own boss”*
- *“Able to reap the benefits of your own hard work”*
- *“Doing a job I really enjoy”*
- *“Supporting my family and securing their future”*
- *“Not being judged on my past”*

These comments along with the response on the questionnaire showed that all of the women who were interested in self-employment considered it to be a realistic viable option on release. Two of the women had a business plan that proves that they are taking the option seriously and using time in custody to concentrate on the preparation and research stages and accessing specialised support for advice and information.

This questionnaire was both enjoyable and encouraging to carry out as it alone proved the need for a guidebook, as there are many women interested in self-employment on release and require a point of reference as they move between establishments and on release. They need to be able to keep up momentum and enthusiasm in the planning stages and most importantly access service on release, which will prepare and support them in business.

Poster & Information Requests To Business Start-Up And Support Organisations

I mentioned in the previous chapter, I was over ambitious in this section because I had the idea that this would identify the majority of the guidebook content. This did not happen for a number of reasons;

- The sample number of poster and information requests sent out had to be greatly reduced to become manageable for the purpose of study and the time constraints given. I had intentions of mailing 150 – 200 but on the advice of Dr Rungay I reduced it to an initial 28 with a second round intended depending on the speed and level of response from the first 28.
- The response was slow and some took a period of six months to respond. From the 28 requests sent out I received 8 responses from the Information request and 3 from the poster. Although in terms of mail responses in research I am advised that this is a reasonably good response.
- A few of the organisation responded to the request and made contact directly inviting me to visit and gain more insight into the running of their organisations. This identified to me that visiting and reviewing the services of organisations would be the approach that would enrich the information within the guidebook. I was time limited in this piece of work but will continue working on this aspect in 2005 to complete the guidebook to the standard I had initially planned.

The organisations that responded were

- WEETU - Norfolk
- Portobello Business Centre - London
- CU – ICT - Nottingham
- TWIST (Let's Train Women in Science and Technology) - Bradford
- Women in Prison – London
- Lincoln Women's Centre
- CAST – London
- In-credit - Stevenage
- Blackburn with Darwen Women's Resource Centre.

The organisations that responded were encouraging in that they covered a wide geographical area and reinforced that the need for self-employment advice is recognised in many communities. In addition to this the recognition of the needs of women as well as exploring creative and unusual business ideas is well established. Below I have detailed two of the organisations visited and the information is set out as a guidebook entry.

Name	Incredit
Type of organisation/ funding	Enterprise Support Agency, funded by Phoenix Fund
Address	Incredit Ltd, 1st floor, Saffron Ground, Ditchmore Lane, Stevenage, Herts. SG1 3LJ
Contact details	Tel: 01438 794444 Eileen Lennon
Geographical area	External - Herts, Essex, Cambs, Suffolk, Norfolk National prison activity
Fees or costs	No initial cost, free advice and support
Target group	Any person interested in starting a business
Support and advice	At office - business start-up advice and support, funding advice, access to short-term business premises, training and use of IT, Business and finance start-up courses. Run a First Thursday club in Stevenage, where entrepreneurs old and new as well as support organisations attend. An information sharing forum with guest speakers and addressing key issues in business start-up.
Prison activity	2005 - running a national programme of workshops in female establishments. "Would you give yourself a job?" Is a series of three workshops which can also stand-alone identifying the need to prepare yourself for the option of self-employment, start the ideas rolling and developing your business plan. Ask your resettlement dept. for details.
Name	Portobello Business Centre
Type of organisation/ funding	Business Start-up Support Agency, funded by Phoenix Fund
Address	Portobello Business Centre, 2 Acklam Road, Ladbroke Grove, London W10
Contact Details	Telephone - 01438 794444 Norman Lamb – Business Outreach Manager, Colin Rutt – Business Consultant
Geographical Area	External – London Wide Prison activity in London prisons
Fees or Costs	Course fees £40 unemployed, £100 employed
Target Group	Any person interested in starting a business
Support & Advice	Business start-up advice and support, funding advice, access to short-term business premises, training and use of IT. Business and finance start-up courses. On completing a course with PBC you enter a lifelong relationship where you can go to them for support and advice at any stage in your business lifespan and receive free accountancy and legal support for the first year. Courses include - 4-day intensive Business Start-up, specialist courses in running Fashion, Music and Restaurant business. Accounts, legal and tax courses
Prison Activity	Recent area of development current activity in HMP Wormwood Scrubs, HMP Holloway, HMP Brixton and HMP Wandsworth. Run monthly workshops and one to one support for those with business plans

This give a taster of the depth of information I need to provide in the guidebook entries and in the publishing process, of which I have limited experience I would include a colour coded key for quick reference.

Many organisations recognise the potential of those in custody and are currently going to great lengths to gain access to and meet the need of this group. Business in Prisons has gained a good profile in a large number of prisons and the Department of Trade and Industry and the Phoenix Fund are creating funding opportunities for smaller organisations to develop new services (DTI, 2004). In the last year I have attended two prison events where the theme was self-employment and this illustrates the demand for these service from people in custody and also that starting your own business is a realistic and positive potion on release.

Questionnaire To Women In Business

I had two case studies that came forward for this part of the research. I had hoped for more but not everybody is willing to disclose their past in case it may affect their current status. This is an area I want to expand on for the guidebook and over the last four months when my practical research was complete I met other women who would also be willing to be case studies. I would then be able to include six case studies but I feel it is essential to visit their enterprises to identify what has driven them and the mechanics of the business they are running.

From the two women I interviewed, both were involved in social enterprise where their activity benefited the community. Both women were from BME groups and displayed high levels of determination, social justice and meeting the needs of women in difficult circumstances as well as other sectors of the community.

One of the women had spent time in custody, the other had experience of the criminal justice system but both felt they had identified and address an important need within their community.

The case studies will be profiled in the guidebook but I will summarise their responses below.

Respondent One had a community based training agency addressing educational and training need of socially excluded groups and taking the services to the community instead of this group facing the difficulties and barriers of accessing services in other parts of the city. She had successfully secured local and national government funding and we visited an active training centre and also new premises recently acquired in an area notorious for anti social behaviour and low uptake of educational opportunities. This woman enjoys the challenge of working with challenging groups and feels strongly about the way women are defined instead of being treated as individuals in communities and within the criminal justice system. Her advice to a woman considering self-employment is:

Explore social enterprise, think of the needs of your community and access the money to make changes. It might sound difficult but changing lives is sometimes more accessible than having a product or service, think beyond the 'sole trader' image of self-employment.

Respondent Two had been running a restaurant business for a number of years specialising in Caribbean food. She understood the need for the different cultures within her community to be represented commercially and the skills of many of the people within these communities. She developed a BME business support network and savings programme. This involved a joining fee, which pays for the monthly social events and requires each member to pay a specified sum each month. This money is collected and each member listed and they

receive the total when their name comes to the top of the list. The name used is Round Robin and idea, which originated in Jamaica and is popular in the USA. Each event give members the opportunity to showcase their business, trade, share ideas, build networks, listen to guest speakers and most importantly enjoy themselves with people in similar circumstances.

Respondent Two expressed:

I have learned that if you really want something you can succeed, don't be scared to explore niches in the market or seek advice from all sectors of the community. I realise funding can be difficult so I decided to use a way of developing funding without having to jump over the hurdles of banks and loans. Be confident and keep trying.

Both women interviewed were extremely inspiring and driven and I enjoyed the chance to share such positive experiences although they experienced difficulties they were determined to succeed and believed in their idea and that it would work.

I look forward to interviewing more business women who can be used in case studies and become role models for women in custody and inspire and motivate women to make changes and develop their own businesses.

Enquiries To Banks

I visited three banks, The Co-operative Bank, Lloyds TSB and Barclays. All were extremely helpful and registered no negative reaction when I asked if the business support advice was different if I had a conviction. I had waiting time but the staff were friendly, supportive and non-intimidating.

They explained that if I had a criminal conviction I could obtain banking references by running a deposit account for six months to gain banking and credit references for the business. Credit facilities were not initially available until funding had been received in the form of a bank loan or grant and each individual business plan was reviewed on its own merit but if fraud or bankruptcy appeared on an applicant's history further investigation may be required but would still be considered.

In the guidebook I would like to visit all the high street banks and identify the approachability, understanding of need, support process, additional services and information and products supplied. This will again be formatted for a quick reference guide.

General Background Research Mainly Web Based

As detailed in the methodology this section is currently under development and all agencies investigated and visited will feature in the guidebook.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the main findings of this research are

- There is a demand for business start-up support and services in prisons
- That this demand is being addressed with events and services expanding across the female estate.
- Support organisations in various sizes exist in the community and support the needs of both women and ex-offenders.
- On release, accessing appropriate services are difficult and family commitment or personal issues override plans and hopes of pursuing self-employment.
- There is a lack of tie-up of services between services in the prison and the community with regional variations.
- Social enterprise is a realistic option, which will have long-term positive effects on communities and reduce exclusion.

During my period of research, I identified many examples of good practice in both the community and prisons. As I did not use all female establishments but still noticed variations in type of service I realised the need for mainstreaming, regulation, consistency and communication to the client group.

I would suggest the following recommendations:

- That service level agreement or Prison Service Order is developed to identify need and standardise the support given in each establishment.
- That the organisation supplying the advice is responsible for linking individuals with support services in their area of release.
- Social enterprise becomes part of the education curriculum and business enterprise schemes are set up within establishments. This could become part of the life & social skills module and include self-employment.
- The business start-up and self-employment information days become regular events and a centrally updated database of local and national exhibitors and contacts is available on the Prison Intranet. This could include letter and invitation templates so that when a governor or resettlement manager decides to run an event the most time consuming part is taken care of. This could initially be achieved through information sharing and better publicity of events currently running within the prison estate. This could be replicated for all resettlement needs – housing, employment, training, education and BME events.
- A membership organisation available in custody and the community where entrepreneurs who have faced challenges and barriers of a criminal record when starting and running a business can offer advice and establish a network where your past is positive, no stigma exists and confident expression and idea sharing is easy.

- My last recommendation leads to my initial aim, the “Self-employment Guidebook” I hope to be able to continue and expand on this task throughout 2005 to produce a resource suitable for use in custody and identifies support on release. I will be consulting with the Griffins on continuation, timeframes and publication and hope to be completed by the end of the year.

Appendices

1. In Business Questionnaire

Name _____

Organisation _____

Position _____

Nature of business _____

Target/Client Group _____

1. Who or what gave you the drive to start your own business/enterprise?

2. What were the barriers to setting up on your own and how did you overcome them?

3. How long did it take to get your idea off the ground and how long did preparations take?

4. How did you obtain funding?

5. Is this business connected to your previous work experience?

6. Where did you seek support and advice, which would you recommend?

7.a. Do you feel you have recognised an important need for a certain group in society?

OR 7.b Is your service unique or special in anyway if so please give details?

8. Have you reached any turning points in the business and what do you feel you have learned from them?

9. What piece of advice would you give to a female planning to start her own business?

10. What ambitions do you hold for the future for your business and yourself?

11. Anything further you would like to add?

Thank you

2. Custody Questionnaire

Personal Details – All Questions in this section are optional.

A. Age _____

B. Ethnic Group

Black or Black British:

Caribbean African Irish Other _____

Asian or Asian British:

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Irish Other _____

White or White British:

English Scottish Welsh Irish Other _____

Mixed Race:

White/Black Caribbean White/Black African White/Black Asian Other _____

Chinese or other Ethnic Group:

Chinese Other Ethnic Group _____

Prefer not to answer

C. Custody

Establishment Name _____

Type of Offence _____

Sentence Length _____ Time spent _____ Release Date _____

History of Offences _____

Area of origin or hometown _____

Prefer not to answer

D. Drug or Alcohol Issues

Any previous issues	Drugs	Alcohol	Prefer not to answer	None
Any current issues	Drugs	Alcohol	Prefer not to answer	None
Currently addressing	Drugs	Alcohol	Prefer not to answer	None

E. Previous Work Experience

What previous work experience do you have?

Detailed None Very Little

Other - please detail _____

Have you ever been self-employed? If yes why no longer _____

F. Self-Employment

1. What business ideas have you had? _____

2. How far did you take the ideas? _____

3. What were the reasons for stopping the ideas or work? _____

4. What types of industries would you consider for self-employment?

5. How would you equip yourself for self-employment, what would you need?

6. What do you consider to be the advantages of self-employment? _____

7. What do you perceive to be the barriers to self-employment? _____

8. Where would you go first for Self-employment advice? _____

9. Can you name organisation or where you could obtain advice or support?

10. Are employment options adequately covered in the resettlement advice provided to you in custody?

11. Have you ever been given any information on Self-Employment while in Custody?

12. Would you be interested in business start-up advice being available before release?

13. How do you think the self-employment advice sessions could be best presented?

14. Do you think starting your own business is a realistic option or just a dream?

Additional Comments

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

If you would like a complimentary copy of this piece of work when finished Dec 2004 please include postal details below.

Name

Address (in Dec 2004)

3. Agency/Organisation Information Request

Name of Organisation _____

Type of Organisation _____

Charitable/Voluntary

Government funded

Privately funded

Co-operative

Membership group

Other (detail below)

Target Client Group _____

Joining Fee yes no how much £ _____

Geographical or Catchment area covered _____

Address _____

Contact details:

Telephone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

Website _____

Type of Support, Advice and Information provided by this organisation

Specialist Advice provided _____

Areas of self-employment advice covered? _____

Do you offer advice and support to ex-offenders?

Yes, Please detail

No, Why? What are the barriers to supporting ex-offenders?

What would help you to offer support/increase support to ex-offenders interested in starting a business?

What other organisations do you work with and make referrals to? _____

Additional Information _____

4. Respondent Breakdown of Questionnaire to Women in Custody

<i>Resp</i>	<i>Estab</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Ethnic Group</i>	<i>Sentence Length</i>	<i>Drug/ Alcohol Issues</i>	<i>Release Area</i>	<i>Previously Self-employed</i>	<i>Interested in Self-employment</i>
1	Send	22	WE	11yr	N/a	East London	No	Yes: greeting cards or photography. Has business plan
2	Send	63	WE	3yr 3m	No	SW London	Yes	Yes: aromatherapy supplies agency, previous experience
3	Send	59	AB	11yr	N/a	East London	No	Yes: clothing retail or freelance hairdresser
4	Send	59	WE	7yr	No	Bucks	Yes	Yes: florist, horse sitter, house clearance or franchising
5	Send	48	BC	10yr	No	Jamaica	Yes	Yes: restaurant
6	Holl	31	BB	R	Yes	London	No	No
7	Holl	29	MRC	1yr 3m	Yes	Herts	Yes	Yes: market stall or takeaway
8	Holl	25	BA	R	No	North London	No	Yes: freelance make-up artist and nail technician
9	Holl	40	WI	1yr	Yes	Ireland	Yes	Yes: family business mobile takeaway vans
10	Holl	35	WE	R	Yes	East London	No	No
11	EH	41	BC	2yr	Yes	Essex	No	Yes: drop-in centre for victims of domestic violence
12	EH	27	WE	4yr	Yes	Cambs	No	Yes: club promoter
13	EH	23	WE	8yr	No	London	No	No
14	EH	39	AP	6yr	No	London	Yes	Yes: dry cleaners and alterations
15	EH	51	WE	3yr 8m	No	Kent	Yes	Yes: landscape gardening, has business plan
16	BH	26	WE	2yr 6m	No	London	No	Yes: plumber, needs qualifications
17	BH	27	WE	4yr	Yes	Norfolk	No	No
18	BH	23	BC	3yr	N/a	B'ham	No	No
19	BH	34	BC	8yr	No	Jamaica	Yes	Yes: continue on release as freelance beauty therapist
20	BH	31	AB	2yr 3m	No	Midlands	Yes	Yes: convenience/video store

Establishment: Send – HMP Send, Holl – HMP Holloway, EH – HMP Edmunds Hill, BH- Bullwood Hall

Ethnic Group: WE – White English, AB – Asian Bangladeshi, BC – Black Caribbean,
BB – Black British, BA – Black African, MRC – Mixed Race Caribbean,
WI – White Irish, AP – Asian Pakistani