



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

RESEARCH

BIS RESEARCH PAPER NO. 245

Evaluation of the Enterprise Pilots
in Prisons

OCTOBER 2015

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background and policy aims

The Enterprise Pilots in Prisons were a cross-Departmental project led by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), and championed by Lord Young in his role as Enterprise Adviser to the Prime Minister, to encourage and support entrepreneurial activity in the UK.

The pilots targeted offenders who wanted to start their own business after their release from custody. The intervention was designed to start when offenders were in their last three to six months in custody and continue after their release. Offenders received mentoring and access to finance (through the Start Up Loans Company), although their business could not be operationalised and finance was not made available until after their release.

The pilots were a BIS initiative but operated with the full support of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and National Offender Management Service (NOMS). The **policy aims** were to:

- help break the cycle of re-offending;
- help individuals progress to self-employment on release;
- or, if more suited to other routes, help individuals progress to employment or other education or training on release.

The pilots were launched in April 2014 and ended in March 2015. They took place in five prisons across two regions: four in the North East and one in South Central. These prisons differed in terms of category, type and size, and were selected to allow testing of the concept and modes of delivery in different environments and with different offenders. BIS provided a high level outline of the different stages of the programme (a pilot 'Pathway') but each region was able to adapt how each stage was implemented to reflect local needs and the different prison environments and regimes.

1.2 Evaluation objectives

BIS commissioned IFF Research to conduct an early stage evaluation to test 'proof of concept' and explore what processes worked, where and why (or why not). The evaluation was primarily concerned with the following objectives.

1. **Assess the design and implementation** of the programme and establish what we can learn from the pilots to improve programme delivery.
2. **Establish what outputs and outcomes have been achieved** by the pilots – and what could be achieved from a larger scale programme.
3. **Scope the monitoring and evaluation** of a wider roll-out of the programme.

1.3 Methodology

To meet the evaluation objectives, the following five-stage approach was adopted.

1. **Scoping stage:** in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and delivery partners.
2. **Research with participants:** up to three interviews per person with a selection of participants, typically taking place in custody soon after joining the pilot and before release and by telephone after release.
3. **Research with stakeholders, delivery partners, mentors and those in support roles:** to gather evidence on experience of delivery and/or supporting the programme.
4. **Analysis of monitoring data:** collected by delivery partners and passed to IFF as part of the evaluation.
5. **Analysis and reporting:** to document the evidence and make an assessment on the proof of concept of the programme.

1.4 Key findings

The scale and short-term nature of the evaluation (along with the methodological issues faced when conducting the research) mean that definitive conclusions cannot be made at this stage as to whether or not the key policy aims have been met. However, the report does provide:

- insight into **aspects of the programme that appear to be generating the highest level of engagement** among participants;
- an assessment of the **direction of travel** against the policy aims; and
- an assessment of the available evidence **on proof of concept**.

There is a demand for the programme

The early stage evaluation evidence is consistent with the view that there is a demand for a programme of this type.

In both regions, large numbers of offenders expressed an interest in the pilots. In South Central candidates who were potentially suitable for the programme had to be deferred to the next cohort and the final cohort was oversubscribed.

Participants were attracted to the programme's focus on self-employment and the opportunity to receive support in achieving this goal. Self-employment is a genuine goal for many offenders as it avoids some of the issues they perceive in terms of stigma and discrimination arising from disclosure of past convictions when trying to secure employment. Many of the participants also expressed a desire to "be their own boss".

The pilots are perceived by participants and stakeholders to be unique in providing a practical goal-orientated focus and tailored approach

Offenders involved in the programme recognised it as **being different from other provision they have received whilst in custody. The pilots were perceived to have a stronger focus** on individual business plans and ideas (in comparison to other business courses which were deemed to be more generic).

Offenders were positive about the goal-orientated structured pathway to setting up business and securing funding.

The programme was delivered by partners with up-to-date business knowledge.

Stakeholders felt that the pilots fitted well with existing Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) provision and similar work delivery partners are involved in.

Positive elements of the in-custody support were identified

Internal pitches, where participants pitched their idea to a panel to gain a provisional decision on their business idea/loan, and which were adopted part way through the programme in South Central, appeared to help maintain participant motivation. They gave participants confidence in their plans upon their release and allowed them to quickly progress with them after their release.

Peer support was evident amongst offenders who were/wanted to be involved in the pilots. In South Central particularly, where participants went through the programme as a cohort (although there was some evidence in the North East as well), peer support and general enthusiasm amongst prisoners encouraged skills development and raised interest in the programme.

Participant engagement with the programme varied considerably

Many participants were very enthusiastic about the programme and their self-employment ideas but a proportion were not engaged. Those who were engaged with the programme were more likely to report that they had developed skills as a result of being on the programme than those who were less engaged.

Evidence suggests that participants demonstrating the highest levels of engagement with the programme were **those who clearly identified the programme as being distinct from other training** and **those who felt that they were getting the right level of interaction** with their delivery partner. There is also some evidence to suggest that those who were self-referred/or were proactive in getting onto the programme tended to be more engaged.

There is some evidence of the pilots achieving interim objectives that are necessary to realise its key outcome goals

Positive short term outputs have been achieved: participants and stakeholders reported an array of different skills being developed amongst those that engaged well in the programme.

There has been a degree of loan and business start-up activity: there have been examples of loan approval, draw down of the Start Up Loans and commencement of new business.

Some participants have made contact with their mentors after their release and have remained engaged with the programme as a result.

Many participants were motivated to change their lifestyle after release and reported that they felt the programme has helped or will help reduce their chances of re-offending by giving them something to focus on and strive towards after they are released from custody. Stakeholders also feel that the programme has real potential to help reduce chances of participants re-offending.

It is too early to say how effectively the pilots will achieve their key goals

Given the early stage nature of the evaluation, there is as yet little evidence showing how extensively key programme outcome objectives (associated with new business start-up and a reduction in reoffending rates) are being/or will be achieved.

1.5 Challenges in delivering the pilots

Participants (particularly those in closed prisons) faced difficulties in terms of conducting the research needed for their business plans

The difficulties faced were primarily due to a **lack of IT access** and this has the potential to impact negatively on some participants' ability to apply for loans in custody or soon after release.

Evidence suggests that a lack of ability to progress business plans to a stage that a participant can "hit the ground running" on release could be the cause of much frustration and could potentially lead to a loss of momentum/interest in the programme.

Maintaining participant motivation "through the gate" is likely to be one of the most difficult parts of the programme

Evidence collected so far shows that where participants have engaged with the programme after their release, **there have been few issues with post-release programme delivery**. Engagement post-release may be aided through the internal pitch mechanism, where participants pitch their idea to a panel whilst still in custody to gain a provisional decision on their business idea/loan.

Communication about how the programme dovetails with other “through the gate” services could be improved

It has not been clear to a number of stakeholders how the programme synchronises with the benefits system on release. This has led to a number of participants being misinformed about the most appropriate route to enable them to progress their self-employment plans.

1.6 Lessons learnt

The pilots highlighted several key issues that will need to be addressed if this initiative is rolled out on a larger scale, particularly in a closed prison environment and over multiple sites. These were predominantly around improving communication between delivery partners and internal and external stakeholders, and developing clear, timely processes to ensure the efficient running of the programme. In addition, the difficulties faced by participants (particularly in closed prisons) in terms of researching business plans need to be considered.

2. Introduction

2.1 Policy background

The Enterprise Pilots in Prisons were a cross-Departmental project led by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), working closely with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

The pilots were an extension of a wider government scheme, championed by Lord Young in his previous role as Enterprise Adviser to the Prime Minister, to encourage and support entrepreneurial activity in the UK. A strategic decision was made to extend the scheme by targeting specific groups in society who face greater challenges than most when trying to start up a business. Ex-offenders were identified as one of these groups: their criminal records mean they often face a number of difficulties securing employment after their release and they experience particular challenges accessing finance to help them with self-employment opportunities. Many prisoners see self-employment as an attractive option post-release¹, often because it avoids some of the issues they perceive in terms of stigma and discrimination arising from disclosure of past convictions. There is an established correlation between employment opportunities and reducing reoffending².

The pilots were targeted at offenders who wanted to start their own business after their release from custody. The pilots were run and funded by The Start Up Loans Company, which operates through a network of local delivery partners. Participants in the pilots were offered a business mentor, who provided the requisite training, advice and support necessary to develop their own business. Furthermore, the programme provided a gateway to accessing finance to support business development in the form of a repayable loan, through The Start Up Loans Company. Support started in custody when offenders were in their last three to six months in custody and continued after their release. Participants' businesses could not be operationalised and finance was not made available until after their release.

The Enterprise Pilots in Prisons was a BIS initiative but operated with the full support of MOJ and NOMS. This introduced wider policy aims beyond the BIS focus on boosting enterprise activity. The pilots were also consistent with MOJ's Transforming Rehabilitation Strategy, which has transformed the way offenders are managed in the community by opening up the delivery of rehabilitation services to a broad range of providers. Key to this is the emphasis on offering 'through the gate' support so that the vast majority of prisoners benefit from a universal resettlement service and continuity of provision from custody to the community.

The pilots were launched in April 2014 and ended in March 2015. They took place in five prisons across two regions: four prisons in the North East and one prison in South Central. These prisons differed in terms of category, type and size, which provided an opportunity

¹ <http://www.dti.gov.uk/files/file38350.pdf>; AIM Partnership Report by Business Enterprise Support Limited: The Enterprise Journey for Offenders; July 2014

² Ministry of Justice, Analysis of the impact of employment on reoffending following release from custody using Propensity Score Matching, March 2013 www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/ad-hoc/impact-employment-reoffending

to test the concept and modes of delivery in different environments and with different offenders.

2.2 Policy aims

The **policy aims** for the Enterprise Pilots in Prisons programme were to:

- help break the cycle of re-offending;
- help individuals progress to self-employment on release;
- or, if more suited to other routes, help individuals progress to employment or other education or training on release.

2.3 Evaluation objectives

In July 2014, BIS commissioned IFF Research to conduct an early stage evaluation to test 'proof of concept' and explore what processes worked, where and why (or why not). The evaluation of the pilots was primarily concerned with the following objectives:

1. **Assess the design and implementation** of the programme and establish what we can learn from the pilots to improve programme delivery.
2. **Establish what outputs and outcomes have been achieved** by the pilots – and what could be achieved from a larger scale programme.
3. **Scope the monitoring and evaluation** of a wider roll-out of the programme.

BIS provided a draft logic model for the programme against which the pilots would be assessed³.

The evaluation recorded progress against the agreed outputs but it was not intended that the programme be assessed on numerical targets. This applied to all outputs including: the number of individuals screened and assessed, the number of participants going through the programme, the number of businesses started or the number of loans successfully taken out.

The notion of there being no numerical targets in this evaluation was fully supported by key stakeholders who agreed with this approach on the basis that:

- the evaluation tested the concept in different prison regimes to understand what processes worked, where and why (or why not);
- there were limitations on the ability to measure outputs and outcomes because of the short duration of the evaluation; and
- the small-scale nature of the pilots did not produce robust data.

³ The logic model was refined as part of the evaluation. The final model is included in Appendix B.

More details about the evaluation objectives are provided in Appendix A.

2.4 Methodology

To meet the evaluation objectives, IFF in close collaboration with BIS, designed the following five-stage research programme. More details about the methodology are provided in Appendix C and discussion guides for the research with participants are provided in Appendix D.

Scoping stage

A total of eight in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and delivery partners were conducted early in the evaluation to **refine the evaluation objectives**.

Research with pilot participants

Research was conducted with offenders **to gather evidence about participant experiences and progress** towards agreed outputs.

Up to three in-depth interviews per person were conducted with a selection of offenders, typically taking place at the following stages:

- face-to-face in custody soon after joining the pilot;
- face-to-face in custody before release;
- by telephone after release.

A total of 58 of these interviews were completed with 50 participants. The table below shows the breakdown of the interviews achieved by prison, region and round⁴.

In custody interviews were achieved through two visits to each prison, where as many interviews as possible were conducted with offenders at different stages in the programme (joining and pre-release).

Research with stakeholders, delivery partners, mentors and those in support roles

A further 16 in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals in these roles to **gather evidence on experiences of delivery and/or supporting the programme**.

⁴ One participant was interviewed at all three stages of the research programme. One participant completed a pre-release and post-release interview. Two respondents completed a post-release interview only. Twelve participants completed joining and pre-release interviews whilst in custody. The remaining 34 participants who took part in the research completed one in-custody interview.

Table 1: Number of interviews by prison and region⁵

Prison	Round 1	Round 2	Post-release	Total
HMYOI Deerbolt	3	2	-	5
HMP Durham	4	2	-	6
HMP Holme House	8	5	-	13
HMP, HMYOI Low Newton	6	4	1	11
<i>North East Total</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>25</i>
HMP Springhill	13	7	3	23
<i>South Central Total</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>23</i>
Overall Total	34	20	4	58

Analysis of monitoring data

Delivery partners were required to collect monitoring data on all participants. This information was anonymised and shared with IFF as part of the evaluation and included information on:

- key demographics – age, gender, ethnicity;
- education and employment history;
- evaluation information – how participants became aware of the programme, details of support received, loan status, details of business proposed;
- Start Up Loans information – loan repayment performance, company details; and
- attendance register.

Analysis and reporting

The purpose of this stage was to document the evidence against each of the evaluation objectives and **make an assessment on the proof of concept** of the programme.

2.5 About this report

The purpose of this report is to present findings for the Evaluation of the Enterprise Pilots in Prisons and recommendations for a wider evaluation programme should the decision be taken to roll-out the Enterprise in Prisons Programme on a larger scale.

The scale and short-term nature of the evaluation (along with the methodological issues faced when conducting the research) mean that definitive conclusions cannot be made at this stage as to whether or not the policy aims have been met. However, the report does provide:

- lessons on the implementation and process of delivery;

⁵ Out of 104 participants in the North East and 40 in South Central. Not all participants had started the pilots when the evaluation began.

- insight into aspects of the programme that appear to be generating the highest level of engagement among participants;
- an assessment of the direction of travel against the policy aims; and
- an assessment of the available evidence on proof of concept.

2.6 Report structure

This report examines participant and stakeholder experience at various stages of the Enterprise Pathway. Using the data collected through interviews with participants and stakeholders (as well as observations made by researchers) as the evidence base, a discussion is presented on how each stage worked in practice and what lessons can be learnt should the Enterprise programme be rolled-out.

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 3** gives an overview of the programme and the Enterprise Pathway as well as profiling the prisons that took part in the pilots and how they adapted the Pathway to meet their needs locally.
- **Chapter 4** outlines how and why offenders became interested in the programme, as well as looking at the volume of offender participation.
- **Chapter 5** evaluates Stages 1 and 2 of the Enterprise Pathway (screening and assessment).
- **Chapter 6** evaluates Stages 3 and 4 of the Enterprise Pathway (enterprise training and business planning).
- **Chapter 7** evaluates Stages 5 and 6 of the Enterprise Pathway (application for Start Up Loans and post-release mentoring support).
- **Chapter 8** discusses, based on the evidence gathered to date, the degree to which the pilots made progress against intended outcomes and policy aims.
- **Chapter 9** discusses options and recommendations for a wider evaluation.

Chapters 4-8 start with 'Key Findings' and end with 'Factors to consider if the programme is to be rolled-out'.

A number of case studies are also provided at the end of the report to exemplify some of the issues that are discussed throughout.

3. The Enterprise Pilots programme

This chapter provides an overview of the Enterprise Pilots programme and how it was operationalised in the prisons in which it ran.

3.1 Participating prisons

As Table 2 shows, five prisons were selected to participate in the programme⁶. A range of prison types were selected, in terms of category, population gender and population age. This allowed the testing of the concept of the programme in different environments (e.g. within closed and open institutions, within a single institution and across multiple sites) and with different target groups.

Table 2: Characteristics of the pilot prisons

Region	Prison	Category	Description
North East	HMYOI Deerbolt	C Closed	Male, age 18-21
	HMP Durham	B Closed	Adult Male, local
	HMP Holme House	B Closed	Adult Male, local
	HMP, HMYOI Low Newton	Closed	Female, aged ≥18
South Central	HMP Spring Hill	D Open	Adult Male

Each region had one designated delivery partner: Pinetree in the North East and Bright Ideas Trust in South Central.

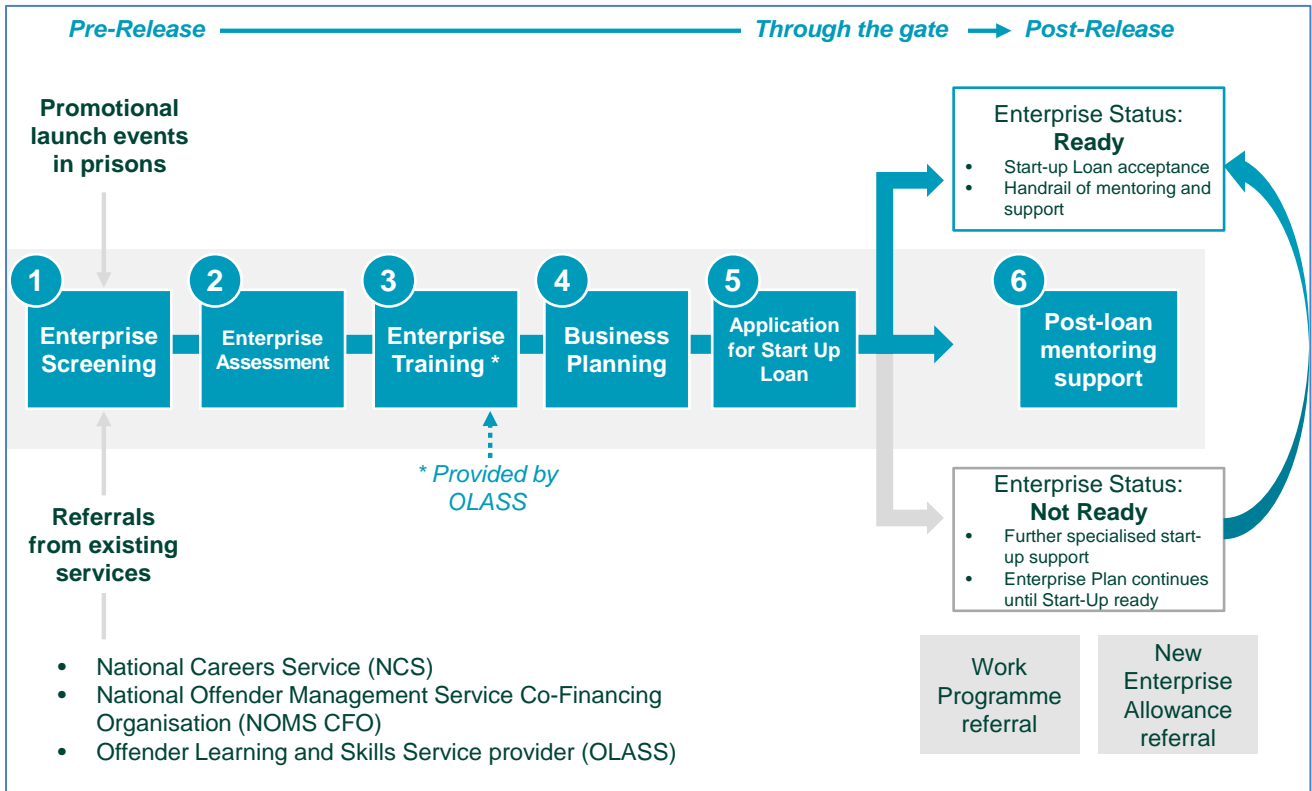
3.2 Enterprise Pathway

The Enterprise Pilots in Prisons was a distinct programme that was designed to complement existing in-custody business/enterprise education and training courses. The programme was designed to follow a Pathway (designed by BIS) containing the six core steps that are outlined in Figure 1. The Pathway was discussed and agreed during cross-Departmental discussions.

The intervention was designed to start in the three to six months leading up to a participant's release from custody and continue after their release into the community. The pre-release sections of the programme were expected to last approximately 12 weeks, depending on the level of support required by the participant.

⁶ Initially, it was intended that HMS Bullingdon in South Central would also participate but this prison was subsequently withdrawn from the programme.

Figure 1: The Programme Pathway



Within these six steps (each of which delivery partners were involved with), there were three unique features that differentiated the pilots from other enterprise programmes delivered in custody, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Unique features in the pilots programme

Step	Unique feature
1. Enterprise screening – designed to ensure public protection was integrated into the process <i>before</i> the offender is assessed.	The programme was designed to be as inclusive as possible (e.g. participants should not be disqualified on the basis of their offence, age, gender etc.) but participants had to be identified as suitable for the programme through a screening and assessment process.
2. Enterprise assessment – applying criteria to assess ideas and motivations; making sure the right people progressed onto the course.	
5. Application for a Start Up Loan – discussing and preparing for the Start Up Loan application whilst in custody.	Integrating access to finance into the programme was a first for in-custody programmes. It was planned that this would reduce delays in access to finance after release and was part of the ‘through the gate’ experience.

3.3 Adapting the Pathway

The Pathway provided the template for the pilots which had to follow the six steps. However, the regions were able to adapt how each stage was implemented to reflect different prison environments and regimes and for the North East that the programme was being implemented across multiple sites. Table 4 summarises how the regions adapted the Pathway to their local needs.

Table 4: Regional differences in the Pathway

Step	North East	South Central
1. Enterprise screening	Screening in-house and assessing using a tool designed by Manchester College.	Screening and assessing potential participants occurred in-house . ⁷
2. Enterprise assessment		
3. Enterprise training	<p>Recognising the role of existing enterprise training and building upon local partnerships, the pilots embedded Step 4 into Step 3 i.e. business planning was integrated into the format of existing training.</p> <p>Accredited Enterprise training was delivered by OLASS providers and pilot participants received this group training alongside others (not on the pilots).</p>	<p>This pilot had a clear focus on Step 4 i.e. business planning leading the programme. Any training needs were identified within the context of discussing business ideas.</p> <p>Ran one cohort at a time in a group format, classes were held once a week and lasted two-hours. Different themes were discussed each week.</p>
4. Business planning	<p>The delivery partner attended these training sessions at agreed times and took the participants out of the group for a dedicated one-to-one business planning session.</p> <p>Participants went through the programme as individuals.</p>	<p>Participants developed their business plans at their own pace using a blueprint. They had the opportunity to hold one-to-one discussions with the delivery partner on issues specific to their plans during group sessions.</p> <p>Participants went through the programme as a cohort.</p>

Continued over leaf

⁷ Although South Central did not use the designated screening forms to do this.

5. Application for Start Up Loan	Participants were required to pitch their business idea to a panel after their release.	Part way through the pilot, South Central incorporated an internal pitch into the programme. Participants put forward their ideas to a panel (which included a representative from The Start Up Loans Company) whilst they were still in custody to get a provisional decision in time for their release. ⁸
6. Post-release activity	Delivery partners intended to give more time to participants after their release from custody due to the challenges of delivering the programme in a closed prison environment across multiple sites, and the desire to maintain “through-the-gate” engagement.	No changes were made to this stage in South Central. Post-release mentoring support would be delivered by delivery partners once the participant had been released.

3.4 Anticipated number of participants

For delivery partner resourcing purposes, estimates were made on how many offenders would be involved with the programme. Table 5 illustrates the estimates that applied to both regions. The actual number of participants involved in the pilots are discussed in section 4.3.

Table 5: Initial estimates on participation in each region

Description	No. of offenders per region
Number of offenders who would show interest in the pilots	c.100
Number of offenders who would be screened and assessed (not all applicants would pass these steps)	30-40
Number of offenders accepted onto the programme (passing screening and assessment)	15-20

⁸ For Cohort 1, this process occurred post-release. For Cohort 2, this was undertaken pre-release.

3.5 Collection of monitoring data

Delivery partners were required to collect data about the participants to monitor their delivery of the pilots and to collect basic information (e.g. on the characteristics of participants) for the evaluation. The spreadsheet for the collection of monitoring data was discussed with and agreed by the delivery partners at the beginning of the pilots and discussed at the regular Task and Finish Group meetings between BIS, other key stakeholders and the delivery partners.

The information collected included basic demographic information (such as age, ethnicity, disability), education and employment history, including whether they had been employed previously or self-employed before, and their business idea.

4. Evaluating the Enterprise Pathway: routes onto the programme

This chapter examines the ways in which offenders got involved with the programme and their motivations for doing so.

- Across both regions, large numbers of offenders expressed an interest in the pilots and large numbers were referred onto/applied to be on the programme.
- In South Central candidates who were potentially suitable for the programme had to be deferred to the next cohort and the final cohort was oversubscribed.

Participants who were proactive in securing their place on the programme demonstrated the highest levels of engagement with the pilots.

Participants were generally attracted to the programme's focus on self-employment and the opportunity to receive support in achieving this goal and/or build on existing skills.

4.1 Routes onto the programme

Participants were made aware of the pilots in different ways, from launch events and word-of-mouth recommendations from other offenders to referrals from tutors and careers advisers. The commonality of these routes differed by region and institution.

Routes onto the programme in the North East

Low Newton and Deerbolt hosted **launch events** and organised a motivational speaker to give a presentation to offenders about the benefits of self-employment. The delivery partner contributed to this event and afterwards spoke informally to those expressing an interest in the pilots.

Participants who attended the launch events talked very positively about the impact it had on them. Positive recall was particularly high in Low Newton where most felt they understood the aims and purpose of the programme as a result of the event and the co-ordinated delivery partner involvement. According to the monitoring data, 10 out of the 96 participants where this information was available found out about the programme through the launch event.

The majority of participants in Deerbolt, Durham and Holme House were **referred onto the programme** (86 of the 96 where information was available on the monitoring data).

Referrals could be made through several channels and usually occurred after participants had expressed some level of interest in self-employment to tutors or careers advisers.⁹ However, there were significant variations in the level of interest that had been expressed.

There were a small number of cases in Durham and Holme House where offenders heard about the pilots through seeing information in their prison or **through word of mouth** from other offenders/participants and they approached staff about a place on the programme. Staff then referred them onto the programme. Engagement and motivations seemed to be higher where involvement in the programme had been **driven by the participant**. They did not always know clearly what the programme involved at the point of expressing interest but they were engaged by the concept.

There were also a few cases in each of these three prisons where participants were unclear how they ended up on the programme. These individuals could not always recall an occasion where they might have expressed interest but instead 'assumed' they must have. In these cases, participants expressed low levels of interest in self-employment and little enthusiasm for any type of business planning. There was little evidence to suggest that these participants were suitable for the programme.

Routes onto the programme in South Central

Spring Hill delivered the programme to four separate cohorts of participants. There was no formal referral process within South Central.

The first cohort of offenders (and a few among the second cohort) largely became aware of the programme as a result of attending a **launch event or internal advertising** about the programme.

Participants who were not at the launch event learned about the programme mostly through word of mouth from other offenders. Those in the first Cohort became advocates for the programme and encouraged others to get involved. Due to the enthusiasm generated amongst participants, by the third cohort, participation was largely the result of **self-referral**, illustrating the positive "ripple effect" generated by programme participants.

Of the information available from the monitoring data (20 records), eight were made aware of the programme through advertising and the launch event, nine through other prisoners and three from prison employees.

Most of the participants in South Central were proactive in securing their place on the programme and those who were seemed to be more fully engaged with the programme and motivated to complete it.

⁹ OLASS, Pertemps (training provider) and the National Careers Service.

4.2 Participants' motivations

The majority of participants, across both regions, highlighted the following as the key factors that made the programme appealing and motivated them to part-take in it.

- They were attracted to the core purpose of the programme because they were **very interested in self-employment**. Many anticipated difficulties finding employment on release due to their criminal record.
- They were also attracted to self-employment because it created the opportunity to **put their existing skills and/or experience into use**. Some participants had business ideas prior to starting the programme that were linked to existing skills. Others knew they had skills but were unsure how to make best use of them. They all believed this programme would enable them to translate their skills into a business proposition¹⁰.
- Participants were also strongly attracted to the benefits of having a **mentor** and some to the opportunity to apply for **funding**. These were among the most attractive aspects of the programme to a number of participants.

4.3 Volume of offender participation

As already discussed, this evaluation does not assess the pilots by measuring outputs against numerical targets. However, the volume of participants who expressed interest in the programme and were involved at any one point serves to reinforce the finding that there is an appetite for this type of provision amongst participants. It also provides useful background to the findings that will be discussed throughout this report.

In the North East 114 offenders were involved with at least one stage of the programme and a large proportion of these were routed onto the programme in the first few months of the pilots¹¹.

In South Central a total of 40 offenders (across four cohorts) were involved in the pilots and a number of potentially suitable offenders had to be turned-away from the programme due to resourcing issues.

¹⁰ See Said's case study for an example of this.

¹¹ However, there was evidence to suggest that not all participants in the early stages of the pilots were suitable for the programme.

Factors to consider if the programme is rolled out

The launch events and referral processes have provided useful routes into the programme for those interested in self-employment. However, the referral process in the North East did not consistently lead to the right people being on the programme (discussed further in Chapter 5).

Route into the programme matters because evidence suggests that participants demonstrating the highest levels of engagement with the pilots are those who:

- played a **proactive role** in securing their place on the programme; and
- were **better informed** about the aims at the point of joining the programme.

Volume of offender participation: Consideration should be taken to ensure that delivery partners have the capacity required to effectively deliver the programme to those who are accepted onto it without compromising the quality of provision.

Those engaged in OLASS vocational provision, as well as accredited OLASS provision, may also be interested in participating in the programme.

5. Evaluating the Enterprise Pathway: Steps 1 and 2 – Screening and Assessment

This section examines the first two steps of the Enterprise Pathway. It discusses how potential participants were assessed in terms of their suitability for the programme and outlines how this could be improved if the pilots were to be rolled-out across the HMP Estate.

Key findings

In the early stages of the pilots in the North East:

- **There did not seem to be a stringent referral process** and it is unclear what criteria participants met to warrant being referred onto the programme other than expressing a vague interest in self-employment.
- **Screening and assessment was not always conducted at the right time**, resulting in some unsuitable participants taking part in and/or staying too long on the programme.
- **Responsibility for screening and assessment (and collection of monitoring data) was not always clearly defined.**

Participants in **South Central** were **selected largely on the basis of having a feasible business idea**. Those coming to the end of their sentence were favoured.

The programme **attracted a range of ages** and **some participants had previous experience of self-employment. Business ideas were often linked to existing skills and experience.**

5.1 Screening and Assessment

The Enterprise programme was designed to follow the six steps illustrated in the Enterprise Pathway in section 4.2. Enterprise screening, the first stage of the pathway, was designed to ensure that the participant and their business idea did not pose a threat to the public. If a participant passed this stage they were underwent an Enterprise assessment which assessed their suitability for the course in terms of their motivation and self-employment plans.

The Enterprise pilots were not designed to be open to all, the assessment aimed to ensure that it effectively targeted appropriate participants.

As noted in section 3.3, different approaches for assessing participant suitability for the programme were adopting in the North East and South Central.

Screening and assessment in the North East

In the North East (potential) participants were screened and assessed in a two-stage process. This involved an initial screening exercise to ensure there were no public protection issues with the participant or their business idea and another assessment, using a tool designed by Manchester College, which assessed their suitability for the course in terms of their motivation and the viability of their business idea.

Evidence suggests that the screening and assessment processes were not always fully completed or conducted at the most appropriate stage of the Pathway. This was potentially because **overall responsibility for screening and assessment was not clearly defined within the prisons** in the region.

This may have been exacerbated due to perceptions by some stakeholders that the assessment and screening tools were repetitive. Some felt there was an unnecessary duplication of information across these steps of the Pathway (including additional requirements to collect monitoring data which is discussed in more detail in section 5.2).

In the early stages of the pilots particularly there did not seem to be a stringent referral process and it is unclear what criteria participants met to warrant being referred onto the programme other than expressing a vague interest in self-employment. Each offender who was referred onto the programme was considered a participant and required a full screening and assessment. This used up valuable delivery partner resource and evidence suggests that the volume of referrals diverted this resource away from offenders who were more engaged with the programme.

As a result of the inconsistent application of screening and assessment there were instances where participants progressed further along the Pathway than they perhaps should have because they were 'unsuitable' for the following reasons.

- **Their business idea was not viable.** Some participants had their business idea rejected by Offender Management Unit (OMU), due to public safety concerns or the business idea being too closely related to their offence, and this was not communicated to delivery partners.

- **They would not be able to secure a loan.** There were some cases where prisoners started participating in the programme, only to discover at later stages that it is unlikely they would be able to access a loan because they did not pass a credit check.
- **They were disengaged with programme.** Some participants were not motivated for the right reasons (i.e. they wanted “to get out of their cell” or they thought they would automatically get funding).

As the pilots progressed, partners took deliberate steps to streamline referral and assessment processes to ensure candidate suitability and thus their likelihood to fully engage with the programme. Improved referral communication and links between the various partners and stakeholders who were involved at the various stages of the Enterprise Pathway was garnered. In addition, those involved with the delivery of the programme took ownership and improved communication over screening and assessment processes.

Screening and assessment in South Central

South Central adopted a more flexible screening and assessment process. Offenders were largely selected on the basis of having a feasible business idea and those coming to the end of their sentence were favoured. Initial screenings were undertaken with the National Careers Service and referrals were only made to the programme if they considered self-employment to be an appropriate avenue for the prisoner. Potential participants attended sessions with the delivery partner who then assessed the viability of plans put forward.

These initial discussions with offenders about their business plans, experience and knowledge and the expertise of the delivery partners in knowing whether a business idea might work was a key ingredient of the screening/assessment process (across both regions but predominantly in South Central).

5.2 Participant characteristics

Delivery partners collected data about the participants to monitor their delivery of the pilots. However, the final monitoring data on programme participants was incomplete¹². It is therefore difficult to gauge how representative it is of the total participant population. Nevertheless, some observations can be made on the data available (albeit caveated).

- The programme attracted a range of ages (19 to 60 in the North East and 25 to 57 in South Central).
- Some participants had previous experience of self-employment: 11 of the 60 (North East) and 8 of 28 (South Central) participants where this information was available had previous experience of self-employment.

¹² Due to concerns by delivery partners that administration processes were impeding delivery of the programme and were overly repetitive, and a lack of understanding as to the purpose of the information being collected.

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- Some participants had been previously employed: 34 of 47 (North East) participants where this information was available had worked previously (data not available in South Central).

As discussed in section 4.2, participants' business ideas were often linked to their existing skills and experience. Examples of participants' business ideas were:

- Barbershops/hairdressers
- Cafés/restaurants/food stalls
- MOT, servicing and car valeting
- Gas safety engineering
- Painting and decorating
- Roofing
- Cleaning
- Landscape gardening
- Window cleaning
- Logging
- Recruitment
- Procurement

Factors to consider if programme is rolled out

Information systems: Information gathering systems and screening and assessment processes need to be developed and agreed prior to roll out. Delivery partners involved in the collection of information need to understand its purpose, their responsibilities and how these relate to other stakeholders involved in the programme, to improve buy-in and levels of completion.

Robust screening and assessment should be implemented at the appropriate stage in the process and not retrospectively. Checks to assess participants' business ideas, loan suitability and motivation need to be undertaken at the early stages of their engagement with the programme to avoid later disappointment and misused resource and to ensure high levels of engagement with the programme.

Resourcing: Level of resource to maintain complete and comprehensive data collection needs to be considered in relation to number of participants being accepted on the programme.

6. Evaluating the Enterprise Pathway: Steps 3 and 4 – Enterprise Training and Business Planning

This chapter examines steps 3 and 4 of the Enterprise Pathway. It explores programme delivery before evaluating participant engagement with the programme.

Key findings

The level of participant engagement with the programme varied considerably – but many participants were very enthusiastic about the programme and their self-employment ideas. Those who were engaged with the programme were more likely to report that the programme had helped them to develop skills.

The programme was perceived by many (participants and stakeholders alike) to be unique in providing a practical goal-orientated focus and tailored approach. The pilots showed participants the different routes available to them and helped them understand that starting their business is a potential option.

Stakeholders felt that the pilots fitted well with existing OLASS provision and similar work delivery partners are involved in. The pilots built on and extended the enterprise support already provided.

Findings suggest that the programme ran more smoothly within an open prison environment than in a closed prison environment and on a single site than across multiple sites. The unique challenges inherent in running programmes of this nature within a closed prison environment and across multiple sites need to be considered in advance of any roll out.

Programme identity, environment and delivery matter because evidence suggests that participants demonstrating the highest levels of engagement with the pilots are those who:

- Clearly **identify the programme as being distinct from other training**; and
- Feel they are receiving **the right level of interaction** with their delivery partner.

The “shared experiences” nurtured through a cohort/group approach have also been important in creating the high levels of engagement observed in Spring Hill.

6.1 Delivery of the training and business planning

The learning environment and programme delivery in the North East

In the North East delivery of the programme occurred predominantly on a one-to-one basis. Building on local partnership working in the region, the pilots in the North East ran alongside existing courses in each prison. Participants joined the existing courses, which were grouped based, and then received additional one-to-one Enterprise training, along with mentoring and support from the delivery partner. Due to this, some participants could not easily distinguish between the Enterprise pilots and the existing courses they were simultaneously enrolled on.

Participants reported having group sessions but this was generally at the beginning of the programme as an introductory session. Following these, one-to-one sessions were held flexibly throughout the programme and generally dictated by the pace of the participant.

Evidence suggests there were differences in the level of interaction participants had with their delivery partner. Participants in Low Newton, along with a minority in the other prisons, felt supported by and had significant levels of interaction with their delivery partner.

“I feel very positive about the programme. The tutors have been really good and supportive. I’m looking forward to learning about how to expand your business. I do enjoy the one-to-one sessions as they’re more focused, you can talk about your own progress more.”

(Low Newton, Pre-release)

However, particularly in the early stages of the research, participants in Deerbolt, Durham and Holme House, more often than not, reported having few, if any, one-to-one sessions with their delivery partner. The more informed among this group were disappointed as the low level of support was not what they expected¹³.

“I feel at this stage there could have been some more one-to-one time. I’ve only had one session with them to date and thought they would have been more frequent. It’s difficult to research my plans. [Delivery Partner] was supposed to be searching for information so I’m waiting for that to come through, I can’t really progress my Business Plan until that happens.”

(Holme House Pre-release)

This absence of one-to-one sessions were a problem for a number of participants who wanted privacy to discuss their own plans or lacked confidence to talk about their ideas in front of their peers.

¹³ See Gary’s case study for a good example of this.

Delivery challenges faced in the North East - in a closed prison and multiple site environments

Access to prisons and participants was a challenge, particularly at the start of the programme. **Security clearance for delivery partners was a protracted process and affected their ability to work with offenders.** In some cases, this was not granted until six months into the pilots. This impeded movement around the prisons, access to prisoners and caused pressure on internal resource as individuals needed to be escorted at all times.

In Durham and Holme House the **one-to-one sessions took place within the OLASS training room, whilst other existing training was being delivered.** Not physically moving away from the classroom environment to deliver the business planning element of the programme could have contributed to the assumption held by some participants that this was not a separate course. It could also have contributed to some participants' views that they were not receiving enough personal tuition/support.

Uncertainty around partners' roles and responsibility for the programme within the prisons presented another challenge. Feedback from a number of stakeholders suggests that no one internal partner within the prisons took overall responsibility for the programme. Where a number of different parties were involved, it was unclear which function the programme sat within. Therefore, there was confusion in terms of whose overall responsibility it was to drive forward the programme internally and ensure it was being delivered to a high quality standard. This resulted in a lack of momentum in the early stages, systematic delivery processes not being in place at the outset and miscommunication between partners. There were also **issues with the flow of information.** There have been examples where delivery has been potentially hindered due to partners not having the right information¹⁴ at key stages. Examples include:

- Delivery partners not always receiving timely feedback from OMU as to whether a participant's business plan is viable and it is appropriate to proceed.
- Delivery partners being uncertain of the release date of programme participants.
- Results of initial screening not routinely disseminated.

As the pilots progressed, the North East delivery partner put the following mechanisms in place in an attempt to streamline delivery.

- **Stronger relationships and communication lines were built between delivery and referral partners** to ensure only the most suitable candidates (i.e. those with a solid business idea) were being referred onto the programme.
- **Improved information systems were put in place** which allowed more effective tracking of prisoners, timelier sharing of screening and assessment information and prisoners' progress, and greater communication between various partners.

¹⁴ Potentially due to issues relating to data protection.

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- **Programme delivery was made more systematic.** Initially, delivery appeared to be patchy. As the pilots progressed, delivery partners increased resource allocated to the programme and were in contact with participants more regularly. This ensured a more routine delivery and prisoners had a clearer understanding of when they would next be able to access support.

The learning environment and programme delivery in South Central

Participants in South Central went through the programme as part of a cohort, with training delivered in groups in a classroom-type setting. The programme was delivered systematically through fixed weekly group sessions within a classroom environment.

Participants enjoyed **the group dynamic**, largely because it provided the opportunity for **peer support** to be nurtured both within and outside the classroom environment¹⁵. This was something that grew organically throughout the programme. The delivery approach provided opportunities for participants to help each other with ideas and share their knowledge. Participants bounced ideas off each other, considered approaches they had not previously thought about and felt encouraged to catch up with those who have more developed plans when not in the classroom. There was definitely a ‘buzz’ around the Cohorts and a **supportive** tone in the way participants discussed the group meetings.

“The group aspect of the programme has been very useful – sometimes we pair up and work on each other’s plans. Group work helps your plans to evolve.”

(Spring Hill, Pre-release)

Participants were very positive about the delivery partner and their style of delivery. The delivery partner was considered **knowledgeable, helpful, enthusiastic and thorough**. Participants valued the fact that the delivery partner operated externally in the business environment and has given them frank and current advice. In some cases, initial plans had been adapted or changed under the delivery partner’s guidance so as to be more realistic and manageable. Participants were extremely appreciative of this level of scrutiny as it **gave them confidence that they were progressing a water-tight, workable idea that would stand up to challenges**. Ideas have also been developed and influenced by labour market information provided by the delivery partner.

“I had a few ideas and was told what was feasible and what wasn’t. The person who delivers the course has been able do some research to show that there is demand for <role> in London.”

(Spring Hill, Pre-release)

Overall, because of the regular group meetings, which all in the Cohort attended, participants reported **high levels of interaction with their delivery partner**. However, some would like more interaction. More contact time would help them to **develop their ideas more quickly**. Desire for a change in frequency could be because their plans were more advanced, their pace of learning was not the same as others in the group or because

¹⁵ See James’, Said’s and David’s case studies for participant views on the group dynamic of delivery in South Central.

they did not want to wait a full week for any information they needed but could not access themselves.

“Speed was an issue – because we only had one session a week we were spending a lot of time waiting for the next session to get answers to our questions.”

(Spring Hill, Pre-release)

There was also a sense among some participants, albeit a minority, that they had to grab one-to-one time if it was needed because the group session took up the full two hours. If these participants wanted to discuss detailed or personal matters linked to their plans, they felt they had to sometimes **compete with others for one-to-one time**.

Participants were also positive about the balance created between delivery style and programme structure. The style of delivery was described positively as being **informal**, which suited the participants. At the same time, they were very clear about what was expected of them on the programme. They were very engaged with the course “blueprint” (the week by week guide to the different themes and steps in developing their plans) because it provided them with **a clear structure**. All participants referred to this blueprint.

“I’m pretty confident that I know what’s coming next in the programme. The blueprint makes it clear what the next steps are and we can work at more or less our own pace to get through the stages.”

(Spring Hill, Joining)

Delivery challenges faced in South Central

In South Central, there were few reported issues in terms of set-up and delivery. On the whole prisoners, felt engaged, supported and, at the point of release, confident that they had a viable, workable enterprise plan.

Feedback from stakeholders and participants suggest that advantages of programme delivery in South Central were:

Structured, classroom-based learning: The programme was delivered routinely as a 12 week course. This provided the prisoners with focus, a high level of interaction with the delivery partner, a good understanding of the aims of the programme and a clear learning pathway. Participants enjoyed the group dynamic this environment presented them with as it provided opportunities for them to help each other with their ideas, share knowledge, have their ideas challenged and build relationships.

Peer support: The nature of the regime in open prisons and the freer movement of prisoners provided the conditions for high levels of peer support to be generated. Prisoners were able to continue discussing their business ideas outside of the classroom which encouraged motivation and generated enthusiasm amongst other non-programme prisoners. In addition, there was a real sense of wanting to help each other progress their

ideas. This was demonstrated through participants learning from each other's skills and knowledge, as well as offers to conduct research for fellow participants¹⁶.

Strong internal ownership: Feedback from programme participants in South Central suggests that the programme has been driven strongly within the prison. They were able to identify key individuals responsible for delivery at early stages, built good working relationship with them and felt supported and encouraged throughout.

6.2 Participant engagement

There was considerable variation in the levels of engagement with the pilots. Engagement is important because it was found to be correlated with the development of skills. At one end of the spectrum, many participants were very engaged with the programme and eager to develop their business plans and at the other, there were participants who had relatively low levels of engagement and were less enthusiastic about developing any plans for the future (see Table 6).

The majority of interviewed participants in South Central were engaged with the programme. In the North East, however, participant engagement was more varied. In many respects, variation in level of engagement was a result of the following:

- the way participants were routed into the programme;
- the environment for learning and the way learning was delivered; and
- the higher than expected number of participants involved in the pilots in the region.

In the North East, the closed prison environment was also a factor, due to the more restricted access participants had to delivery partners, OLASS providers and the NCS. This meant they were less able to discuss queries about the pilots than participants in South Central, where the pilot took place in an open institution.

The evaluation research observed three levels of engagement amongst participants, as Table 6 shows. Each type was found in most of the prisons, though the balance between the types varied by prison. The typology of participants that emerged was based on engagement with the programme and with their business idea. These were in part influenced by the level of support they received whilst on the programme and the quality/judiciousness of referrals onto the programme.

¹⁶ See David's case study for a good example of this.

Table 6: Engagement typologies across the pilots

Type 1: Fully engaged	Type 2: Partially engaged	Type 3: Relatively disengaged
Participants are fully engaged with the programme, the idea of self-employment and their business plans	Participants are engaged with the concept of the programme but have less developed ideas and less clarity about what they should be doing to develop their plans	Participants are not particularly engaged with the programme and have little interest in developing a business plan
<p>Clear understanding of the programmes objectives and learning pathway</p> <p>High level of interaction with delivery partners</p> <p>Time with delivery partners valued and seen as worthwhile</p> <p>Motivated, determined and have belief that plans could become a reality</p> <p>Want their ideas to be scrutinised and challenged – enjoy discussing plans and uncovering issues they might not have thought of themselves</p> <p>Feel confident in their idea and prepared to argue the case for their business.</p>	<p>Idea of self-employment motivating but not always sure what line of business they want to go into</p> <p>Have less of an understanding of what the programme involves – not clear on the structure of the programme or what the end goal is</p> <p>More likely to identify barriers that could prevent them from completing the programme e.g. their own motivation levels/lack of focus, uncertainty about their future, lack of family support, coping with debt, etc.</p>	<p>No particular interest in the programme or motivation to develop a business plan</p> <p>No real understanding of the programme objectives with some being uncertain they are on a programme at all</p> <p>Relatively despondent about their future prospects and appear resigned to “this life” and, in some cases, the likelihood that they will reoffend.</p>
Present in each prison but the majority in Spring Hill (Male, D Open) and Low Newton (Female, Closed)	Present in each prison but the majority in Durham and Holme House (Male, B)	Present in Durham, Holme House (Male, B) and Deerbolt (Male 18-21, C)

Type 1: Fully engaged

These participants enthusiastically discussed their plans and could articulate their ideas, even if they were still in the early stages of developing a business plan. In many cases, their **business ideas aligned well with their previous experience and existing skill set and they demonstrated a passion and interest** in the line of work they were looking to move into.

These participants were extremely positive about the programme and believed it was providing them with a practical understanding of the different elements required to start up a business. They had a **clear understanding** of what the programme expects of them and what they can expect from their delivery partner. A majority knew about the Start Up Loan application process but views were mixed on whether they would want to take out a loan so soon after their release. A number of participants were determined to secure the loan early following their release whilst others feel they would rather work first to help accumulate the funds they might need.

They **valued their time with their delivery partner** and felt these sessions had been extremely productive in helping them develop and focus their ideas. Particularly in South Central, participants developed close working relationships with the delivery partner who was very highly regarded. Spring Hill delivered the programme through fixed weekly group sessions, and this created a real sense of camaraderie among participants within each Cohort. There was a real sense of a positive group dynamic and participants trusted the advice they receive.

Some had considered self-employment before but did not know how to go about translating their idea into practice. A number had tried self-employment in the past but with varying success and felt the programme filled in the gaps in their knowledge on how to plan better and drive their plans forward. All were realistic that substantial work would be required before and after their release to keep momentum with their plans but the programme has given them a real sense of hope. **They feel encouraged** that their plans could actually become a reality.

These participants were **confident that they will lead different lives after their release**. They were looking ahead and had already started to picture what their life and their business could look like. They recognised barriers to change, such as peer influence on release, but expressed a determination to change for themselves and their families. Most were confident about where they would live after their release and were positive about their future.

Type 2: Partially engaged

These participants were **motivated by the concept** of self-employment and pleased to have the opportunity to be involved with a programme that supports this idea but they had **less focus and direction** than those in Type 1.

For some, '*the idea*' of self-employment was the motivating factor behind their participation in the pilots rather than their desire to build on an existing business idea or because they were passionate about a particular line of work. In these cases, the participants were enthusiastic about learning how to set up a business but they had **little idea of what their business could be** or how to go about generating ideas. The Start Up Loan was the motivating factor for some, to the point that they seemed to have designed a business idea with the hope of securing funding rather than viewing the loan as a support mechanism. Some participants revealed debt problems, which could impact on their likelihood of securing a loan in any case. Indeed, some expressed concern that this would be a key barrier in achieving funding, which in some case seemed to affect their willingness to fully engage.

Among those who had started generating business ideas, they typically had low levels of experience or knowledge in the area of their proposed business and in some cases, little consideration of whether their existing skills set aligned well with their ideas. There was a drive for self-employment among these participants but they needed a greater level of help and/or persuasion to focus their energy and ideas.

Compared with Type 1, there was **less understanding of what the pilots involve** (goals, steps and/or activities) and what is expected of them as participants. There were also **lower levels of interaction with their delivery partner**. In some cases, this created disappointment as this was not meeting their expectations in terms of the level of support

they were hoping for. In other cases, they were fairly apathetic and were not taking an active role in seeking out support/guidance or attempting to progress themselves further.

These participants were also more likely than Type 1 to see **barriers that could prevent them from completing the programme**. Barriers included their own indecision about the focus of their business plan, uncertainty about their future, circumstances after their release (they report lower levels of family support) and concerns about coping with debt.

Type 3: Relatively disengaged

These participants had **no particular interest in self-employment and little motivation to develop a business plan**.

For these participants, the loose idea of self-employment had an element of appeal but they had not given any real thought to the type of business they wanted to start, nor had they considered what they have to do to make it happen. As such, they had not yet started to formulate any business ideas. They expressed **no real understanding of the pilots programme**. Some were very uncertain about why they are on the programme, other than thinking it could be because they happened to mention to a tutor or other support role (not quite in passing but with no real conviction) that they were considering self-employment.

In some cases, there was **despondency about the future** and some appeared resigned to 'this life' and the likelihood of reoffending if they were unable to find work quickly on release. Some could not contemplate looking to the future or considering any career-related plans while still in prison, feeling it to be a relatively meaningless exercise.

6.3 Programme identity

Identity was found to be an important factor in engagement. Identity mattered because participants who are not able to separate the pilots programme from other programmes are also less able to identify what the pilot programme is for, what they are trying to achieve and what the next steps are in terms of their business plans. The end goal lacks clarity and seems some way off.

For those fully engaged participants, the programme had a **strong identity**. It was seen as a **unique, innovative programme and was identified as being a separate entity** from other learning activities.

There was a feeling that this programme was different to other courses: that it provided these participants with in-depth, *practical* direction whereas other business courses tended to be more generic in content. The programme was more heavily focused on creating and making a success of *their* business, for example, not only studying what a cash flow plan is but creating one based on a real idea and real projections.

Engaged participants had a **solid understanding** of the programme's purpose and what it aims to achieve. These aims made it feel different in kind to other programmes, which also helped shape its identity.

“This course has something at the end of it to look forward to, other courses are good ideas but they never go anywhere – this has a real goal.”

(Spring Hill, Pre-release)

Within Spring Hill, contributing to this identity was the way participants were accepted onto the programme. Some referred to it as 'The Dragon's Den' course because they had to pitch their ideas to be accepted onto it (the assessment step) and also would need to pitch them again to secure funding (Start Up Loan application). These **unique steps** in the programme Pathway were recognised as being 'different' by a number of participants.

Also instrumental in shaping the programme's identity is **the learning environment**, specifically the group structure and the role and delivery style of the delivery partner.

Participants who were partially engaged or relatively disengaged tended *not* to be able to spontaneously identify the programme as being separate from other provision. For example, it was perceived to be part of a business course they are already taking. When asked about the progress they had made, they initially discussed progress on their other courses, for example, they could readily discuss the units they had completed on their advanced business course. They assumed the courses were one and the same. On probing (mentioning the delivery partners for instance) they were able to speak more specifically about the interaction they had with delivery partners and the work being undertaken with them.

This lack of recognition of the pilots programme could in part be a symptom of how participants are routed into it (they don't seek it out and know less when entering into the programme) and also a symptom of the environment in which they are learning.

6.4 How the pilots fit in with existing provision

Stakeholders felt that the pilots fitted well with existing OLASS provision and similar work delivery partners are involved in. The pilots built on and extended the enterprise support already provided. Stakeholders felt that it gave participants the opportunity to put the skills that they had learned on other courses that they had completed whilst in custody into practice. A number of participants also expressed this view.

Factors to consider if programme is rolled out

Appropriate set-up lead time is required to ensure the systems needed to deliver the programme effectively are in place:

- Adequate lead time is required to ensure delivery partners are fully vetted prior to the programme commencing and have freer movement and access to participants from the outset.
- Communication channels need to be established between various partners to ensure effective flow of information and that key information filters through the networks. Better understanding is required of the data protection processes that need to be established to facilitate the movement of data and enable effective delivery.

Understanding the environment: The interplay of partners and services within each individual prison varies and contribution to set-up and delivery of the programme has been different internally. The interaction between learning and skills, offender management and reoffending functions needs to be considered on a prison-by-prison basis and delivery needs to be flexible across prisons to accommodate the difference in these networks.

Internal responsibility: Decisions need to be made as to which function the enterprise programme sits within to ensure that it is being driven effectively at an internal level.

Running the programme in a closed prison environment: The difficulties associated with delivering the programme in a closed prison environment, and how this impacts programme delivery needs to be carefully considered.

Developing a strong identity and engagement in the programme: It is important that the programme has a strong identity and that participants have a clear understanding of the programme and its objectives.

Participant interaction with delivery partners: Participants need to have a sufficient level of interaction with delivery partners to ensure they are engaged with the programme and the right balance between group and one-to-one sessions.

7. Evaluating the Enterprise Pathway: Steps 5 and 6 – Application for Start Up Loan and Post-Release Mentoring Support

This chapter examines steps 5 and 6 of the Enterprise Pathway. It examines the process of applying for a Start Up Loan and examines, as far as possible, the level of support that participants received after their release from custody.

Key findings

Participants (particularly those in closed-prisons) faced difficulties in terms of researching their business plans due to lack of IT access and this has impacted negatively on their ability to apply for loans whilst they were in custody or very soon after release. Lack of ability to progress business plans in custody could potentially lead to a loss of momentum.

The opportunity for participants to pitch their business idea whilst they were still in custody was a popular part of the programme in South Central and allowed their ideas to be challenged and refined. It gave participants a degree of confidence in their plans, aimed to help participants stay motivated ‘through the gate’ and allowed them to progress with their plans quicker after their release.

Timing of the programme is important in relation to release date. A large gap between completion and release has the potential to impact on motivation levels and the likelihood of participants re-contacting delivery partners on release.

The small amount of evidence collected so far suggests there have been few issues with post-release programme delivery so long as the participant remains engaged with the programme after their release.

Communication about how the programme dovetails with other “through the gate” services could be improved. There was a lack of understanding amongst stakeholders as to how the programme synchronises with the benefits system and the Work Programme.

7.1 Start Up Loan applications

The approach to loan application differed between the North East and South Central. In the North East, the aim was to progress business plans as far as possible whilst the participant was still in custody and where possible, begin discussing the loan application and filling parts in. In South Central, as part of the programme from the second cohort on, participants pitched their idea to a panel, which included a representative from the Start Up

Loans Company, whilst they were still in custody. This enabled them to get a provisional decision on their business idea/loan in time for their release.

Start Up Loan applications in the North East

As discussed previously, awareness of and interest in applying for a Start Up Loan varied amongst participants in the North East. At pre-release interview stage, a number of participants had discussed the loans and had begun undertaking preparatory work in order to apply. However, this was generally as far as participants were able to take loan applications while still in custody. This was largely due to their inability to conduct research (e.g. understanding target markets, finalising pricing strategies and locating potential premises).

When asked about potential drawbacks of the programme, the majority of participants interviewed as part of the research stated that no/limited **access to IT was a major issue**. It was felt very difficult to develop business plans and cash flow forecasts without access to the appropriate software and very difficult to conduct research relating to their business plan without access to the internet. Although some reported that they got round this by asking friends, family or course providers and delivery partners to conduct research for them, this was not felt to be the most effectual method. It took responsibility out of the participants' hands and several reported that this lack of ownership caused them to feel frustrated and disengaged.

Due to the limited access to IT (and the impact that this in turn had on some participants' ability to develop their business plans) and the desire to keep prisoners motivated "through the gate", North East delivery partners weighted the balance of support towards the post-release stage.

Start Up Loan applications in South Central

As in the North East, IT access was also an issue for Spring Hill participants and for most the only drawback of the programme¹⁷. However, the category of the prison meant the impacts of this were less severe as it allowed for some mechanisms to be put in place to enable some research to be undertaken.

Strategies to get round access to online information included using weekend home visits or local town passes as opportunities to access the internet off-site and asking other participants with leave/passes to do this for them (which they were happy to do – further evidence of the sense of camaraderie the programme engendered).

Spring Hill also utilised volunteers from the Oxford Brookes University to help participants conduct research into their business plans. Students were volunteering in the prison prior to the pilots to conduct supervised IT sessions. Pilot participants were encouraged to tap into this resource, enabling them to research their business plans. Stakeholders (and participants alike) reported that this was extremely beneficial as it **provided a focus, kept ideas progressing with momentum and enhanced research skills**. Indeed, it was felt by one stakeholder in particular that this helped engender "a mature attitude" towards the funding they would potentially access, in the sense that securing funding was not the main

¹⁷ See Said's case study for a good example participants' views on the lack of IT access.

driver but rather a vehicle for them to achieve their business goals. They had a greater opportunity to really understand and practice budgeting and it was felt this enabled them to visualise how their business would operate in the real world financially. Over the course of the programme, stakeholders at Spring Hill felt they witnessed **a real sense of responsibility develop in participants in terms of the way they perceived and approached the idea of funding.**

Access to IT and the ability to research their business plans enabled participants in South Central to make more progress on their loan applications prior to release than participants in the North East. In Spring Hill, delivery partners built a pitch process in to the pilot. This involved participants pitching their idea to a panel to gain a provisional decision on their business idea/loan. Delivery partner's worked with participants progressing their ideas to the point that they were satisfied they would stand up to scrutiny from a panel and were strong enough to secure a loan.

For the first Cohort, the preparatory work was done pre-release but the pitch itself happened once participants had been released from custody. The second Cohort undertook the pitches while still in prison and both participants and stakeholders felt this was a better approach.¹⁸

From both the stakeholder and participants' perspective, the pitch process had value as it gave participants the opportunity to meet and present their case to key decisions makers. This gave participants a clear idea of the likelihood of receiving funding on release, which was beneficial in terms of giving them clear direction and maintaining determination to drive their plans forward. Participants also reported appreciating having their ideas scrutinised and challenged. This gave them confidence that either their business plan was viable as it stood, or alternatively they were provided with feedback on the area(s) that needed improving in order to secure funding.

7.2 Maintaining prisoner motivation “through the gate”¹⁹

Due to the different delivery models, approaches to maintaining prisoner momentum on the programme post-release were different in the two regions.

In the **North East** delivery partners aimed to maintain momentum through skewing the support towards post-release. The Pitch process²⁰ in **South Central** was intended to help maintain prisoner motivation “through the gate”. The pitch meant that participants had a clear indication of whether funding would be received and as a result would feel the process of getting the business in place had already begun before their release. Of the small number of post-release interviews conducted, there was some indication from participants that having a decision on their business idea meant that they could progress

¹⁸ See David's case study for a good example of participants' views on the internal pitch and how useful it was perceived to be.

¹⁹ Evidence of how post-release support worked in practice is currently limited due the small number of participants who had been released by the end of the evaluation period and the difficulties encountered when trying to contact those participants who had been released (four post-release interviews were conducted in total) For more details see Appendix C.

²⁰ where participants pitched their plans to a panel and gained a provisional decision on their business idea/loan

with their business plan quickly after their release and it gave them a focus, which helped to maintain motivation through the gate.

In addition, the delivery partner in Spring Hill has a network of other businesses they work with and were able to direct participants towards services they required to progress their business. Participants reported that the availability of this support helped them to feel like they were part of a business community at the point of release as they had a ready built a network of contacts. Motivation was also maintained throughout by the peer support mentality that grew organically as the pilot progressed (although there is, as yet, little evidence as to whether this peer support mentality has continued post-release).

Those who had been released from South Central reported having a good relationship with their delivery partner after their release²¹. They found the delivery partner to be approachable, easily contactable and they thought the level of support from them post-release had been extremely valuable in terms of helping business plans progress and helping them maintain momentum. It should be noted that two of these three interviews were conducted relatively soon after the participant had been released from custody so mid to longer term support could not be assessed. As a result they do not measure any difficulties that delivery partners might encounter in terms of maintaining participation and motivation in the mid to longer term.

7.3 Key challenges faced by delivery partners in delivering post-release support

Evidence from the post release interviews, suggests that where participants had engaged with the programme after their release delivery partners did not encounter many difficulties in terms of delivering post-release support. Three out of the four participants who completed post-release interviews thought that the delivery partner had provided them with all the support they needed. Nevertheless, delivery partners did face a number of challenges in delivering post-release support.

Maintaining contact with participants

For both regions, a key barrier for continuing support through the gate has been maintaining contact with participants. Due to concerns relating to data sharing²² and the accuracy of the contact details collected²³, delivery partners had to rely on participants proactively contacting them on release to access their support. In both regions however, delivery partner's attempted to meet with participants prior to their release and to encourage them to establish contact after their release but this was not always successful. In South Central, contact had been made with 3 of the 13 released participants at the time of the evaluation. Northern Pinetree was working with 20 released participants.

In addition, the change of staff on the programme in the North East also meant that the difficulty of re-contact was exacerbated further as it was not possible to provide released participants with revised contact details.

²¹ See James', Said's and David's case studies for examples of how post-release support worked in South Central.

²² Please see Appendix C for further details.

²³ Where contact details are collected, they can frequently be inaccurate/no longer operating.

“Out of area” participants

Furthermore, the North East delivery partner faced **difficulties in taking on participants who were “out of area”²⁴ on release**. Participants who were re-located outside of the region after their release put a degree of pressure on partners’ ability to deliver post-release support as some time is required to build links with other support organisations and ensure continuation of support on release (particularly the case in Low Newton).

Timing of enrolment

In addition, timing of the programme is important in relation to release date. A number of participants have been engaged with the programme but are not due to be released until next year. Stakeholders (including delivery partners) and participants alike expressed the view that a large gap between completion and ability to progress plans has the potential to impact motivation levels and likelihood of prisoner re-contacting delivery partners on release²⁵. It should be worth noting that, optimum timing for delivery is not always with programme designers/deliverers control as in some cases, release dates can be unpredictable (and pushed back or brought forward).

7.4 Compatibility with other post-release support

Most of the issues raised by participants in their post-release interviews related to understanding how the programme fit with other types of support available, particularly in terms of understanding how it fit with the benefits system and Work Programme.

Relationship with the benefits system

The evidence suggests there was a lack of understanding among some participants and stakeholders about the most appropriate benefit route for participants following release from custody. Department for Work and Pensions Employment and Benefit Advisers (EBAs) are based in resettlement prisons, and work closely with other partners in prisons to support resettlement both prior to release and in the community. In addition, they refer offenders to the National Careers Service in custody for career planning advice. Appointments with EBAs are available to all offenders on a voluntary basis, including participants of the pilots, to provide advice on eligibility for benefits and employment support on release. However, it was unclear whether participants on the programme had seen, or been encouraged to see, an EBA prior to release.

Feedback from a number of stakeholders suggests that miscommunications occurred about post release support from Jobcentre Plus throughout the pilots and this led to prisoners being misinformed about their position on release. Specifically the following issues arose:

- There was a misunderstanding as to whether participants were still eligible to claim Job Seekers Allowance on release whilst on the pilots or not.

²⁴ “Out of area” refers to participants on the programme who are likely to be living outside of the delivery partner’s catchment area on release.

²⁵ See Said’s case study for an example of this view.

- Stakeholders responsible for administering the advanced Job Seekers Allowance claims (prior to release) were not always informed when they were working with a pilot participant and therefore referring them on to the Work Programme.
- There was confusion amongst stakeholders over the eligibility criteria for the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA).
- Uncertainty as to whether the Work Programme was mandatory in all cases.

This was despite efforts to ensure an inclusive approach. For example, in the North East, the pilots were an agenda item at Local Offender Partnership meetings and in South Central one-to-one conversations were held with Employment and Benefit Advisers.

There appeared to be particular confusion over the New Enterprise Allowance²⁶, which some participants may have been eligible for on release. Although the research was unable to identify the sources of advice, some participants believed that the New Enterprise Allowance was a definite source of funding available to them and that this would be available immediately following release. In reality not all participants would have been eligible and applications take at least four weeks to process.

Ashley's case study demonstrates the misunderstanding surrounding eligibility for the New Enterprise Allowance. Again, the research was unable to identify the source of this advice, but she believed funding from NEA would be available on release as an alternative to the Work Programme. When Ashley went to Jobcentre Plus and informed them that this was her intention she was told that she had been given the incorrect information and that she needed to go onto the Work Programme. This left Ashley feeling frustrated with the programme.

"It's wrong. You are told one thing and you go into the Jobcentre and you're told 'no, that's not right'..."

(Low Newton, Post-release)

The evidence also suggests that communication **systems were not in place/being used to ensure adequate flow of information between some stakeholders with regards to the benefit system post-release**. In some cases, advisers were aware of the programme but the lack of information flow meant that they were unaware that claimants were on the programme. Limitations on data sharing and/or correct information sharing protocol not being in place added further complications. Stakeholder feedback suggests that even when a prisoner has provided consent to have their data shared there is often still a reluctance/nervousness for cross-service sharing of data.

²⁶ New Enterprise Allowance can provide money and support to help you start your own business if you're getting certain benefits. More information can be found at the following link www.gov.uk/new-enterprise-allowance

Other issues affecting progress post-release

A number of other issues that do not relate directly to the pilots but impacted on participants' ability to progress with their plans were also raised during the post-release interviews. Due to her criminal convictions, Ashley found it difficult to get her car insured (which was vital to the success of her mobile hairdressing business idea). Similarly, at the time of his post-release interview, David found it difficult to secure an appropriate property for his business.

"I had a few challenges, not from in terms of the delivery partner but the 'real world'...landlords are not interested in a new business – even though I am prepared to pay the asking price or they want higher deposits well in advance. I've had that happen a few times already."

(Spring Hill, Post release)

These examples demonstrate the need for an effective signposting system to be in place post-release (i.e. delivered through delivery partners) to ensure that participants are able to access guidance where required.

Factors to consider if programme is rolled out

In-custody programme:

- Considerations should be made as to how participants can progress further with their loan applications and business plans whilst they are in custody (particularly in terms of having IT access). Reliance on delivery partners to provide information/ conduct business planning research for participants could place additional pressure on their resource, particularly if there were a higher number of participants.
- Integrating in-custody pitch panels¹ into the process gives participants a degree of certainty and confidence in their idea which may help to maintain their motivation after their release. It also allows them to proceed with their plans more quickly on release.
- Engagement with EBAs in custody as early as possible after acceptance onto the programme is essential. This will ensure participants are informed of the most appropriate route on release with regard to benefit entitlement or eligibility to NEA, taking account of each individual's circumstances. It will ensure this is recorded for future engagement with Jobcentre Plus services in the community.

(Continued over leaf)

Factors to consider if programme is rolled out (continued)***Enrollment and continuing engagement***

- Programme completion should be timed to be near to release to ensure motivation and momentum is optimised at the point of release.
- Processes, such as information systems and data sharing procedures, need to be put in place to ensure effective tracking of and continued engagement with participants.
- Better linkages between delivery partners and other “Through the Gate” services may also improve contact with participants on release. Establishing relationships with participants’ Community Rehabilitation Companies¹, probation officers or offender managers have the potential to improve “through the gate” access.
- Close working relationships between delivery partners and resettlement providers are essential to deliver the best route/outcome for each individual and this is only achievable by good partnership working.

Considering other post-release challenges: Issues which are not directly linked to the programme (for example, a criminal record, being a new business) but could hinder a participant’s ability to progress with their business plans should be considered.

8. Progress against key outcomes

The short-term nature and scale of the pilots and evaluation mean that judgements cannot be made at this stage as to whether the overarching policy aims (to help break the cycle of re-offending and help individuals progress to self-employment, employment or other education or training) have been met²⁷. This chapter presents short-term observations of progress towards key outcomes, an assessment of the direction of travel against the policy aims and an assessment of the available evidence on the proof of concept.

Key findings

It is too early to say how effectively the pilots will achieve their key goals, associated with new business start-ups and a reduction in reoffending rates.

However, **there is some evidence of the pilots achieving interim objectives that are necessary to realise the key goals:**

- **Positive short term outputs have been achieved:** Participants and stakeholders reported an array of different skills being developed amongst those that engaged well in the programme.
- **There has been a degree of loan and business start-up activity:** There have been a few examples of loan approval, draw down of the Start Up Loans and commencement of new business.
- **There has been engagement with mentors post-release:** A number of participants have remained engaged with the programme and their business ideas after their release.

Interviewed participants were generally already motivated to change their lifestyle after their release. Many participants felt the programme would help them to change their lifestyle after their release and impact positively on their chances of reoffending.

Peer support was evident in the prisons and contributed to the development of business plans and the development of skills. In South Central particularly where participants went through the programme as a cohort (although some evidence in the North East as well), peer support and general enthusiasm amongst prisoners has encouraged skills development and raised interest in the programme. Those first through the programme in South Central provided feedback, guidance and advice to offenders who subsequently got involved in the programme.

The pilots created a 'buzz' around self-employment among both participants and prison staff and raised interest in the programme.

²⁷ See Appendix A for more details.

8.1 Progress against policy aims/target outcomes

Although it is too soon to assess whether long-term impacts have been fulfilled, this next sub-section discusses the progress against the outputs outlined in the evaluation Logic Model²⁸. These include:

- uptake of the programme;
- completion of in-custody programme and development of business plans;
- engagement with the programme and associated activities;
- increased employment skills and business management knowledge;
- progression of Start Up Loan applications and business start-ups;
- engagement with mentor post release;
- motivation to change lifestyle and improved commitment to achieve employment goal.

This chapter will also examine some “other” outputs of the pilots that were not outlined in the evaluation Logic Model.

Uptake of the programme by offenders

As discussed in Chapter 4, large numbers of offenders in both regions expressed an interest in the pilots and the number of offenders who participated in the pilots (in at least one stage of the Enterprise Pathway) was far larger than originally anticipated. Participants were attracted to the programme’s focus on self-employment and the opportunity to receive support in achieving this goal.

Completion of in-custody (pre-release) programme and development of business plans

As discussed in Chapter 7, the inability of participants to conduct the necessary research needed to develop their business plans was a barrier to completion for some respondents (particularly those in closed prisons).

Despite this, many participants developed feasible business plans through participation in the programme. In many cases these plans built on existing skills/experience of participants. The majority of these participants believed that the programme had helped them to develop their business plans by making them more detailed, thought-out and comprehensive. Many participants stated that the programme had given them a new perspective on the opportunities available to them and helped them to consider things they had not previously thought about, such as issues surrounding insurance and proceeds of crime.

²⁸ See Appendix B for logic model.

“I’ve benefitted from this programme 100%. Definitely. I’ve learned a lot more about business – cash flow and how to structure a business plan. I wouldn’t have considered those in the past.”

(Spring Hill, post-release)

“I have always wanted to have my own business but I’ve never known what to do. This programme gives the support and it cuts out having to find out where to go to get the ball rolling.”

(Spring Hill, Joining)

Engagement with programme and associated activities

As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, a number of factors meant that participants had differing experiences of the pilots and that participant engagement varied as a result. A typology of participants emerged based on engagement with the programme itself and engagement with their business idea. These typologies are summarised in Table 6. Those who were engaged were more likely than those who were not to state that they had benefitted and developed skills as a result of their participation in the programme.

Engagement varied as a result of the following.

- **The way participants are made aware of and routed into the programme matters**

Fully engaged participants are more likely to have *actively* signed up to the programme and to have established an *early relationship* with their delivery partner.

- **The learning environment and the way learning is delivered matters**

Fully engaged participants are more likely to recognise a *distinct identity* for the programme and have levels of *interaction with the delivery partner* that meet their expectations. They are more knowledgeable about the nature of the programme, its specific aims and objectives and the different stages of the Pathway.

- **The number of participants in each region and in each prison matters**

Demand for programme places has to be managed so as to meet delivery partner resource.

Naturally, engagement varied according to the motivation and drive of the individual participants also.

Increased employment skills and business management knowledge

There is evidence from stakeholders and participants to suggest that programme participants, particularly those that were fully engaged with the programme, developed a variety of skills on the pilots and enhanced their knowledge in a number of areas.

“Week after week you’re getting better and more confident about your business, research, presentation and delivery... it’s a lot of personal skills, a lot of the boys will take a lot of those away when they leave.”

(Spring Hill, Post-release)

“I have still gained from it. Mainly it’s a lot more knowledge on finance, VAT and things like that, which I didn’t really have a clue about before. How to do a business plan, for example, the ups and down, your shortfalls – the business plan itself and if you can do the research I would say yes it’s great..”

(Durham, Pre-release)

Key hard skills that participants stated they had developed by being on the programme included:

- understanding of the different components required to set up a business;
- ability to write a feasible, water-tight business plan;
- marketing (such as where to advertise, promotional materials and how to sell your products/services);
- conducting research:
 - improving knowledge on aspects of business (e.g. taxation, employing others, administration),
 - understanding and targeting audiences;
- budget planning, understanding cash flow and managing accounts;
- sourcing products and services.

Soft skills that participants stated they had developed by being on the programme included:

- team working and supporting others;
- presenting ideas/putting forward an argument;
- working out solutions to overcome challenges;
- confidence and self-belief;
- determination and motivation; and
- a more mature approach regarding finances and budgeting (for example, understanding the value of planning financially for a longer, rather than shorter term and needing not to be impulsive with purchases).

Those who had been partially engaged on the programme felt that they had benefited to a degree in terms of developing their business skills. Several reported an increased knowledge of writing business plans and had gained some understanding of running a business in terms of cash flow and budgeting. In addition, some reported feeling more focused on the idea of self-employment, and that the programme had got them seriously considering what they could realistically achieve in terms of a business. However, focus on goals, the desire to drive forward and show confidence in their plans was generally lacking. Furthermore, particularly in the North East, many participants (both those who were engaged with the programme and those who were not) did not have the opportunity to hone their research skills or progress their knowledge of local markets.

Progression of Start Up Loan applications and business start-ups

Progression of Start Up Loan applications were also impacted by the lack of access to IT (as Chapter 7 outlines). Further, the level of enthusiasm for developing business plans and harnessing the support offered by delivery partners was not necessarily consistently matched by enthusiasm or perceived need for the Start Up Loan.

Views on the loan (when participants are still in-custody) were mixed, ranging from those who showed considerable interest in applying for the loan to those who were very hesitant. Among the latter there appeared to be a reluctance to take on debt and some were nervous about the process.

Nevertheless, even at this early stage, there has been some movement in terms of business start-ups and loan applications. There were four business start-ups (two with funding from Start Up Loans and two without) and three loan applications (one declined, one needing minor changes, one decision pending) and seven loans approved in principal by the South Central in-custody pitch panel²⁹ (see Table 8).

James' case study is an example of how one of the business start-ups is progressing. James reported how funding had allowed him to leave his employment to concentrate on his business plan and undertake the training he required (in gas safety) for his business.

Motivation to change lifestyle and improved commitment to achieve employment goal

Almost all of the participants who were interviewed (regardless of the level of engagement with the programme) stated that they were motivated to change their lifestyle after their release. This suggests that perhaps whereas the programme was not driving the desire to change lives for some, it was providing an opportunity for them to do so. Many saw the programme as the vehicle through which they could make changes as it gave them an end-goal to focus on after their release.

'Before I came in this time I had been outside of prison for 4 years. This is the last time. With, or without, the funding. I have a good family structure now'.

(Holme House, Joining)

"A lot of people come out of prison with nothing but having something like this gives you drive. It's given me a chance of a new life, career and focus."

(Spring Hill, Pre-release)

"This programme has been excellent. It's the best thing to come out of prison. Before this I was thinking I was going to be getting out of prison not in the best situation but this programme was been amazing... things did take a while to get going...but to me it is like I was never in prison and I lot of the issues that I had

²⁹ where participants pitched their plans to a panel and gained a provisional decision on their business idea/loan.

before I went to prison have now gone so I'm in a really good place."

(Spring Hill, Post-release)

"Well I'm definitely going to do it and go through with it and this has helped a lot because I have a real structure now and I know what I am going to do when I get out. I've wrote to a company to do some training with so I can start fitting boilers. I've secured a few people who will be working for me too. I've also got some finances sorted too from my family and I'm just trying to do the actual business plan at the moment".

(Holme House, Pre-release)

As discussed in section 4.2, the majority of participants were attracted to the programme because they were interested in becoming self-employed. Many of these participants stated they were committed to the idea of self-employment prior to enrolling on the programme but, as already discussed in this section, participation in programme helped them to improve on their existing ideas and in doing so helped to strengthen their desire to become self-employed.

Engagement with mentor post-release

Due to the evaluation timeframes and the few follow-up interviews conducted post-release³⁰ it is difficult to assess levels of participant engagement with mentors after their release.

Delivery partners were working with a number of participants post-release by the time the pilots came to an end.

Table 7: Number of participants delivery partners were working with in the community at the time of writing

Region	Number of participants
North East	20
South Central	3

Feedback from the four post-release interviews was largely positive about the level and nature of support from delivery partners post release. Most of the participants who completed post-release interviews stated that dealing with the mentor after their release was simple and all stated that they were still engaged with the programme and determined to continue with their business plans.

"Other" outputs: peer support and a positive "ripple effect"

Peer support was evident amongst offenders who were/wanted to be involved in pilots. In South Central particularly (although some evidence in the North East as well), peer support and general enthusiasm amongst prisoners has encouraged skills development

³⁰ See Appendix C for more details.

and raised interest in the programme. Those first through the programme in South Central were keen to provide feedback, guidance and advice to offenders who subsequently got involved in the programme.

There was also evidence of a 'ripple effect' whereby participants encouraged other offenders to engage with the programme. Stakeholders reported that the pilots helped create a 'buzz' around self-employment, not only among participants but also among prison staff.

8.2 Direction of travel against key policy aims

The timing of this research means there is no evidence at this stage that the pilots have achieved their key policy aims. Nevertheless, even at this early stage, there has been some movement towards achieving the interim objectives that are necessary to facilitate the achievement of the key aims.

Helping to break the cycle of re-offending

At this stage it is not possible to determine whether the programme has helped participants to break the cycle of re-offending. However, other research suggests that it has the potential to do so³¹. As discussed above, many participants thought that the programme did/would help to change their lifestyle after their release from custody and impact on their chances of reoffending by giving them something to focus on.

"A lot of people come out of prison with nothing but having something like this gives you drive. It's given me a chance of a new life, career and focus...it's helped me progress as a person... it's a wonderful project."

(Spring Hill, Post-release)

A number of participants who were interviewed whilst they were in custody felt that the programme could help to stop them from re-offending after their release.

"This is a stepping stone to be completely legal, it's going to stop me from offending which is the most important thing."

(Spring Hill, Pre-release)

³¹ Ministry of Justice, Analysis of the impact of employment on reoffending following release from custody using Propensity Score Matching, March 2013 www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/ad-hoc/impact-employment-reoffending

Participants who were interviewed after their release thought that the programme had helped to deter them from re-offending by giving them a focus and a goal to drive towards.

“It’s definitely had an impact on me reoffending... business will keep anyone from offending it changes your mentality... the course transforms a lot of people. I’d like to think a very small number of the three cohorts [that have run up until now] will go back to prison now they’ve come to the idea of legitimate money being the best and only way forward.”

(Spring Hill, Post-release)

“There’s a lot less chance of me re-offending now because I’ve been given the chance to try to do something positive, knowing that if I throw that away I might never get it back again.”

(Spring Hill, Post-release)

Helping individuals progress to self-employment on release

There are examples of some business start-ups and loan applications.

Table 8: Start-ups and Loans by region

	North East	South Central
Number of participants (those who were involved in any stage of the pilots)	114	40
Number of business start-ups by programme participants	2 (without funding)	2 (with funding)
Loans applications	1 (loan declined) 1 (decision pending)	19 loans approved in principal by the panels in November 2014 and June 2015 1 additional loan application needs minor changes

9. Scoping the wider evaluation

The following section discusses a recommended approach to an evaluation of any larger scale Enterprise programme should this be rolled out in the future.

It is crucial that a comprehensive evaluation strategy is developed and agreed before any roll out. A key prerequisite for any such evaluation is that SMART objectives and an associated logic model are defined at a very early stage (see Appendix B for an example of a proposed logic model). Programme impacts cannot be evaluated without such metrics.

9.1 Approach

There are three broad types of evaluation which can be undertaken:

- i) experimental evaluation using randomised control trials;
- ii) quasi-experimental evaluation; and
- iii) non-experimental evaluation.

Randomised control trials are often seen to provide the absolute measure of effectiveness. At the other end of the scale is a non-experimental approach that can capture how the programme was delivered but provides limited evidence of impacts.

A commonly adopted approach, and the one which is likely to be the most appropriate in this case, is a quasi-experimental design.

Establishing causality is a key objective in evaluation research and how this is achieved is the key difference between these approaches. In exploring what would have happened in the absence of the programme under review, a quasi-experimental approach requires a suitable comparison group to be identified and matched against the 'treatment' group.

The design of this evaluation can be seen to involve a number of strands.

Strand 1 – implementation evaluation of the setup and delivery of the programme;

Strand 2 – impact assessment; and

Strand 3 – cost effectiveness.

9.2 Strand 1 – evaluating delivery

To understand why a programme has been successful, it is necessary to gather evidence on the implementation and delivery process. In particular this element of the research should seek to explore the following research questions:

- How has the programme been implemented at a local level?

- How do prison establishments and delivery partners work together in facilitating the delivery of the programme?
- What elements make it more or less successful, in terms of types of delivery approach, target populations etc.?
- What are offenders and delivery partners experiences of the different models adopted and how does this relate to outputs and outcomes?
- How sustainable is this type of programme and how easy would it be to replicate it more widely?

Assessing how the programme was implemented and variations in delivery across different areas typically requires a range of methodologies to be adopted – such as collation of monitoring data, surveys, qualitative discussions and case studies. An appropriate combination of these methods can capture the views and experiences of delivery partners, offenders and other stakeholders. Adopting a mixed methods approach will allow an assessment of whether or not the programme is being implemented as planned, whether it is reaching the right people in the right way, and to what extent it is doing so efficiently.

9.3 Strand 2 – measuring impact

Understanding how and why the programme was established and delivered provides the necessary detail for exploring whether the objectives of the programme have been achieved. It is proposed that an impact evaluation addresses the following research questions:

1. Does the Enterprise programme have a positive impact on the short and/or medium-term outcomes for offenders targeted by the programme?
2. What outcomes, and whose outcomes, does it improve, and by how much?
3. How quickly do we find improvements in outcomes, and how sustainable are these over time?
4. What models of working, or intervention approaches, achieve the best outcomes?
5. Do different approaches work more or less well in changing particular types of outcomes?
6. How does this compare with those not supported by the Enterprise programme?
7. How much does it cost to run the programme, including the initial set up, and over time?
8. How cost-effective are different approaches, in terms of the outcomes achieved?

The methods adopted should seek to explore the assumptions being made at each stage of the programme. It is recommended that measuring impact focuses on the following:

-
- Data from within programme areas will allow the evaluation to measure and quantify short, medium and longer-term outcomes for those who are targeted by the programme, helping to establish distance travelled;
 - Data from within comparison areas will generate estimates of the counterfactual outcomes for matched cohorts;
 - Information gathered through the implementation will show what practice, partnerships and approaches work to reduce reoffending and to help individuals progress to self-employment on release from custody or into employment, education or training, and will generate an understanding about how impacts have been achieved;
 - By comparing data and outcomes at an area level, against counterfactual outcomes, the impact of the programme across the whole of the eligible population will be measured in determining whether the programme can have wider as well as prison/area specific impact;
 - Data and costs from the programme areas can be combined with findings on the impact of the programme, which will allow the cost effectiveness of the programme, both overall and specific to each delivery partner to be measured.

Data collection is likely to involve a combination of techniques. These are likely to include:

- collation and analysis of monitoring data;
- quantitative survey(s);
- qualitative interviews.

Collation and analysis of monitoring data

Programme monitoring data can and should be used to provide a consistent picture of progress across all aspects of the programme. It enables inputs, activities and outputs to be measured routinely across all the areas delivering the programme. On commissioning, a review of the existing data systems should be undertaken. This will help identify any gaps. If the latter are evident then a standardised template should be developed for completion by all relevant bodies.

Making the collection of routine monitoring data a funding requirement can help improve the impetus of staff to record their practice. Likewise gaining buy-in from senior management through to practitioners from the outset can also assist in the completion of monitoring data.

The following provide a suggested list of performance indicators that should be captured by the monitoring information.

Performance Indicators

- Numbers targeted by the programme
- Numbers successfully engaging with the programme
- Numbers of drop-outs/non-completers
- Characteristics of programme participants
- Numbers completing the programme
- Types of business models developed
- Numbers of offenders progressing a Start Up Loan application on release
- Number of participants with successful loan applications
- Time between release, achieving loan and trading
- Number successfully engaging with other Education Training and Employment (ETE) provision post release
- Number entering employment post release
- Unit cost of delivering the programme in custody and post release
- Number reconvicted within a year

Quantitative survey – the completion of a standardised questionnaire, in this case at least two time points (start of treatment and sometime following release), would provide statistical evidence on both the activities, outputs and outcomes – the impacts - of the programme.

For offenders this should preferably be undertaken face to face (to mitigate against any literacy issues) in custody and then again in the community. This will allow attitudinal and behaviour changes to be measured, as well as their motivation and engagement throughout their contact with the programme and post release in developing self-employment opportunities.

Tracking offenders post release can be difficult. It requires the research team to invest time in gathering contact details (for both the offender and their wider network) and in liaising with delivery partners and other organisations to gain their assistance in maintaining contact with them. This applies both to the completion of structured interviews as well as more informal qualitative discussions.

The views and experiences of stakeholders, delivery partners and offenders can be gathered routinely through structured questionnaires. It is recommended that this is undertaken at a minimum of two time points in order to capture change.

Qualitative interviews – More insightful evidence can be gathered through qualitative interviews with a sample of those involved, whether directly or indirectly, in the programme. These should include stakeholders at a central level (NOMS, BIS, DWP) who are responsible for policy actions and funding allocation, senior management across the prison estate (Governors, Heads of Learning and Skills), practitioners responsible for delivering the programme (delivery partners), wider staff working with offenders locally

(offender managers, Offenders' Learning and Skills Service) and importantly the offenders themselves. Face to face interviews work better with offenders, particularly once released in to the community, where phone details will change regularly making telephone interviews difficult. Face to face, telephone interviews and discussion groups work well for other stakeholder consultations. Views can be gathered either through depth face to face or telephone interviews - essential for some of the respondents, such as delivery partners and key stakeholders. More illustrative accounts of process and outcomes can be captured through case studies.

Counterfactual outcomes

With any impact evaluation, the need is to robustly demonstrate the effectiveness of a programme. A key way of being able to do this is by identifying a suitable counterfactual – a group that is essentially the same as the treatment group but which is not treated. The data collected will be used to generate our estimates of the counterfactual – that is, what would the outcomes for offenders be in the absence of the programme?

Using this approach helps to ensure that any observed differences were in fact real and due to the programme. This requires comparisons to be drawn between the 'treatment' and 'non treatment' group. Assuming that the programme does not cover all prisons, or all prisoners in the prisons involved, it should be relatively straight forward to identify a suitable comparison group. The two samples should have the same range of characteristics (both in terms of demographics, but also in terms of socio-economic characteristics). To assist in the matching of cases – to allow for greater certainty of effect – propensity score matching can be used which will allow for differences between the treatment and comparison group to be determined.

It is important that the selection of a suitable comparison group is mirrored by an identical data collection process from carefully selected comparison cohorts/areas. The key research instruments – notably the questionnaires used with the treatment group - should also be used in acquiring data from the comparison group.

Sample size - The sample sizes for both the treatment and comparison group should seek to allow for the optimal balance of statistical power for all possible comparisons to be made within the data. For the comparison cohorts to provide an unbiased estimate of the counterfactual, the two samples (programme and comparison) need to be balanced on all non-programme predictors of outcomes. There is inevitable attrition within any sample selected for an evaluation, yet this is ever more present when conducting research with offenders, particularly when seeking to track cohorts over a period of time. Consideration should be given to the anticipated numbers to be targeted by the programme and the potential to draw the sample over a number of time periods in order to generate a sufficient cohort.

Once a suitable comparison has been achieved, the behaviour of each can be tracked during and after the programme. This relates not only to their offending behaviour but also their motivation and engagement with ETE post release. Such an approach requires a number of methods to be adopted:

Distance travelled – this involves either a qualitative or quantitative assessment, capturing the views and experiences of offenders' pre and post release. This would include details on the 'treatment' group's involvement in the programme and the support received

by those in the comparison group, their hopes and aspirations for life post release and then tracking both cohorts at different stages over a specific time period in the community to determine distance travelled.

A key measure of success will be the extent to which offenders are able to sustain self-employment over significant periods of time. Longitudinal tracking is therefore essential. A number of approaches can be adopted – longitudinal surveys and/or follow-up qualitative interviews. For either the best means of facilitating such an approach with offenders is face to face; the nature of the cohort means telephone or postal contact will invariably generate a poor response rate. Follow-up timings should be dictated by the duration of the contact offenders have with the programme, with the overall objective to measure attitudes and behaviours (offending, engagement in education, training and employment) over sensible time periods in order for distance travelled to be adequately measured. This may mean following offenders at 3/6/12 month time periods.

Any longitudinal follow-up requires time and resource in maintaining contact with the selected cohorts. There are a number of well tested approaches, such as: gathering contact details from the individuals for themselves and wider family or significant other contacts; maintaining contact, where able, through social media sites; regular contact i.e. sending birthday or Christmas cards; and checking in with mentors or other practitioners working with both the treatment and comparison group.

Reoffending analysis – self reporting of offending can be captured through discussions with both offenders and delivery partners, yet the more standardised approach in determining levels of reduced reoffending is conducting a one year follow up through Police National Computer (PNC) data. This can be conducted on both the programme and comparison groups. Data is submitted to the Ministry of Justice ‘Justice Data Lab’ and allows for any records of reconvictions to be identified. As way of an example, a similar analysis has just been completed for a resettlement and employment programme at HMP Kirklevington Grange. This has reported an 8% proven reoffending rate for those who participated in the programme compared to 16% for a matched control group of similar offenders from England and Wales³².

A conclusive reoffending analysis requires sufficient sample numbers to allow for attrition and also for statistically reliable comparisons to be drawn, particularly where sub group analysis is required. The quality of the data submitted to the Justice Data Lab will also determine the likely success of this type of analysis. If information required (age, gender, date of birth, offence details, and where possible PNC number) is incomplete then it will make the task of matching the sample with PNC records difficult and limit the numbers that can be included in the analysis. This again highlights the significance of gathering good quality monitoring information.

³² Justice Data Lab; HMP Kirklevington, Reoffending analysis. MOJ, March 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410883/hmp-kirklevington-grange.pdf

9.4 Strand 3 – economic evaluation

The success of the Enterprise programme is determined not just by the number entering employment or reductions in reoffending but also the cost savings that have been achieved and the extent to which these exceed the costs involved in delivering the programme.

As with any policy programme it is important to be able to accurately measure and to determine a monetary value for these impacts. This allows for objective measurement of the success of the programme and it allows for meaningful comparisons to be made with other programmes and policy options.

The techniques involved in conducting economic evaluations of this kind are fully documented in the HMT Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government³³. Any evaluation of a larger scale roll out of the Enterprise programme should plan from the project's inception to be able to follow the best practice described in the Green Book.

9.5 Risks/Methodological issues to consider

As discussed throughout this section, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in taking forward a larger scale evaluation.

- This early stage study has not provided evidence of key programme impact being achieved.
- A detailed evaluation strategy should be fully developed and funded before any large scale roll out of this programme.
- Defining and agreeing SMART objectives (both output and outcome objectives) before any large scale project roll out is fundamental to any evaluation.
- Securing reliable and consistent monitoring data is necessarily central to an effective evaluation. Agreement on the scope and detail of Management Information (MI) requirements and buy-in from delivery partners is needed at a very early stage. Ideally MI requirements should be defined in any contracts for programme delivery.
- It may be difficult to identify and engage a well matched comparison group.

Maintaining contact with individuals involved in the programme and the comparison group post release may well be problematic. An effective approach to achieving such ongoing contact needs to be developed, particularly for non-participants in the programme (the comparison group) who may have less of an incentive to stay in contact. The impacts of the programme cannot be properly evaluated without such ongoing contact with both participants and non-participants in the programme.

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220541/green_book_complete.pdf

10 Conclusion

The evidence collected so far suggests that the Enterprise Pilots in Prisons has the potential to work as a concept. There is a strong demand for a programme of this type, which is perceived to fit well with existing provision whilst offering something which is unique in providing a practical goal-orientated focus.

Although it is too early to determine whether the pilots have met the key policy aims associated with new business start-ups and a reduction in reoffending, direction of travel is promising and a number of positive short term outputs have been achieved. A significant proportion of the pilot participants were engaged with the programme and committed to developing their business ideas.

Some participants had made contact with their mentors after release and remained engaged with the programme.

There were examples of loan approval, draw down of the Start Up Loan and commencement of new businesses.

Those who were engaged with the programme developed a range of hard and soft skills.

Evidence suggests there is scope to improve participant engagement further by addressing some of the factors discussed throughout the report, such as developing a strong identity for the programme, ensuring a balance between group and one-to-one support, enabling participants to conduct research for their business plans, developing peer support and introducing an in-custody pitch process.

As discussed throughout this report, there have been issues with how the pilots functioned in some of the prisons (particularly those in the North East where delivery across multiple sites and closed prison regime was more challenging). These were predominantly around communication between delivery partners and internal and external stakeholders, and the lack of clear and timely processes to ensure the efficient running of the programme. However, it would be unusual to introduce a new programme of this type and not face some issues - and a number of improvements were made by those delivering the programme as the pilots progressed.

If any roll-out of the Enterprise Pilots is to take place it should be accompanied by a larger, more comprehensive evaluation which can explore the impacts of the programme in more depth over a longer period of time.

Case studies of participant experiences of the Enterprise Pilots in Prisons

The following case studies show how some individual participants progressed through the programme and outlines their views about their experiences. They provide examples for the issues that are discussed throughout the report.

Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the participants.

Case study A: James

James undertook the programme in South Central. He was very positive about the group dynamic of programme delivery and the enthusiasm of the delivery partner. Throughout the process James was positive about the programme and its potential to help prevent him from re-offending by giving him a 'focus'.

Case study B: Said

Said also expressed the opinion that the programme has reduced his likelihood of re-offending. He was positive about the group delivery in South Central though he stated that access to IT presented a major barrier.

Case study C: Ashley

Ashley's case study shows how delivery issues in the North East impacted negatively on some individuals. A lack of communication with and support from the delivery partner left Ashley 'frustrated' with her progress. Like James, she also encountered difficulties when she contacted Jobcentre Plus.

Case study D: David

David's case study exemplifies the peer support that was an important facet of the programme in South Central. He enjoyed the group dynamic of the sessions and helped others to develop their ideas in his own spare time. David encountered difficulties once he was released but he stated that these were not related to the programme itself.

Case study E: Gary

Gary was strongly engaged with the programme in the North East. However, miscommunication with and a lack of support from the delivery partner meant that he became disillusioned with the programme by the time of his release.

CASE STUDY A: James

James was interested in self-employment as he wanted to be his own boss. He planned to be a gas-safety engineer and was confident that he had the skills to make his idea work because of his experience of and links to the industry.

James planned to do a 12 week training course after his release to put his plans into action. He was unable to do the training course whilst he was in custody as it was run by a relative.

The deliverer of the programme has been excellent, they have helped me a lot.

James was very positive about the delivery of the programme. He thought the most useful aspect was the group sessions as they allowed participants to discuss and refine their ideas. The only negative part of the programme that James highlighted was the difficulties that he faced in terms of conducting research to progress his business plan.

Start of pilot



This is a stepping stone to being completely legal, it's going to stop me from offending which is the most important thing.

This course has something at the end of it to look forward to, other courses are good ideas but they never go anywhere.

When James was interviewed prior his release he had just finished classes in custody. At this point he had not started his loan application but he was confident about what he needed to do to continue with the programme after release. At this point he thought the programme would help reduce the chance of him re-offending as it would give him a 'focus'.

James did not immediately associate the classes with the development of 'soft skills'. He thought he had gained these skills from other courses he had done whilst in custody but he perceived this programme to be different from the others he had undertaken because it was far more focused towards an end goal.

My idea has evolved over the course, and it will evolve a lot more when I get home... it can definitely work, it's just about putting the commitment in.

End of classes in custody

There was a 3 month gap between James ending the classes in custody and his release. He kept in touch with the deliverer of the programme throughout this period to ensure that his plans kept momentum. At the time of his release James had completed his business plan and he was confident about his prospects going forward.

I mentioned this programme to the Jobcentre Plus and that I was waiting to get it up and running but an adviser wouldn't actually see me at all. They said they could only point me on to the National Careers Service, I went there and they had absolutely nothing for me. It was a joke really... So I was very chesed off with that and I think that sort of thing – the way they were – could have sent somebody off the rails.

James had a degree of stability following his release as he had support from his family and accommodation.

I'm probably in a different situation to a lot of people because I have a lot of stability in my family.

The only issue James had was a few days after his release was when he went to Jobcentre Plus in order find work. He found the interaction with them and National Careers Service frustrating because they would not advise him unless he was prepared to 'sign on'.

Release from custody



James felt well-prepared for the panel and that the experience helped him to refine his business idea further.

I'd say in ten days later I had the £7,000 put into my bank account. It was all simple, very simple.

Any time that I needed any help with anything I could go straight to the delivery partner and they would help me out.

James managed to secure employment in construction after his release as he had contacts in the industry. This gave him further stability. James decided to work throughout December and then organised a meeting with the delivery partner in January once he got his 'head into it'. James found it easy to get back in touch with the delivery partner and he found the meeting he subsequently had had useful. With the delivery partner he refined his business idea further. Around three weeks after that initial meeting James was pitching his idea to the panel.



After securing the funding James left his employment to concentrate on his business plan. He began to undertake his gas-safety engineer training. At the time of his last interview he was around 6 weeks into a 3 month course and was looking forward to getting his business started in the near future, once he passed his examinations

Post-release engagement with delivery partner

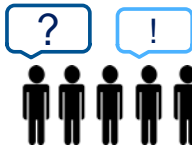
Overall, James is very positive about the programme. Although he doesn't think he has improved his softer skills from being on the programme he believes it has increased his business knowledge and has equipped him with the skills needed to run a business. He thinks it has given him a much-needed 'focus' which will continue to reduce the likelihood of him re-offending in the future.

This programme has been excellent. It's the best thing to come out of prison. Before this I was thinking I was going to be getting out of prison not in the best situation but this programme was been amazing... I'm loving it now. Everything is sweet. Don't get me wrong, things did take a while to get going and for me to get used to everything once I had been released. But to me it is like I was never in prison and I lot of the issues that I had before I went to prison have now gone so I'm in a really good place. It's good for me because there is already a business plan there that is working and as soon as I am a gasman I've got four jobs a day to go so I have got constant work already – without even advertising.

This programme has steered me down the road where I won't need to reoffend.

CASE STUDY B: Said

Said was attracted to the programme in order to get financial support for his business that he ran prior to being in custody.



The good thing about the groups was that everyone can chip in to help out people with ideas and you can use other peoples' ideas to come up with your own views. But at the same time, you could also have a one-to-one if you just wanted to discuss your own idea so in terms of delivery I don't think there were many issues at all.

Said's self-employment plan was to run a procurement company. Prior to going to prison, he had been running a similar business. He thought the funding and the mentoring would be perfect for him as it would give him access to the support needed to get things up and running again. Said was positive about the delivery of the sessions whilst he was in custody and thought the group discussions were particularly useful.

Start of pilot

Having the loan amount approved whilst you are in custody is definitely a positive thing – at least you know then that your idea can work

After finishing the classes Said pitched his business idea to a board whilst he was still in custody and it was approved. He thought having the pitch in custody was a good idea because it allowed him to gain confidence about his plans prior to release.

Said thinks the programme could be improved in the future by increasing participants' access to computers. This would allow them to conduct research needed to develop their business plans and would also help them when doing some of the programme requirements such as the cash flow forecast.

That was one issue with the programme whilst we were in custody. Because we weren't provided with computers we had to hand write everything. Even though the prison has computers they wouldn't provide us with access to them. I think that's one thing that needs to be improved – there's no point in us doing a business course such as this and having to write a business plan and a cash flow forecast for 12 months by hand – it makes a mockery of it



Pitch

End of classes in custody

Said finished the classes in custody in January and was released at the end of February. He thought this allowed him to keep motivated with his plans.

That worked well, I think anything up to 2/3 months prior to release would work. I think anything longer than that runs the risk of getting a bit stale.

I haven't really had any other issues to deal with because my sentence was admittedly a bit of a short sentence, so I haven't had that many issues. I think it's been easier for me because it doesn't take me as long to get back into the rhythm of things. I haven't really got that pressure to bring any money in at the moment. I'm in a fortunate position that my wife is able to maintain the bills and I have got help from my family

Upon his release Said was confident about his business plan. He didn't encounter any issues after his release as he had stable accommodation and a family to support him financially.



Release from custody



Once I got released it became a lot easier. If I started doing all the admin side of things and the paperwork in prison it would have been a bit of a nightmare. The logistics that would have been involved would have made that process difficult – obviously the prison would need to get involved in that side of things but actually, and the prisons said the same thing, it is a lot easier to get all that sorted once you have been released. The loan has been approved; we just need to smooth over the finer details now. And I understand that the process of actually filling out the forms and getting everything approved is quite quick – it only takes about a week.

After his release Said got in touch with the delivery partner within a few weeks and at the time of the post-release interview he was waiting for them to confirm an appointment to go over the paperwork required to withdraw the loan. He thought that the process of getting in touch with the delivery partner to continue the programme was very easy and found the delivery partner to be as approachable and helpful after his release as she had been whilst he was in custody. As he did not have any immediate financial pressures and because he thought it would take 2-3 weeks to draw out the loan Said elected not to contact Jobcentre Plus as he didn't want the 'headache'.



Post-release engagement with delivery partner

Looking back over the whole programme, Said thought that the funding was the best part of it. He stated he would have tried to set-up a business without the funding but that it allowed him to bring his plans forward by 6-9 months. He stated that the course had helped him develop existing skills, whilst giving him a new perspective on the opportunities available to him. He was feeling positive about his future and his chances of re-offending and thought the programme played a large role in this.



It sort of helped me polish up some of the skills that I already had, rather than resulting in me developing new skills. It's helped me to write things out and present them

There's a lot less chance of me re-offending now because I've been given the chance to try to do something positive, knowing that if I throw that away I might never get it back again.

CASE STUDY C: Ashley

Ashley had never thought about setting up her own business prior to starting the Enterprise programme which her duty tutor encouraged her to get involved with. At the time of her post-release interview Ashley was waiting to hear the outcome of her revised loan application. She remained focused on her business plan but was disheartened about the length of time it was taking to get off the ground.

I'd never thought about opening my own business, I'd have been too frightened to, too nervous

Ashley planned to set up a mobile beauty company. She started doing beauty courses whilst she was in custody but had no experience of working in this industry prior to being in custody.

Start of pilot



I couldn't do most of the research for my business plan in custody... you needed the internet. A lot of it has been going around salons and getting their price lists, word of mouth, talking to people, "Would you be interested?"

Ashley did not complete her business plan prior to her release as she needed to conduct research into prices and the lack of access to the internet prohibited her from doing this.

One thing that needs to be improved are the restrictions on the advisers so they can come and see you more often, one-to-one.

I didn't have a lot of meetings in custody with the delivery partner, I had half an hour and I was promised the world. They built it up to say there wouldn't be any problem with funding or loans they said they wanted to get me set up 6-8 weeks after my release.

Ashley thought that she didn't have enough contact with the delivery partner whilst she was in custody.

I felt dreadful... it was very daunting... I can understand how these young kids get into trouble and end up going back because there is no help whatsoever.

Ashley did not feel prepared at the time of her release as a result of the lack of support she had received. Despite this, the programme helped to keep her motivated.

It's wrong. You are told one thing and you go into the job centre and you're told 'no, that's not right'... if they knew about the Enterprise Allowance it would make life a lot easier for people when they go to sign on.

Ashley was told to go to Jobcentre Plus after her release to inform them that she wanted to claim 'Enterprise Allowance' instead of being put on the work programme. However, Jobcentre Plus told her this was not possible and put her on the Work Programme. She was frustrated with this as she felt the delivery partner gave her wrong information.

Release from custody



Ashley also faced difficulties getting her car (which she needs for her business) insured after her release as a result of her convictions.



The advisor has been absolutely fantastic. Unfortunately, she went away for a month in January and things slowed down as a result but she has made me feel positive about a lot of things. I know I can do it. It's just a case of waiting for the loan.



I just felt a bit let down when I left and they didn't keep in touch. They told me that once I got the business sorted, they would stay with me for a year.

After her release Ashley tried to get in touch with the advisor who had worked with her whilst she was in custody but she was unable to. Ashley got in touch with the new advisor who she thought was very enthusiastic and helpful which helped to keep her motivated.

Post-release engagement with delivery partner

I feel very, very frustrated that I can't do anything. I'm at a standstill now.

I would have preferred it to be a little bit sooner. I'm probably different, I'm not but a lot of girls would be disinterested if it took seven months to get sorted after they got out. I'm focussed, and I know I'm going to do it.

At the time of her post-release interview (7 months after her release) Ashley was on the Work Programme and waiting for her revised business plan to be approved. She said she remained focused on her plan and had been doing extra qualifications to help with it but felt 'disheartened' due to the length of time the process as taking.



CASE STUDY D: David

David had considered self-employment prior to being in custody. He was attracted to the programme because he wanted to know more about setting up and running a business. David was part of cohort 2 but he also assisted those in cohort 3 with their queries and plans.

David first found out about the programme via an advert for the opening evening that happened on campus. Prior to being in custody David was an estate agent but he planned to open a barbershop following the barbering course that he was undertaking whilst in custody.

It helps build confidence in your idea because it has been challenged and scrutinised.

David really liked the group dynamic of the programme delivery. He thought it helped participants to develop and refine their plans. David found it particularly useful as it gave him the opportunity to run his idea past his client demographic.

Start of pilot

If you know you are getting out of prison with a loan pretty much in place it gives you the extra drive to go forward.

We had a practice 'pre-pitch' which was useful because it helped you prepare. It's good to have your plans critiqued.

Access to computers would improve the programme. It's hard to pin-point your plan without doing research and hand-written plans don't look professional.

Whilst David was completing the classes in custody he was enrolled on a barbering course at college on a full-time basis. This allowed him to conduct research into his business plan. He acknowledged that other participants weren't in a position to conduct their own research so he offered to conduct research on their behalf too when he had the opportunity to do so.

David pitched his idea whilst he was in custody. He thought this process helped him improve his communication skills and gave him confidence about his plans going forward.

The delivery partner has been excellent, along with other participants, she has created a really supportive environment

Pitch

End of classes in custody

Just prior to his release, David was feeling confident about his plan and was looking forward to putting in plans into action as soon as possible with the help of the delivery partner and their contacts.

I am quite fortunate to have that... I don't know about the others but I am in a good position

I got released on Thursday and I had an appointment the following Tuesday... it was straight forward.

David had a degree of stability after his release since he owned his own house. This allowed him to concentrate on his business plan, which along with family, was a post-release priority for him.

Within a few days of being released, David made contact with the delivery partner and handed in the paperwork relating to the loan. At the time of his post-release interview David was looking for a shop in order to be able to access the loan.

Release from custody

Post-release engagement with delivery partner

Everything's going how I thought it would be... it hasn't knocked me back or anything like that.

It's just a simple case of getting a property and I think it's achievable.

Despite these challenges, David was positive about the future and was happy with how things were progressing.

It's not easy, I'm not an experienced barber I'm fresh out of college. I'm on Jobseeker's Allowance but I had to quit the barbering course I was on at college in order to be able to claim Jobseeker's Allowance.

I had a few challenges, not from in terms of the delivery partner but the 'real world'...landlords are not interested in a new business – even though I am prepared to pay the asking price or they want higher deposits well in advance. I've had that happen a few times already.

Whilst looking for a property, David was also trying to secure employment as a barber to support himself financially as he was relying on Jobseekers' Allowance for financial support. He faced challenges here also.

At the time of his post-release interview David said that he was facing some issues when it came to securing a suitable property.

Looking back on the whole programme, David was very positive about his experience. He felt that it had helped him to develop skills and he felt that it had reduced his likelihood to re-offend.

A lot of people come out of prison with nothing but having something like this gives you drive. It's given me a chance of a new life, career and focus. It's definitely had an impact on me reoffending... business will keep anyone from offending it changes your mentality... it's helped me progress as a person... it's a wonderful project.

I've benefitted from this programme 100%. Definitely. I've learned a lot more about business – cash flow and how to structure a business plan. I wouldn't have considered those in the past. Week after week you're getting better and more confident about your business, research, presentation and delivery... it's a lot of personal skills, a lot of the boys will take a lot of those away when they leave.

The course transforms a lot of people. I'd like to think a very small number of the three cohorts will go back to prison now they've come to the idea of legitimate money being the best and only way forward.

CASE STUDY E: Gary

Gary had always wanted to run his own business but he thought he never had the time or money to get things started. Gary was engaged with the programme to begin with but a lack of contact with the delivery partner caused his plans to lose momentum in the few weeks prior to his release.

I think they were supposed to come in every two weeks—that hasn't really happened, I've seen them twice in probably about 6 or 7 months. They've looked at my business plan and picked up a few things that I was able to change straight away, but there's not so much help in saying I think that's a good idea or I don't think that is such a good idea – it's just looking through it to see if anything is in order.

Gary was motivated by the desire to be his own boss. He wanted to utilise over 20 years of experience in the automobile industry by setting up his own business MOT business.

Gary felt that he did not have enough contact with the delivery partner and he didn't feel he got the feedback he needed to improve his plans.

Start of pilot

"I personally don't see how anyone can get through the programme properly without doing research. When you look at the criteria you can't realistically do it without research. Really the business plan is worthless without research".

The biggest issue I would say with the scheme is that about 60% of the criteria and the work you have to do is about research and you can't do any research in here, literally none whatsoever. I've been lucky in some ways; because I'm red band I have a lot more leeway than some of the prisoners – being a trusted prisoner. If you can't do the research you can just do the very basic stuff such as your name and address and your idea. The ordinary prisoner that would go in to do this scheme wouldn't really get any further, without something else being in place i.e. you could go into the library and book a one hour session with one of the librarians who would go on the internet for you, but that's never happened to date.

Gary thought that difficulties he and other participants faced in terms of conducting research was a major flaw in the programme.

In order to set up his own business Gary needed to do a training course. He was informed that he would receive funding to complete the course only to be told at a later date that funding was no longer available. This caused him to be frustrated and disillusioned with the programme.

I was on the top of the world when they said they could help me to get my training done, I've probably wanted to do that for about 20 years but I've never had the time or the money. They told me it was definitely going to happen 100% and then 6 months down the line I was told "we don't have the funding". They should have just told me that it was a maybe. The delivery partner said there was up to £25,000 available if the plan was viable, it's been finished for months – so is it viable? Surely it would make no difference if someone was looking at it in here or out there. Do I need to change it while I have the time in here to do it? Still, I think it would be a great scheme if they could actually deliver. It's a false hope or a false dream maybe. I feel a bit let down should I say because I could have been doing something else with my time.. I've worked towards this since I have been in, since day one. I have done all of the work and extra courses around it but now I don't know if it means anything or not"

I have still gained from it. Mainly it's a lot more knowledge on finance, VAT and things like that, which I didn't really have a clue about before. How to do a business plan, for example, the ups and down, your shortfalls – the business plan itself and if you can do the research I would say yes it's great.

I haven't been told if it's worth carrying on with this, if something is available – nothing. So realistically I have done all that work but I'm no further forward at all.

Gary was one of the first participants through the programme in the North East. He completed the loan application whilst he was in custody and was waiting to here for the outcome at the time of his interview. He felt frustrated at having to wait for a response and the lack of communication with the delivery partner regarding the status of his application and the feasibility of his plans.

Despite this frustration Gary did think he had benefitted from being on the programme as it had helped him develop his business knowledge.

I think the programme is a great idea especially for the guys who want to get on and not come back here basically. Really I don't know anything. I don't know if they have looked at the application or whether it has been refused or not. I don't know if I can ask for the loan or if there's any point. I haven't got a clue.

End of classes in custody

Prior to his release from custody Gary had become frustrated with the programme due to the delivery partner's lack of support and communication. He thought the programme had the potential to be successful but that the process required to turn this potential into reality weren't yet in place. Gary stated that he didn't think he would be able to continue with the programme after his release because he needed to get back to work as soon as possible and he wasn't confident that the support he required to set up his business plan would be available to him.

The idea is there, I think it will be a great scheme but I can't personally see anything coming of it, for me personally anyway. I can't really see it progressing for me. The thought is there, but I haven't really seen anything in place to make it happen.

In the ideal world, if I was given what I was told I would receive it would be fantastic. ...realistically I can't see it happening. ...I've got a mortgage and kids so I have to get straight back into work to get the money built up. Once I'm working I won't have the time to do the courses and I won't have the money also.... I think I'll just end up getting any job to get back into the workplace.

Release from custody

Appendix A – Detailed evaluation objectives

The evaluation of Enterprise Pilots in Prisons had **three objectives** of equal importance.

1. Assess the design and implementation of the programme and establish what can be learnt from the pilots to improve programme delivery

- This is a pilot programme and as such, it is vital to explore what aspects of the design and delivery work well and what did not work so well.
- This objective will contribute significantly to testing the proof of concept. In particular, it will help inform decisions about if and how the programme could be refined or developed to be more effective.
- Findings will also contribute to our understanding of why the pilots produced the results they did.

In meeting this objective, the evaluation sought to establish:

- Had the programme been implemented as intended
- Had the targeted audience been reached
- What was the perceived quality of the programme components
- Had support been flexible enough to meet individual needs
- How could the programme be improved in the future

2. Establish what outputs and outcomes have been achieved by the pilots – and what could be achieved from the programme

- It is essential that the evaluation of the pilots, as far as is possible, measures the extent to which the policy aims are being met i.e. does the programme achieve what it sets out to achieve.
- Policy aims must be translated into measurable outputs and outcomes. IFF and BIS drafted a logic model for the programme, which has been used as the foundation for this objective (see Chapter 9).
- The scale and duration of the evaluation means that the pilots can provide insights into more immediate measures. A set of outputs, based on those in the draft logic model, has been developed for this evaluation. The outputs from the pilots will be recorded but numerical targets have not been set.
- This objective adds value by providing direction against the outputs from the pilots and findings will help develop the draft logic model.

In meeting this objective, the evaluation sought to establish:

Policy aim: Help break the cycle of re-offending

- Likelihood of reoffending
- Had a positive attitude to future reoffending
- Feels positive impact of programme on behaviour
- Feels can contribute positively to community and society
- Had improved relationship with people in 'authority' positions
- Feels has improved control over life
- Had stable accommodation
- Is satisfied with standard of living
- Had improved social ties (family/friends/community)

Policy aim: Help into self-employment OR into employment, training or education

- Had a complete enterprise plan/is continuing to progress enterprise plan
- Is self-employed or in employment/training/education
- Had Start Up Loan or other financial support (e.g. New Enterprise Allowance)
- Is using the business mentor
- Improved skills and knowledge including feels better able to plan, keep on time/keep appointments
- Improved confidence in presenting/marketing self and enterprise
- Improved resilience – feels able to deal with setbacks
- Ability to manage (keep control of) money
- Repaying Start Up Loan to agreed terms (if applicable)

In addition:

- Refine outputs and outcomes for the logic model i.e. establish objectives that are clear, can be measured and are realistic for the programme to achieve in a specified time period.

3. Scope the monitoring and evaluation of a wider roll-out of the programme

- This objective considers what an evaluation strategy could look like for a scaled-up rolled-out Enterprise in Prisons programme.

In meeting this objective, the evaluation will seek to establish:

- What performance monitoring arrangements should exist in the future
- What outputs and outcomes should exist on the logic model
- What frequency is required for engagement points with participants
- What data should be used to benchmark performance/ effectiveness
- Who should the target audience be
- What sample size should be included
- Cost effectiveness

Appendix B – Final logic model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Long-term outcomes	Impact
<p>Use of external Start-Up Loan Approved Delivery Partners</p> <p>Effective working relationships between Delivery Partners and institution-based learning and skills provision</p> <p>Development of course programme and materials</p> <p>Development of recruitment mechanism to attract and/or refer to the programme</p> <p>Development of appropriate screening tools to ensure public protection</p> <p>Ongoing Delivery partner support pre and post release</p> <p>Provision of mentoring support</p> <p>IF APPLICABLE Support with the identification of alternative employment, education or training opportunities</p>	<p>Delivering agreed course sessions with participants (one-to-one, group activities)</p> <p>Research and development of business plans</p> <p>On-going mentoring by Delivery Partner</p>	<p>Uptake of programme by offenders</p> <p>Completion of in-custody (pre-release) programme</p> <p>Developing business plan</p> <p>Progressing Start Up Loan application</p> <p>Engagement with the programme and associated activities</p> <p>Motivation to develop business plans</p> <p>Motivation to change lifestyle</p> <p>Increased employment skills and business management knowledge</p> <p>Improved commitment to achieve employment goal</p> <p>Engagement with mentor post release</p> <p>Regular, ongoing support providing advice and help in achieving business</p>	<p>Desistance from offending <i>OR</i> Delayed reoffending if has history</p> <p><i>IF SELF-EMPLOYMENT:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of business plans and strategies to develop business ideas [<i>OR</i> Successful start-up of new business] Progression of Start Up Loan [<i>OR</i> Securing Start Up Loan <i>OR IF START UP LOAN REFUSED</i> Securing alternative legitimate business funding] <p><i>IF NOT SELF-EMPLOYMENT:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful employment, education or training <p>Has improved business start-up skills (such as managing finances/cash flow)</p> <p>Has improved confidence (presenting themselves and their business/business ideas)</p> <p>Has improved self-management (able to plan, keep appointments)</p> <p>Making a positive contribution to family (if applicable), community and society</p> <p>Has improved relationships (with family/friends, with authority positions)</p> <p>Has a settled lifestyle (stable accommodation, satisfied with situation)</p> <p>Improved money management skills (meeting regular loan payments)</p>	<p>Reduced offending:</p> <p>Reduction of re-offending among ex-offenders</p> <p>Reduction in number of victims and cost to the tax payer</p> <p>Better integration of offenders into communities</p> <p>Enabling offenders to make a positive contribution to society</p> <p>Business impacts:</p> <p>Additional viable businesses started; generating dynamic competition benefits and raising productivity</p> <p>Additional business turnover</p> <p>New jobs created</p> <p>Improved business performance</p> <p>Avoid non-viable businesses being started</p> <p>Increase in self-employment among ex-offenders</p> <p>Reduced likelihood of unemployment among ex-offenders</p> <p>Reduced costs to benefits system</p> <p>Economic Growth:</p> <p>Positive net impact on economic output (GVA) through turnover and employment in businesses created</p> <p>Impacts on Government:</p> <p>Cost savings (e.g. from reduction in reoffending rates)</p> <p>Additional tax revenue generated (e.g. from corporate and income tax)</p>

Appendix C - Detailed methodology/challenges faced

In order to meet the evaluation objectives, this evaluation adopted the following five-stage approach.

1. Scoping stage

The purpose of this stage was to **refine the evaluation objectives** and clarify what key stakeholders needed from the findings.

The methods used were in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and delivery partners.

In August 2014, a total of eight face-to-face interviews, each lasting around one hour, were conducted with the following individuals:

- Head of Learning and Skills, North East
- Delivery partner, North East
- Head of Learning and Skills, South Central
- Delivery partner, South Central
- National Offender Management Service

The scoping stage was completed in September 2014 with the production of a Research Plan that set out the detailed methodology for the evaluation.

2. Research with pilot participants

The purpose of this stage was to **gather evidence about participant experiences and progress** towards agreed outputs.

Two methods were used in this stage:

(1) Research with offenders via in-depth interviews. Up to three interviews per person took place with a selection of offenders, typically carried out on a one-to-one basis at the following stages:

- Face-to-face in custody after joining the pilot
- Face-to-face in custody before release
- By telephone after release

In custody interviews were achieved through two visits to each prison, where as many interviews as possible were conducted with offenders at different stages in the programme (joining and pre-release):

- Round 1: September/October 2014
- Round 2: January 2015

Post-release interviews took place in February/March 2015.

The table below shows the number of interviews achieved by stage, prison and region:

Prison	Round 1	Round 2	Post-release	Total
HMYOI Deerbolt	3	2	-	5
HMP Durham	4	2	-	6
HMP Holme House	8	5	-	13
HMP, HMYOI Low Newton	6	4	1	11
<i>North East Total</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>25</i>
HMP Springhill	13	7	3	23
<i>South Central Total</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>23</i>
Overall Total	34	20	4	58

In total, 50 participants were interviewed as part of this process (i.e. they were interviewed at least once during the evaluation). This was out of 104 participants in the North East and 40 in South Central. Not all participants had started the pilots when the evaluation began.

The interviews that were conducted in custody lasted approximately 30 minutes (depending on where the participant was in terms of the programme at the time) and post-release interviews also lasted approximately 30 minutes (again this varied according to how long the participant had been released from custody).

Discussion guides for the joining, pre-release and post-release interviews are provided as Appendix D.

Challenges faced when conducting interviews in custody

The amount of time available to interview participants in the pilots whilst in custody was restricted due to the schedules of the individual prisons, the difficulties faced moving around the prisons and the difficulties faced in trying to locate offenders.

These factors made it particularly difficult to conduct follow-up interviews pre-release with offenders that had been interviewed shortly after the pilots began. In addition, some offenders were unavailable due to illness, working commitments, home leave and being re-located to other prisons. Interviews were conducted with other participants when this was the case to maximise the time spent in the prisons.

It was planned that pre-release interviews be conducted no more than one month prior to the participant's release but these challenges meant we had to be more flexible in our approach and in some instances we conducted pre-release interviews with respondents who, at the time, had more than one month to their release.

Challenges faced when arranging post-release interviews

Data Protection concerns caused some difficulties for post-release interviews and

prevented interviewers from taking identifiable information (such as contact details) out of the prisons.

As a result, offenders' contact details had to be provided by the delivery partners³⁴, which held-up the recruitment of post-release interviews. Getting up-to-date contact details from delivery partners in turn relied on offenders making contact with the delivery partners once they had been released. This potentially took weeks to happen and in some cases it never happened. Due to this it was more difficult to contact offenders who were less engaged with the programme.

In South Central this process was slowed further as the delivery partner was reluctant to pass on contact details of offenders who had been released without first asking their permission to do so.

In total, contact details (telephone, email or address) were provided for 30 offenders in the North East and 4 offenders in South Central. Responses in the North East were very few. The vast majority of the telephone numbers provided were dead lines/wrong numbers. We received one response to the letters that were mailed-out and no responses to the emails that were sent. On the other hand, contact details for South Central were more accurate and the offenders in South Central were more engaged with the research, meaning three post-release interviews were conducted.

To add to this, the short-term nature of the evaluation meant that a number of the offenders we spoke to earlier in the evaluation were still in custody at the time.

It also meant that we had to be flexible in terms of timeframes. Initially we had planned to conduct post-release interviews no earlier than one month after release and no later than two months after release. However, the difficulties faced meant that we conducted any interviews that we could – irrespective of how long the respondent had been released (this ranged from two weeks to seven months).

3. Research with stakeholders, delivery partners, mentors and those in support roles

The purpose of this stage was to **gather evidence on experiences of delivering and/or supporting the programme.**

The methods used were in-depth interviews with individuals in these roles. This stage involved one-to-one depth interviews with **stakeholders, delivery partners, mentors and those in support roles**, gathering evidence on their experience of delivering and/or supporting the programme.

Sixteen telephone interviews were carried out as part of this stage and lasted 30-60 minutes depending on the individual's role. Interviews were conducted with the following:

- 1) Head of Learning and Skills, North East
- 2) Delivery partner, North East

³⁴ Offenders who were interviewed whilst they were in custody were asked whether IFF could obtain their contact details from the delivery partners with a view to setting up further interviews as part of the evaluation.

-
- 3) Head of Learning and Skills, South Central
 - 4) Delivery partner, South Central
 - 5-6) Other individuals from National Offender Management Service who were involved in delivery
 - 7) Start Up Loan Company representative
 - 8) Enterprise Pilots Policy Lead at BIS
 - 9) Representative from Manchester College (Assessment Lead in the North East)
 - 10) A representative from the National Careers Service (NCS)
 - 11-12) DWP representatives
 - 14-16) Those in support roles involved with delivery of the pilots within prisons (including Employment Benefits Advisors, learning support and careers advisors)

A small number of these interviews were conducted in October 2014 but the majority were conducted in between January and March 2015.

4 Analysis of monitoring data

Delivery partners were required to collect monitoring data on all participants. This information was anonymised and shared with IFF as part of the evaluation. However, the monitoring data available to IFF was incomplete.

5. Analysis and reporting

The purpose of this stage was to document the evidence gathered against each of the evaluation objectives and **make an assessment on the proof of concept** of the pilots programme.

Analysis against evaluation objectives one and two looked across the regions and different prison types to understand progress on a range of factors e.g. whether different approaches to programme delivery or different 'types' of participant (male, female, prison category type), are more/less effective.

The evidence gathered was also used to help inform the **scope of the monitoring and evaluation** of a wider roll-out of the programme.

Appendix D – Topic guides

Participant topic guide: Round 1 (after joining the programme)

This document is a *guideline* for the interview with key question areas in bold.

A Introduction (2 mins)

- INTRODUCE SELF AND IFF RESEARCH
- INTRODUCE EVALUATION: IFF Research has been asked by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to carry out an evaluation of the Enterprise programme you've recently started. This is a pilot programme with only a small number of people involved at this stage, and we're keen to find out how you're finding it and what you hope to get out of it.

The purpose of the evaluation overall is to find out what's working well and what's working not so well so that we can help make improvements to the programme in the future if needed.
- CONFIDENTIALITY – NOT NAMED IN ANY REPORTING
- RECORDING

B Awareness/Information received (5 minutes)

How did you first hear about the Enterprise programme?

PROMPTS:

- Did you receive any leaflets or information about it, or did someone tell you about it?
- AS RELEVANT: What did it/they say?
- IF ATTENDED EVENT: What did you make of that? E.g. useful, informative?

And what were your first thoughts?

PROMPTS:

- Did it immediately appeal to you or did you take some time to think about it?
- Why was that?
- Did you speak to anyone about it? Family, friends or others here?
 - What did they think about it?

Did you receive any other information about it before the programme started/Have you received any other information (AS RELEVANT)?

PROMPTS:

- What did you receive/who did you speak to?
- Did you ask for this or was it offered to you?
- AS RELEVANT: What did it/they say?
- AS RELEVANT: What did you make of that? E.g. useful, informative?

C Motivations for taking part (8 minutes)

So what was it that made you want to take part? What is that you specifically hope to get from the programme?

PROBE TO GET RANGE OF REASONS E.G. BUSINESS/EMPLOYMENT RELATED AND PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- Concerned about getting a job?
 - Were you working before? IF YES – what sort of work have you done in the past?
- Learn new skills, improve skills – which ones and why?
 - EXPLORE PRACTICAL AND SOFTER SKILLS
 - EXPLORE WHETHER THESE SKILLS ARE CURRENTLY STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES

PROMPT:

- What was your experience of learning <...> before?
- Worried about what happens when released – why?

PROMPTS:

- Are these worries linked to experiences you've had before?

PROBE DISCRETELY AND ONLY IF FELT APPROPRIATE ABOUT REOFFENDING CONCERNS/GETTING INTO TROUBLE

- Develop ideas already had – what opportunities has had in the past to develop these ideas? Why these ideas now?
- Create own business – what attracts you to this?

PROMPTS:

- Had you done anything like this before? IF YES – what was it you did?
- Have your family or friends had their own business or been self-employed? IF YES – what did they do? IF FAMILY BUSINESS – were you involved in that/in what way?
- Something to do?
- What else?

Is this something that's totally new to you or have you been on education, training or employment programmes before?

- What did you do before?

IF DONE BEFORE:

- Was that in custody or in the community?
- How did that go?
- How does this programme compare? Why is that?

Did you expect to get on the programme when you first applied for it?

- Why/why not?

Do you have clear ideas about the type of business or self-employment work you're looking for? Or are you looking to this programme to help you pin down some thoughts?

- EXPLORE BRIEFLY SELF-EMPLOYMENT IDEA

D Experience of the programme (10 minutes)

On what stage of the programme are you at the moment?

- Tell me a bit about what you've done so far? (PROBE FOR EACH STAGE EXPERIENCED)

And how is it going for you?

- What has been most useful so far?
 - Why?
- What has been not so useful?
 - Why?
- Have you experienced any difficulties or problems with any part of the programme so far?
 - What have you found difficult?
 - Why do you think that this was the case?
 - What could be done differently to help you with that?

PROBE TO ESTABLISH DIRECT (E.G. SOMETHING NOT EXPLAINED PROPERLY OR COVERED TOO QUICKLY) AND INDIRECT (E.G. STRUGGLE TO FIT IT IN AROUND WORK) DIFFICULTIES

- Are you learning as a group or is this one-to-one sessions?
 - How do you find that?
 - Would you prefer (whichever it isn't)? Why is that?

So far, has the programme been what you expected?

- If not, why not?

Do you know what's happening next in the programme?

- Are there any parts you're particularly looking forward to?
- What and why?
- Is there anything you're worried about? E.G. KEEPING UP, GETTING RIGHT LEVEL OF SUPPORT

What information have you been given about start-up loans?

PROBE TO ESTABLISH WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD AND EXPECTED:

- What about the process of applying for it?
 - When do you actually apply for it? Does this suit you or would you rather get it underway earlier/after release (AS RELEVANT)?
- Is it guaranteed or do you apply and see what happens?
- Do you expect to need the start-up loan for *your* self-employment plans?
 - What expectations do you have about getting the loan?
 - Do you have any concerns about repayments or are you confident you can manage that?

Do you talk to other people not on the programme about it?

- Who – family, friends, others here? What do you tell them? And what do they say about that?

-
- Is it something you would recommend to others here?

Is there anything at all that might prevent you from completing the programme?

- What and why?

E Looking ahead (5 minutes)

We've been talking about the programme and what you want to get out of it. But let's jump forward in time to after your release.

What happens with the programme after your release?

- EXPLORE AWARENESS OF MENTOR, LOAN APPLICATION
- Are you concerned at all about the support that continues for your self-employment plan after your release or are you comfortable that you'll have the support you need?
 - Why is that? (CHECK AWARENESS OF MENTOR)

What does the period immediately after release look like?

- Where will you be? PROBE ACCOMMODATION
 - How does this compare with before you came into custody?
- Do you have family and friends to support you settle back into the community? And will they be able to support you with your self-employment plans or is this something you'll work on by yourself?
 - Have you historically have strong bonds with family and/or friends?

How different do you expect your life to be?

- In what way?
- Do you expect this programme and the plans you have to play a part in that?
- How does this programme fit in with other support you're receiving to help you move back into the community?
- Is there anything else that could be done *now* to help you move back into the community?
- What's important to you for the future?
- What motivates you to make this happen?

Is there anything else that you would like to discuss at this stage? Is there anything else important that we should know?

END.

Participant topic guide: Round 2 (pre-release)

This document is a *guideline* for the interview with key question areas in bold.

A Introduction (2 mins)

- INTRODUCE SELF AND IFF RESEARCH
- INTRODUCE EVALUATION: As a reminder, IFF Research has been asked by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to carry out an evaluation of the Enterprise programme you've been involved in. This is a pilot programme with only a small number of people involved at this stage, and we're keen to find out how you've been finding it and what you hope to achieve from taking part.
The purpose of the evaluation overall is to find out what's working well and what's working not so well so that we can help make improvements to the programme in the future if needed.
- CONFIDENTIALITY – NOT NAMED IN ANY REPORTING
- RECORDING

B Catch up (3 minutes)

Last time we met, you'd just started out on the programme. What stage are you at now – have you finished attending the group/one-to-one sessions (AS RELEVANT) or are they still taking place?

PROBE FOR WHEN FINISHED/DUE TO FINISH

I'd like to hear about different parts of the programme but *overall*, how have you found it?

PROBE:

Is it what you thought it would be?

- Why/ why not? What's different?

C Programme content, skills and knowledge (12 minutes)

Let's talk in more detail about the programme. Can you give me an overview of the different things you've done?

Which *specific* parts of the programme stand out for you?

Why is that? PROBE TO UNDERSTAND IF THE 'STAND OUT' IS A PARTICULAR MODULE, WAY IT WAS DELIVERED, PERSON THEY MET IN THE COURSE OF THE PROGRAMME ETC.

Thinking about all the different parts of the programme, what has been most *useful* so far?

- Why?

What has been not so useful?

- Why?

Have you experienced any difficulties or problems with any part of the programme so far?

- What have you found difficult or problematic?
- Why do you think that this was the case?
- What could be done differently to help you with that?

PROBE TO ESTABLISH DIRECT (E.G. SOMETHING NOT EXPLAINED PROPERLY OR COVERED TOO QUICKLY) AND INDIRECT (E.G. STRUGGLE TO FIT IT IN AROUND WORK) DIFFICULTIES

Where are you with your self-employment plans at the moment?

Do you feel you've had had the opportunity to develop your own ideas?

How much have your ideas developed since you started the programme?

- In what way?
- How did it develop? PROBE WHETHER SKILLS LEARNED AND DEVELOPED FROM THERE, OR WHETHER RECEIVED DIRECTION FROM PROGRAMME PROVIDER OR OTHERS

What are your hopes for your business/ self-employment? When you look ahead, what does your business/work look like?

- And what sort of timescales do you have in mind after your release? PROBE TO UNDERSTAND EXPECTATIONS ON HOW QUICKLY/SLOWLY THINGS WILL DEVELOP

Are you confident that you have a good business plan at this stage or does it need some more work?

- IF MORE WORK: What plans are in place to help you develop it further? PROBE FOR EXPECTATIONS RE WORKING WITH MENTOR POST RELEASE

What about the loan application – do you expect to need that and if you do, what stage are you at with that?

Have you applied yet? IF NOT: When do you actually apply for it? Does this suit you or would you rather have this underway already/have dealt with this after release (AS RELEVANT)?

What sort of support have you had with it? E.g. sorting out debts, helping fill in forms, explaining how it works.

Is it guaranteed or do you apply and see what happens?

What expectations do you have about getting the loan?

- Do you have any concerns about repayments or are you confident you can manage that?

Do you have other plans to generate an income for yourself whilst you're waiting for the loan decisions/loan to come through e.g. government support such as the New Enterprise Allowance, or will you find work?

Thinking more generally about what you've got out of the programme – do you feel you've improved other skills as a result of taking part in this programme?

PROBE FOR PRACTICAL AND SOFTER SKILLS (PROMPTS: Verbal, numerical, presentation, confidence, reasoning, interpersonal).

Is there anything you would have liked to develop that you haven't had the chance to?

- Why is that?
- PROBE TO ESTABLISH WHETHER IT IS SOMETHING FELT TO BE MISSING FROM THE PROGRAMME OR IF THERE WASN'T ENOUGH TIME SPENT ON IT

Is the programme content what you expected it to be?

In what way? E.g. is it different to the information you received before you started, has the direction or level of difficulty changed over time?

Is this for the better or worse?

Are you at the stage you expected to be at this point in time?

D Programme delivery (7 minutes)

Thinking about how the programme was run, what was the balance between one-to-one sessions, classroom/group environment and self-learning?

Was this different week to week?

How did you find that? Did that suit you or would you rather have had more/less of?

Is it what you had expected?

What about the time that was spent on different parts of the programme?

Did you spend the right amount of time on the different parts, or not enough/ too much time on particular parts?

- What could have been better *for you*?

Do you think this was the same for others on the programme or do you not know about that?

Were there different people involved in delivering the programme or was it all delivered by the same person?

How did you find that? Did it suit you?

Do you feel you had enough support from them for your own personal plans and needs?

- Why is that?
- What sort of feedback did you get during the programme? Was it useful?

To what extent have you had support on your self-employment plans from others not directly involved in the programme e.g. people involved in delivering other courses, other people you know here, family or friends?

Do you expect to stay in touch with people delivering the programme?

- Why is that?
- IF YES: How long would you like to see that continue?

Before we move on to look at what happens next, if there was one thing you could change about the programme – that's what you learned, how you were taught, *anything at all*, what would that be?

- Why is that?

E Looking ahead (6 minutes)

Let's jump forward, not too far into the future, to after your release.

What happens with the programme after your release?

Are you concerned at all about the support that continues after release for your self-employment plan or are you comfortable that you'll have the support you need?

- What? Why?

What does the period immediately after release look like for you?

Where will you be? PROBE ACCOMMODATION

Do you have family and friends to support you settle back into the community? And will they be able to support you with your self-employment plans or is this something you'll work on by yourself?

What's your biggest priority when you are released?

How different do you expect your life to be to your 'before custody' life?

In what way? EXPLORE HOW CHANGE IS EXPECTED, INCLUDING IN RELATION TO REOFFENDING BEHAVIOUR (IS THERE A HISTORY OF REOFFENDING, HOW DO THEY FEEL ABOUT THIS GOING FORWARD)

Do you expect this programme and the plans you have to play a part in that?

How does this programme fit in with other support you're receiving to help you move back into the community? E.G. PROBATION, OFFENDER MANAGERS, OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

Is there anything else that could be done to help you move back into the community?

What's important to you for the future?

What motivates you to make this happen?

Are you concerned at all about the future?

We would like to speak to you once more, around a month or so after your release to see how things are going at that time. We'll speak with you by phone on that occasion so it's important for us to be able to keep in contact with you.

Contact number for participant

Contact name and number for others we can contact to help us keep in touch with you – we won't discuss any of the details of our interviews with them, this is only so that we can keep in touch if there's something wrong with your number. E.G. family, close friends

END.

Participant topic guide: Post-release

A Introduction

- INTRODUCE SELF AND IFF RESEARCH
- INTRODUCE EVALUATION: As a reminder, IFF Research has been asked by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to carry out an evaluation of the Enterprise programme you've been involved in. This is a pilot programme with only a small number of people involved at this stage, and we're keen to find out how you've been finding it. The purpose of the evaluation overall is to find out what's working well and what's working not so well so that we can help make improvements to the programme in the future if needed.
- CONFIDENTIALITY – NOT NAMED IN ANY REPORTING
- RECORDING

B Catch up (5-10 minutes)

When we last met, you were in custody and not too far from your release date. I'm keen to find out how things have progressed with your business plans since your release date but to start off, it would be helpful to get an overview of how your business plans progressed between our last meeting and your release.

INTERVIEWER CHECK PRE RELEASE INTERVIEW AND ADAPT THIS SECTION AS NECESSARY TO SUIT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PARTICIPANT AND WHAT DISCUSSIONS YOU HAD ABOUT THEIR PLANS, LOAN AND MINDSET DURING THE LAST INTERVIEW

Note: Some of this information will be known depending on how soon before release the pre-release interview took place. Where known, we will confirm situation before release and where not known or not known in full, we will capture this information. The aim is that we know exactly what stage they were at, at the point of their release.

Did you complete all the course sessions and classes before your release?

IF YES:

- Roughly how much time was there between finishing those sessions and being released? IF SOME TIME ELAPSED, ESTABLISH IF CONCERNED ABOUT THIS E.G. LOST MOMENTUM OR WAS DRIVEN ENOUGH TO KEEP FOCUSED
- Did you keep in touch with {DELIVERY PARTNER} between finishing classes and your release? Why/Why not? E.G. NO NEED, NOT AVAILABLE, NEEDED MORE SUPPORT (WHAT SPECIFICALLY?)

IF NO:

- ESTABLISH WHETHER CONTINUED PROGRAMME ON RELEASE OR WHETHER STOPPED PROGRAMME IN PRISON

IF STOPPED PRIOR TO RELEASE:

- What happened there? ESTABLISH WHEN PARTICIPATION CEASED AND WHY
- Were you concerned at all about it not being completed? Why/Why not? E.G. SELF-MOTIVATED, SUPPORT NOT AS EXPECTED/NEEDED.

Was your business plan completed before your release?

IF YES:

- Did {DELIVERY PARTNER} work with you on that or were you working on that on your own in those final weeks/days?

-
- Were you confident that you had everything in place? Why/why not?

IF NO:

- Was {DELIVERY PARTNER} continuing to work with you on that or were you working on your own in those final weeks/days?
- What stage were you at with it?
- Were you concerned at all about it not being completed? Why/why not?

What about financing your plans? Have you applied for a Start Up Loan??

IF YES:

- Can you tell me about that process? PROBE FOR HOW WAS DONE, WHAT SUPPORT DELIVERY PARTNER AND/OR OTHERS OFFERED, WERE THERE ANY COMPLICATIONS
- Did you have a pitch for the loan application? How did you find that? Did you receive any feedback? PROBE TO UNDERSTAND IF FELT PREPARED FOR THE PITCH, WHAT (IF ANYTHING) COULD HAVE BEEN DONE TO BETTER PREPARE THEM FOR IT

IF NO:

- Were you not interested in the loan or was there another reason you didn't apply for it? PROBE TO UNDERSTAND REASONS
- At that time, when you were still in custody, did you have alternative plans for funding your business? WHAT/WHY? PROBE FOR AWARENESS OF NEW ENTERPRISE ALLOWANCE
- IF SELF-FUNDING: What were your thoughts at that time about how you'd raise funds? PROBE TO UNDERSTAND WHETHER CONCERNED ABOUT GETTING EMPLOYMENT.

C Through the gate (5 minutes)

INTERVIEWER – SUMMARISE SITUATION (E.G. AT POINT OF RELEASE (GET DATE), YOU HAD A BUSINESS PLAN IN PLACE, HAD APPLIED FOR YOUR LOAN AND WERE READY TO GO...)

How did you feel about your plans at that time of your release?

- PROBE: Were you confident, concerned, did you feel prepared? Why/Why not?
- What were your priorities on release? What were your immediate intentions/goals on release?
- Did you face any particular challenges? Were you in need of any support at this time to help you move back into society? Were you able to access this support?
- To what degree did any challenges impact on you being able to focus on developing your business?

What had you been told about any on-going support for you after your release?

- PROBE: Awareness of what to do next, role of delivery partner, role of other support (formal/informal)?
- PROBE: Did you speak to a JCP/Employment and Benefit adviser whilst you were in custody?

IF YES: Can you tell me about that? Did you find that discussion helpful? Did they help you make a decision about your future employment choices?

IF NO: Is this because you did not get the opportunity, because you did not know about this service or because you didn't want to talk to them.

D Post-release progress (10 minutes)

So far we have discussed what your experience of the programme was like up until, and on, your release from custody. Now I'd like to ask a few questions about how things have progressed since your release. So, what have you been doing since your release and what are you doing at the moment?

INTERVIEWER TO EXPLORE PATHWAY TO WHERE THEY ARE CURRENTLY

- PROBE: Are you in employment, self-employment, education or training?
 - How did you get here?
 - Explore relationship with JCP since release. Are they on the work programme? How do they feel about this?
 - Is there where you hoped you would be at this stage? Why/why not?
 - Is there anything that is preventing you from doing what you're wanting to do?
- How settled do you feel currently? PROBE: What's missing if anything?
- Have things gone as you had hoped on release? IF NOT: In what ways are things different to how you had hoped? IF YES: What has helped you get where you are now?

Have you been able to progress your business plans since your release?

IF YES:

- What have you been able to do? ESTABLISH IF BUSINESS IS PROGRESSING OR STARTED
- Have you changed the plans in any way? Why?
- Have you been supported by {DELIVERY PARTNER} with this? Do you feel that you have been given enough support since your release? PROBE FOR OTHER SUPPORT
- Did you get your Start Up Loan or other finance (AS RELEVANT) to help you with this? ESTABLISH IF LOAN APPROVED OR IF OTHER FORM OF FUNDING USED
 - IF START UP LOAN OFFERED: Have you received that? Were you put in touch with a mentor through this loan? IF NEW MENTOR - EXPLORE THAT RELATIONSHIP
 - START UP LOAN REFUSED: How did you feel when you heard that? Did you expect that might happen?
 - IF OTHER FUNDING: How did you hear about this? Did you need help to apply?
 - How are you funding yourself and your business? IF WORKING – EXPLORE HOW FOUND E.G. PERSONAL CONTACTS, JOB CENTRE, WORK PROGRAMME

IF NO:

- EXPLORE SENSITIVELY WHY THIS MIGHT BE THE CASE, E.G.
 - Is there anything in particular that is preventing you from doing so?
 - PROBE: Housing situation, finances
 - Have you not had time – explore if due to other work, personal circumstances etc.?

-
- Do you feel that you have had access to the support you needed after your release to progress with your business plans? Why do you think this?
 - Have you changed your mind at all – why is that (e.g. more difficult than expected, other influences or opportunities)?
 - Are you unsure what to do to progress your plans?
 - Do you intend to follow up with a business start-up in the future? Why/Why not?

Have you had any particular challenges with your plans? FOCUS HERE IS ON BUSINESS CHALLENGES BUT EXPLORE SENSITIVELY ANY PERSONAL CHALLENGES INFLUENCING THIS

IF YES:

- What were they? (PROBE issues relating to the programme specifically as well as other factors that they may have had to deal with such as housing, finance, proceeds of crime, the JCP etc.)
- How have these challenges impacted on your business plans? Have you been able to overcome these? Did you turn to support for this?
- Is there anything that could have been done, either in the classes you attended whilst in custody or by {DELIVERY PARTNER} since your release to better prepare you for dealing with this?

IF NO:

- Is that because everything has been reasonably straightforward or because you have been able to deal with issues before they became problems? FOCUS HERE ON WHETHER THEY HAVE NOT HAD ANY OR HAVE SIMPLY BEEN ABLE TO COPE WITH ISSUES FACING THEM

E Taking the plans forward (5 minutes)

What are your next steps for your business plans?

PROMPT AS NEEDED

- Keep progressing business plans – what timeframe are you working to for this?
- Get more training – is this a new issue or a training need have been identified whilst your were in-custody
- Try to get a job – is this an alternative to your plans or to help with experience and/or finances

Overall, are you satisfied with how your plans are progressing since your release?

PROMPT AS NEEDED

- Happy/disappointed overall with business progress to date
- Has motivation to keep momentum with business (or alternative plans e.g. work, training, education)
- Has confidence to drive plans forward

F Post-release impressions of programme (5 minutes)

I'd like you to think back over the Enterprise programme, both the in-custody courses and any support you've had from the programme since your release. Do you feel you've benefited at all from being part of the programme?

IF YES:

- Why is that? PROBE AS NECESSARY
 - What are the key things you feel you have benefited from? E.g. particular things you've learned, support provided, impact on confidence, channel for finance
 - Has everything been as expected? PROBE IF NOT AS EXPECTED

IF NO/UNSURE:

- Why is that? PROBE AS NECESSARY
 - What hasn't turned out as expected? E.g. not learned enough, not prepared, support not there, expected finance support

In what ways, if any, would you say that the programme has prepared you for setting up your own business?

- Why do you say that? What part of the programme has been most helpful? Are there any parts of the programme that have not been helpful in terms of setting up your business?
- What, if anything, do you think could have been done better or differently?

And overall, what sort of impact, if any, has the programme had on your life more generally?

- How does your lifestyle now compare with your lifestyle before you went into custody? PROBE FOR ANY CHANGE IN STABILITY E.G. ACCOMMODATION, RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS
- IF FELT APPROPRIATE, DEPENDING ON RESPONDENT AND NATURE OF THE INTERVIEW:
 - How are you feeling about your life/circumstances right now?
 - Is there anything that would improve your life right now?
 - Is there anything that you're worried about?
 - What do you think about when you think of the future?
 - Do you feel that you are more or less likely to re-offend as a result of taking part in the pilot programme? Is this down to the pilot itself or other factors? Why do you think that?
- Do you think you're in a good place at the moment with life in general? Is this linked to the programme at all or were you already determined to get to this point?

And what does life look like for you in the next few months? Or are you looking further ahead than that?

- Think forward to next year, what are you hoping your circumstances will be/what does life look like?
- Is there anything in particular that you think might prevent you from achieving this?

WISH THE PARTICIPANT WELL, THANK AND CLOSE.

Thank you for agreeing to speak to us throughout this process. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) may conduct further research in this area in the future. Would you be willing to take part in future research on similar issues carried out by BIS, or an independent research company working on behalf of BIS?

Stakeholder topic guide

A Introduction

(5 mins)

- INTRODUCE SELF AND IFF RESEARCH
- INTRODUCE EVALUATION: As a reminder, IFF Research has been asked by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to carry out an evaluation of the Enterprise programme you've been involved in. This is a pilot programme with only a small number of people involved at this stage, and we're keen to find out how from key stakeholders how they feel it has gone. The purpose of the evaluation overall is to find out what's working well and what's working not so well so that we can help make improvements to the programme in the future if needed.
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- RECORDING

B Stakeholder role in and understanding of the pilot (5 minutes)

ASK ALL

B1 Talk me through your involvement in the enterprise pilots to date? **PROBE:**

- Specific role
- Type of involvement (e.g. strategic vs. operational)
- Level of involvement
- At what stages? Which stages have they been most heavily involved?
- How have you liaised with the other stakeholders?

DP/NOMS/NCS/MC/PT

B2 In your view, what were the overall objectives of the pilot?

B3 What were your **INITIAL** impressions of the objectives? Please try and think only about your initial feelings prior to the pilot beginning. We will talk about whether you think the pilot has the potential to meet its intended objectives towards the end.

***INTERVIEWER NOTE:** At this stage of the interview, try to get stakeholder to think about their initial impressions (rather than the knowledge they have now once the pilot has been run)*

- Did you think at the time they were sensible/realistic?
- **PROBE:** Why/why not?
- How do you think they could have been improved?

B4 What do you believe to be the overall intended outcomes? And what were your thoughts about these?

DWP and SULCo

- B5 **When did you first hear about the pilot? Do you remember what your first thoughts were about it in terms of its feasibility?**
- B6 **How well known is the pilot throughout your organisation? To what extent has it been filtered down to front line staff?**
- B7 **What implications did the pilot have for your organisation in terms of planning/management? Were there any particular challenges faced? How were these overcome?**

C General feelings about the pilot (10 mins)

DP/NOMS/NCS/MC/PT

- C1 **We'll talk a bit more about the specifics but in your view, how has the pilot gone overall?**
- C2 **What are your thoughts about the selection process and the way prisoners were assessed for their suitability on the programme?**
- **What did you think of the screening and assessment tools? How much were these used when assessing participant suitability?**
 - **At what stage were the screening tools used?**
 - **How effective were they? In what ways, if any, could they be improved?**
 - **At an overall level, do you think they worked?**
 - **Has the selection process changed or developed since the beginning of the pilot?**
 - **MANCHESTER COLLEGE:**
 - **Who was involved in the design of the tools**
 - **What influenced the design of the tools?**
 - **What information are they intended to illicit? Explicitly? Implicitly?**
 - **What specifically indicates whether a participants is likely to be suitable for the programme?**
 - **On what grounds are they supposed to be "screened out"?**
 - **Is there anything you would do to change/improve the tools now they have been used?**

D Views on specific aspects of the pilot (20 mins)

Explore each aspect in turn.

DP/NOMS/MC/ NCS/PT

FOR DP: Focus on what has changed/new learnings

- SET-UP
- DELIVERY
- RECEPTION FROM PRISONERS (and OB and SULCo)
- LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT FROM PRISONERS (and OB and SULCo)
 - PROBE: To what degree do prisoners stay engaged? Throughout the programme? Once completed? What can be done to encourage this engagement?
- SUITABILITY OF PRISONERS INVOLVED (and OB and SULCo)
- DEGREE TO WHICH PRISONERS DEVELOPED ON THE PROGRAMME AND THE SPECIFIC THINGS THAT THEY HAVE DEVELOPED (skills, confidence in business idea, motivation)
 - a. How do they progress? Do you see a difference once they have been through the programme?
- INTERACTION BETWEEN DELIVERY PARTNER AND
- RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN THE PILOT (*INTERVIEWER NOTE: This will need to be approached sensitively*)

INTERVIEWER NOTE: Some aspects will not be relevant for all stakeholders. For each aspect probe on the following:

How well did this go?

What challenges were faced?

What would you have done differently?

Positive aspects/successes?

Lesson to take forward?

Any examples of best practice?

D1 Have you seen any evidence in peer support amongst the prisoners/between participants? (and OB)

IF YES:

- In what forms did this take?
- Did this happen naturally or was this encouraged through the training provider?
- What influenced these relationships?

- Was this beneficial to the participants/programme? What were the benefits of peer support? For the participants/For the training provider/For the programme? Has it helped participants achieve their objectives and aims?
- Were there any downsides or detrimental consequences of peer support?
- Any wider impacts of this?

FOR NORTH EAST DELIVERY PARTNERS PROBE:

Difference in these aspects across prisons.

Explore difference in regimes/delivery logistics across the prisons. How were they different? What was the advantages/disadvantages in each?

Were there any where delivery was easier/more successful? Why was this?

FOR BOTH DELIVERY PARTNERS PROBE:

Did delivery go as you initially intended? IF NO: What prevented this? What could be done to improve ease of delivery?

SULCo

- D2 **Talk me through the loan application process. How does it work? Who do you largely deal with?**
- D3 **Talk me through the decision making process your organisation goes through when deciding on a loan application**
- **What are the key ingredients an application must have to make it successful?**
- D4 **What has been your organisation's level of interaction with prisoners?**
- D5 **What has been your organisation's level of interaction with delivery partners?**
- D6 **Were you or any of your colleagues involved in any of the pitch discussions with prisoners? How did your organisation feel this process worked?**

E Views on the aims and objectives of the Enterprise in Prison programme (10 mins)

DP/NOMS/NCS/MC/PT

- E1 **How far do you believe the pilot has met its objectives? Which ones were met? Which were not?**
- **IF OBJECTIVES NOT COMPLETELY MET: Were there any particular barriers that prevented objectives from being met?**

SHOW STAKEHOLDERS LOGIC MODEL AND BRIEFLY TALK THROUGH:

- E2 **What are your views on scope of the programme? DWP and SULCo**
- E3 **Do you think the programme in its current form has the capability to meet these objectives/outcomes?**

- E4 How do you think these outputs/outcomes should be measured?
- E5 What part do you think the programme can play in aiding the transition from custody into the community?
- What ingredients does the programme need to have to enable this transition?
 - What can the programme do to complement other areas of “through the gate” support prisoners might experience?
 - Are there any ways in which the programme might conflict with other pathways a prisoner might take on release?

F Views on degree pilot has been/the potential to be a success (10 mins)

DP/NOMS/NCS/MC/PT

- F1 On balance, how successful do you think the pilot has been? What makes you say this? What criteria to you use to decide if the pilot has been successful or not?
- F2 Has the programme been successful for the participants? Has the pilot been a success for your company/organisation/department etc.
- F3 What do you think have been the immediate achievements of the pilot?
- F4 Have you seen any immediate achievements from the prisoners (i.e. outputs)? Do you anticipate any future benefits?
- F5 Did you find there to be any indirect/unintended achievements or impacts of the pilot? PROBE:
- Reaction from non-participants?
 - Increased interest in training in general?
 - Increase in business training specifically? Self-employment?
 - Any benefits for delivery partners? Lessons learnt
 - Increased networking/information sharing between prisons?
 - Improved stakeholder relationships?
 - Wider interest from other prisons?
- F6 If the programme were to be rolled out, do you think it has the potential to be a success?
- What are the key ingredients needed to make it a success?
 - In your view, what does successful delivery of the enterprise programme look like?
- F7 Is there anything that needs changing to the current model to improve delivery?
- F8 Currently, delivery seems to be smoother in the open prison environment than closed. Would you say that was a fair assessment?
- F9 IF YES: Discuss reasons why.
- What is the impact of this?
 - Would delivery need to be difference across open/closed prisons? How so?
- F10 On release, how does the programme fit in with other strategies aimed at getting offenders back into employment or training? E.g. Job centre programmes – is there synergy?
- How is the programme currently interaction with other mainstream services? Is there anything that could be done to improve compatibility?
- F11 Thinking about the enterprise programme. What do you think it SHOULD be doing? If you could design an enterprise programme, what would it look like?

DELIVERY PARTNERS:

How much contact have you had with participants on release?

How much progress is being made on release? Are those on released managing to stay motivated/engaged?

Is this the level you expected?

For those not making progress, what particular barriers are they/you facing?

PROBE ISSUES AROUND:

Stable environment

Loss of interest/motivation/confidence – what would cause this?

Employment situation on release e.g. impact of Work Programme referral

G Wrap up (2 mins)

G1 If there was one thing you would have changed about the pilot, what would it have been?

G2 What do you think are the biggest lessons moving forward?

G3 Is there anything else that you would like to discuss about the pilot that you don't feel we've covered?

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This publication available from www.gov.uk/bis

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BIS/15/535