

Evaluation of the Beyond the Gate Magazine pilot at HMP Liverpool 2020-2022

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Introduction

Beyond the Gate is a magazine which aims to raise awareness of organisations/services that link into resettlement, whilst also publishing real resettlement experiences/stories to inspire individuals within prison. The idea for the magazine was generated by the editor whilst they themselves were serving a prison sentence. Having noticed how there was not one resource which compiled all essential information for during prison and release, the idea of Beyond the Gate was born.

The Beyond the Gate team is composed of the editor (who themselves have lived experience of the prison system) and the publisher (who has an extensive background in Communications and the publishing field).

The magazine was piloted at HMP Liverpool from 2020-early 2022. This prison was chosen as a pilot due to the ongoing support provided to the Team during the process of creating the magazine. The aspiration is that the magazine will be rolled out nationally to all prisons within England and Wales.

The research team became involved in the evaluation process mid-2020 until the end of 2022. During this time, the COVID-19 pandemic was prevalent and reached its peak, disrupting the research teams' ability to enter the prison to conduct the necessary interviews. As a result of this, the research team had to wait for the necessary HMPPS approval to enter the prison which took several months. For this reasoning, the evaluation process was longer than expected, hence the long time period mentioned above.

To evaluate the pilot, the research team aimed to gain an understanding of the process, levels of engagement and value of the magazine from the viewpoints of a variety of stakeholders involved in the process. The evaluations' purpose is to help the magazine creators develop the magazine in accordance with the views of the readers (individuals in prison), to enable the magazine to reach the audience better, encompassing more of what the individuals within prison want and need within any future editions. This will allow potential future editions to be tailored to individuals in prison, therefore making it more accessible to the wider prison estate.

The research team used a mixed methods approach to the research, to enable a deeper understanding of the individual in prison and prison workers' views, thoughts, and comments on the Beyond the Gate Magazine.

The report will firstly provide a background on the magazine before explaining the methods adopted by the research team to conduct the evaluation. This will be followed by the findings of the evaluation, both quantitative and qualitative. The voices of those interviewed will be represented throughout the evaluation with quotes. Finally, recommendations will be presented based on the findings of the evaluation.



About the Magazine

The magazine titled 'Beyond the Gate' was an idea of the editor, who after serving her own time in prison, realised that a lot more was needed to be done to help individuals in prison. In her own words, she was:

“wanting to help those people” by helping to “eradicate the communication issue present within prison and make sure every person in prison can see the opportunities, courses and help them find a path to stop re-offending.”

The Beyond the Gate team is composed of two individuals, together the team: created the name, communicated with prisons to create a partnership, communicated with sponsors to gather the content and organisations for the magazine, designed the layout, organised publication and organised distribution within HMP Liverpool where the magazine was piloted.

The aims of the magazine (from the view of the Beyond the Gate Team) were to:

- Reduce reoffending rates
- To encapsulate information that people within prison need
- Signpost individuals to any help they may need
- Make information available within one resource so it is not simply *“a series of leaflets”*
- To be accessible and inclusive to all: *“no matter what your education levels are, you will still be able to find the help.”*
- To avoid missed appointments by providing a place to store appointment slips.
- To make prison an easier place by providing knowledge and support

The idea for the information to be presented in the format of a magazine stemmed from the popularity of 'Hello' magazine within the prison, with the editor stating that *“it got passed around all 487 women in the prison.”* This highlighted a *“real interest in written material”* with *“printed material...still a way of getting messages out there”*.

The title for the magazine the editor describes as coming:

“from a girl who I was sharing a room with... and she said you should do an article on being in the outside-house which might encourage people to behave better, to get to the outside-house...You could call it Beyond the Gate... and I thought “that’s a great magazine” that, that’s not an article, that’s a whole new product and it literally just stemmed from there.”

When wishing to advance her idea into a reality the editor received a lot of help from the Clink Charity who managed to get her time with 15 senior prison staff to pitch her idea in a *“dragon’s den style.”* When presenting the idea, she was challenged with the potential issue of security when bringing the magazine into the prison estate. She stated that she

“sorted every potential problem that the senior officials had come up with. Like for example security, people could smuggle things in, so dip the magazine in spice water and might

smoke it as it goes through the door. So I did a deal with Northumberland prison, that they would print the magazine, so it was going to be printed there, packed in a prison and sent to a prison so there was no, unless you're accusing prison staff of doing something, there was no opportunity for it to be a security risk."

The process of creating the magazine is described as including many different individuals, from Clink, the governor and most importantly a contact at HMP Liverpool who helped in numerous ways. The contact provided *"a list of about 40 odd service providers"* for the team to get in touch with whilst also in their own words

"was involved in the putting together of the magazine, assisting the editor and publisher greatly in creating the magazine."

The contact describes helping

"the editor to source the information for the magazine, ensuring that information was specific to the magazine, finding real life stories, ensuring agencies were relevant etc"

further emphasising their help and role within the magazine. This contact from HMP Liverpool (Prison Worker) emphasises during their interview that there would need to be a link at each prison for the magazine to be a success, this link would need to undertake a role similar to what they did to ensure that the magazine worked in each prison.

Regarding the providers for the magazine, again this process included multiple individuals. One staff member at HMP Liverpool described their role in the recruiting of providers:

"Erm, we basically we we decided on an ASK. So if we were gonna go out to an agency to ask them for things, we had a bit of a terms of reference for what we would ask them for. So it would be things like what services are you offering, what's your referral process, erm are there any minimum requirements for people to be able to access your services? Whether or not there was any, any advertisement that needed to go with it. So we put together a bit of a standing agenda really. And if you had any good news stories or anything like that, we encouraged agencies to compile it, bring it back to us. And then the magazine then would work with them on what it looks like, the contents of it and if they needed to slim it down or bulk it up, they'd be in touch with them basically to work through it." (Prison Worker)

The publisher of the magazine received an in-house list of charities of which HMP Liverpool connected with and then got in contact with the providers to secure involvement. In his own words he states that he *"rang them up and tried to secure sponsorship, basically selling advertising space in it."* From this the editor stated that it would

"branch out, because those charities (contacted) would say "oh you know what if you're going to do that, why don't you do this? So why don't you talk to these people? These might be able to help." And then bit by bit we came up with I think there were 41 advertisers in the magazine."

An obstacle in the magazine's journey has been the issue of funding. The publisher described COVID as playing a big role in the challenge of funding as when COVID hit, *"I found*

with all the service providers, any marketing spends were just pulled instantly.” Fortunately for the team, the governor at HMP Liverpool helped to secure the money to pilot the first edition. The Beyond the Gate team produced the magazine free of charge to the prison and the sponsors. The publisher described the process of the magazine as:

“So erm they helped us secure funding for the first project to produce 2000 brochures, which was part of their induction package for prisoners on Induction and Resettlement and then obviously we were in negotiations of speaking to, er the...prison and probation service, erm and they wanted it in every prison in the UK. But the job of producing 120 brochures every 6 months...different publications was...a big job and need a lot of staff and cost a lot of money so we decided to do 12 publications for the 12 prison and probation regional areas”.

He continues:

“The plan was for them to be given it in the resettlement 12 weeks, giving it when they go in, to show those people that are helping. And and you know what the first few nights are gonna be like and then giving it 12 weeks before they go and say, look, read that again. If you’re wanting to open a bank account, there’s someone gonna help you. If you’re wanting to find a house, Shelter is gonna help you. If you need to open a bank account, find a doctor, because those are the things that you need to make sure people don’t reoffend”.

When asked about future costings, the publisher stated *“it was just under £5 million for two publications for 120 prisons done in 12 different regional areas.”*

Eventually the Beyond the Gate Team are hoping the magazine can be more widely distributed with the editor wanting it *“in every prison. I want it in every prison in the UK...then I’ll jump over to America.”* The publisher also has big aspirations for the magazine stating *“I’d love us to see those 5 year contracts with the Prison and Probation Service. Hopefully they find funding for it and we do it in every prison in the UK.”*

What we did

As stated, a mixed methods approach was adopted by the team. This means that both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were adopted to ensure a more holistic view of the magazine was captured by those involved. Quantitative methods included questionnaires, administered to both individuals in prison and families in the visits centre. This questionnaire enabled the team to generate numerical data which allowed the findings surrounding the magazine to be shown in a clear and objective way. Qualitative methods adopted included a focus group and interviews with individuals of varying roles within the prison. Qualitative methods were adopted as it enabled a deeper understanding of the magazine to be presented, with thoughts and feelings being clearly articulated by those interviewed. No inferences are needed as the words of participants reveal the most important findings.

The first method adopted by the team was a focus group with 10 individuals in prison. This focus group helped the team establish the important questions to ask within the research and ultimately helped frame the project. Although not used within the analysis of findings, this method helped engage the individuals within HMP Liverpool and helped them be involved in the design of the research and have their voices be heard.

Questionnaires were utilised in two different ways within the evaluation:

Firstly, a questionnaire was placed in the family visiting centre of HMP Liverpool to enable the views of families to be captured, ensuring all involved in the prison process were able to have their voices heard. The team received 58 responses through this method, with quantitative data being generated from these responses.

Secondly, questionnaires were distributed to the individuals within the prison. The questionnaires involved questions regarding the content, design, style, level of engagement and value of the magazine (800, approximately the number of individuals at HMP Liverpool). Physical copies of the questionnaire were provided to HMP Liverpool and delivered to all individuals within the prison either during the first night/induction process or through delivery to wings. Anonymity was protected through the distribution process and there were no questions as part of the questionnaire that would lead to identification of an individual prisoner. This process resulted in the research team only receiving 10 completed questionnaires, as a result a decision in collaboration with staff at HMP Liverpool was made to utilise the internal digital system. This placement on the digital system ran until the end of analysis gathering, resulting in the research team receiving an additional 78 completed questionnaires, taking the total to 88 responses overall. It is important to note therefore that this total represents a small percentage of the total population in HMP Liverpool at the time. This data once again was collated into quantitative data providing numerical values to showcase the feelings of participants regarding the magazine.

Finally, interviews within the prison were conducted to provide qualitative, in-depth data surrounding participants' views of the magazine. Participants were interviewed once by the research team with interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes. Questions in the interview were the same as questions from the questionnaire, with the interview aiming to elicit more

detailed information regarding the questions asked. 6 staff members and 10 individuals in prison were interviewed in prison. A further 3 interviews with prison staff were conducted via Microsoft Teams, in addition to two interviews with the Beyond the Gate Team, which were conducted via Microsoft Teams also.

An analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered was then conducted, with the findings being presented in the following section of the evaluation.

The research team were not able to measure the impact of the magazine on reducing re-offending due to the large nature of a project of this kind. A further research project would need to be conducted to capture this impact.

This methodology was approved by both LJMU (reference number: 21/LAW/008) and HMPPS (reference number: 2022-123).



Findings

The findings within this report are split into quantitative data generated from the two questionnaires administered and qualitative data generated from the interviews conducted within the evaluation.

The quantitative data is discussed first, with the questionnaire which was administered to the individuals within HMP Liverpool (both physically and digitally through the internal kiosk system) being explored. The findings from each question are presented individually to allow for all areas to be presented and analysed. Following this questionnaire, the family centre questionnaire will be explored, again with the findings from each question being presented individually to allow for a more detailed exploration of the findings.

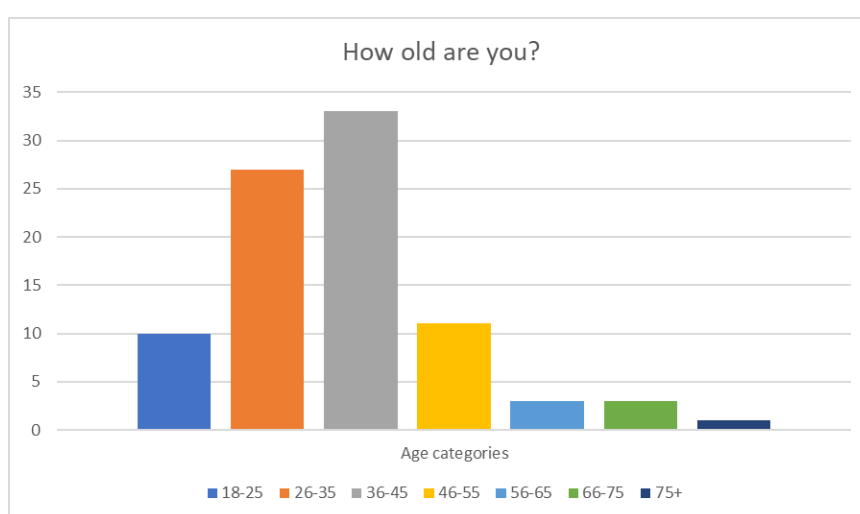
The qualitative data will follow this section. The qualitative data has been generated by the interviews conducted with both individuals within HMP Liverpool, in addition to prison workers. This data enabled the research team to establish five main themes. These are:

- Title and Purpose
- Potential Benefits
- Distribution
- Format: Design and Visual Communication
- Content: Owned and Featured/Other Media.

These themes will be discussed individually.

Quantitative Data

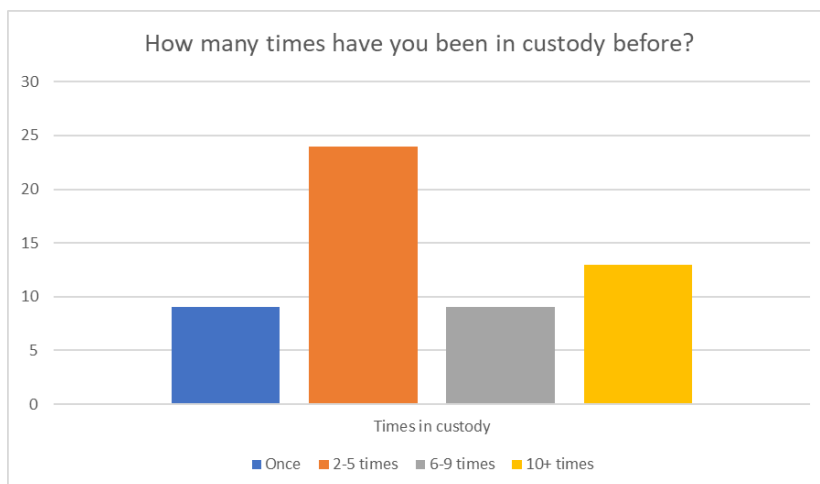
1. Questionnaire administered to individuals within HMP Liverpool



The majority of those who completed this question categorised themselves within the 36–45-year age category. Most respondents were aged between 18–55.



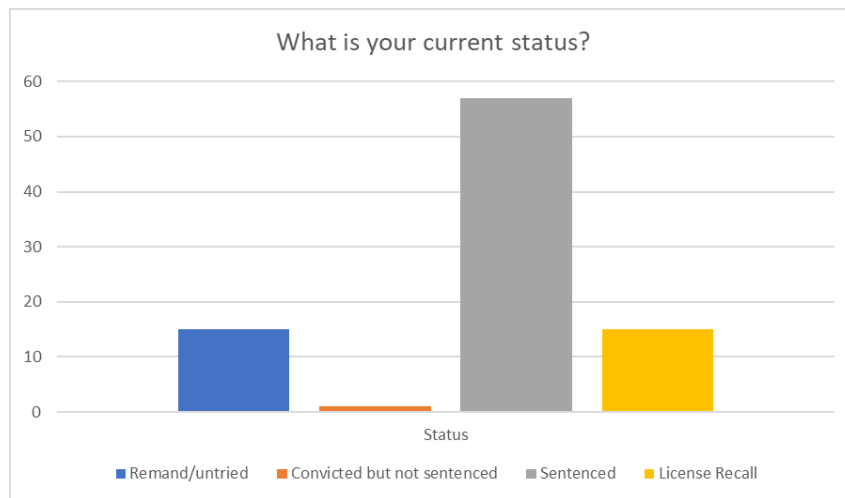
63% of the 88 respondents stated how this was not their first time in custody.



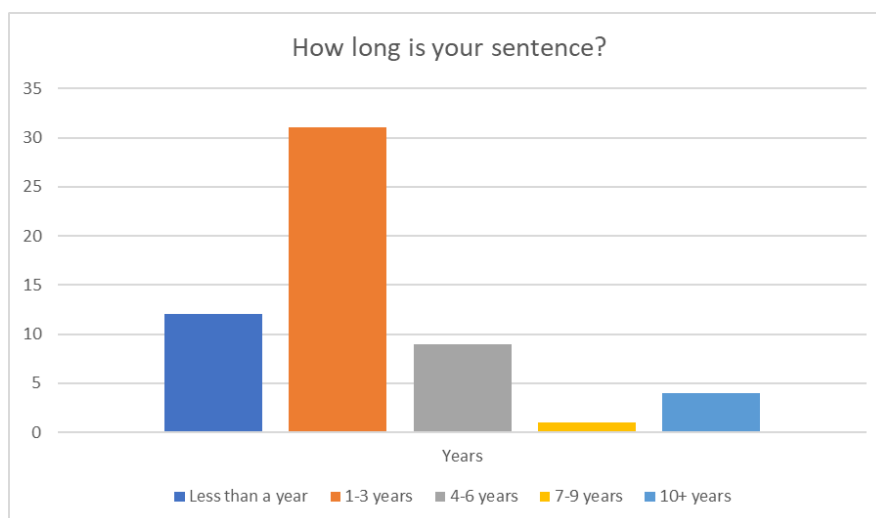
Regarding the 55 individuals who had been in custody before, the average times in custody were around 2-5 times, with just under 25 individuals reporting this many instances in custody.



Over half of the 55 respondents who had been in custody before had been to HMP Liverpool before. This accurately represents 30 individuals who completed the questionnaire.



The majority of individuals who are in custody are sentenced (a figure of 57), with an even split of 15 respondents each who are either on remand or on recall. Only one individual who completed a questionnaire has been convicted but not yet sentenced.

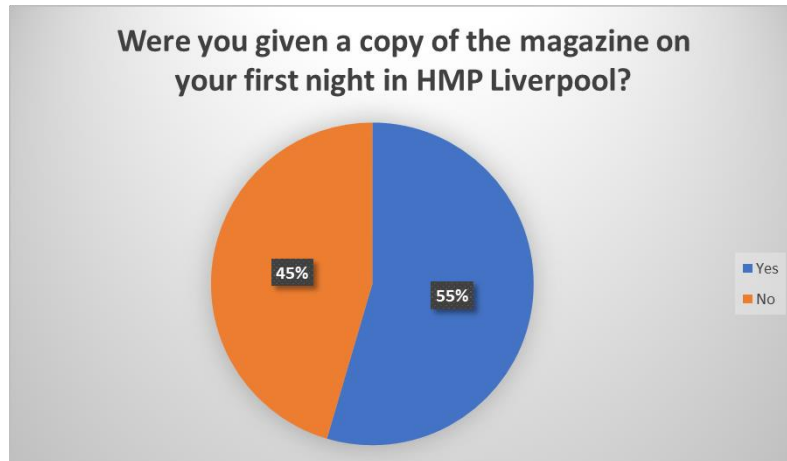


For the 57 individuals sentenced, over 30 are serving a 1-3 year sentence. 43 respondents are sentenced to a maximum of 3 years, highlighting how most respondents are on a short sentence.

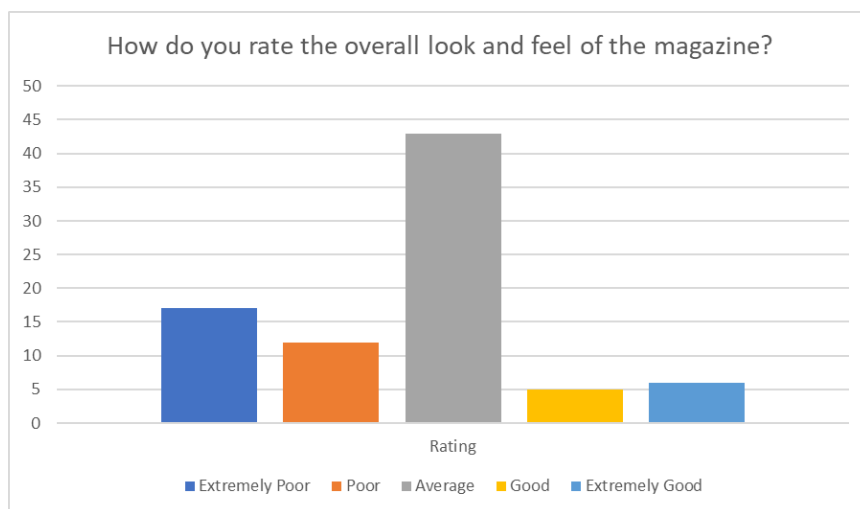
Understanding the demographic of those who took part in the quantitative part of the research process, is of interest to the research team as it enabled an exploration of how those who are returning to custody react to the magazine compared to those who have never been in custody before.

It is important to note that a significant proportion of the individuals in prison had been in prison previously and had served more than one sentence and/or a short sentence at HMP Liverpool.

Moving forward, understanding the demographic of the prison population will be an important consideration.

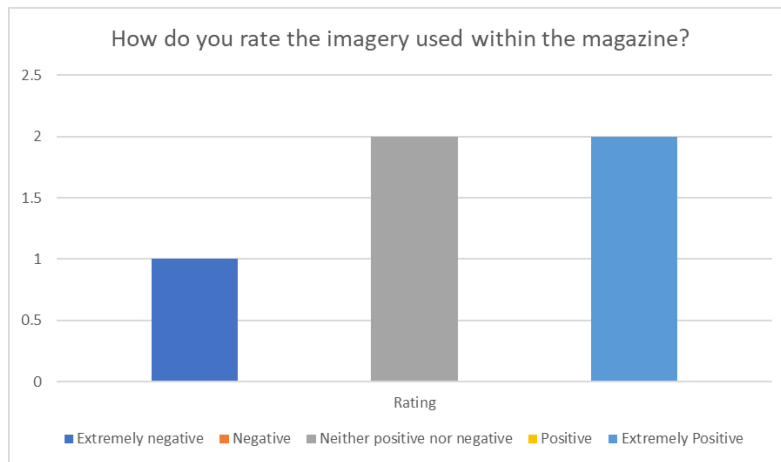


Over half of respondents stated they were given a copy of the magazine on their first night. The percentage who received the magazine is 55%.



This question had a response rate of 83 meaning 5 individuals did not complete this question.

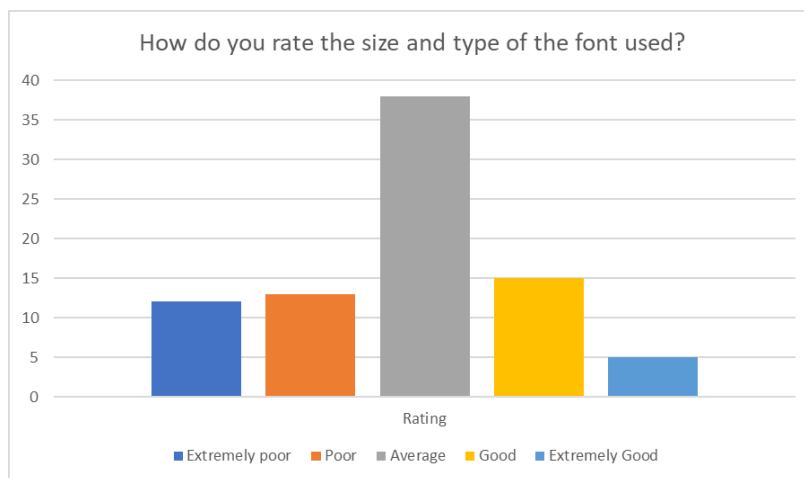
For the respondents who did answer this question, the overall look and feel of the magazine was rated as average, with more respondents leaning towards a negative viewpoint of the overall look and feel of the magazine than a positive viewpoint. This suggests a need to revisit the design of the magazine to improve the rating from the target audience.



This finding must be approached with caution as due to a failure of the internal kiosk system, this question was only shown to the 10 respondents who completed a physical copy of the questionnaire.

From the 10 respondents, only 5 answered the question.

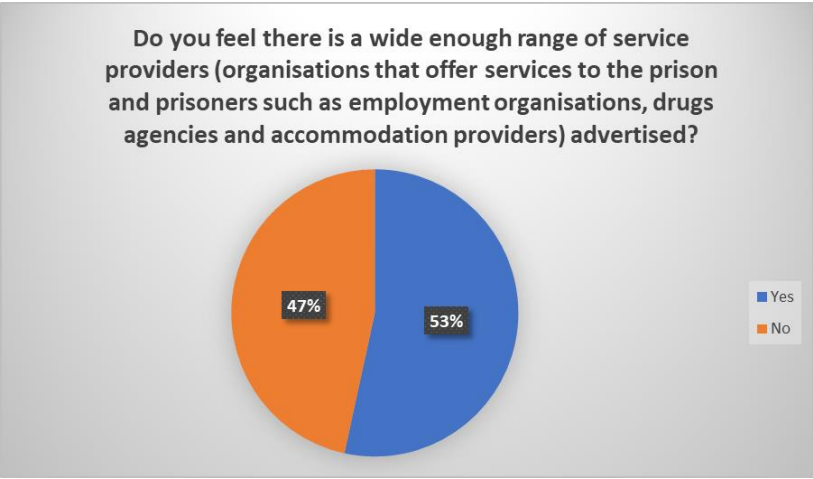
The 5 respondents, were more positive than negative when questioned on the imagery within the magazine, implying this is a strength of the magazine but requires further research with a larger audience.



This question had a response rate of 83 meaning 5 individuals did not complete this question.

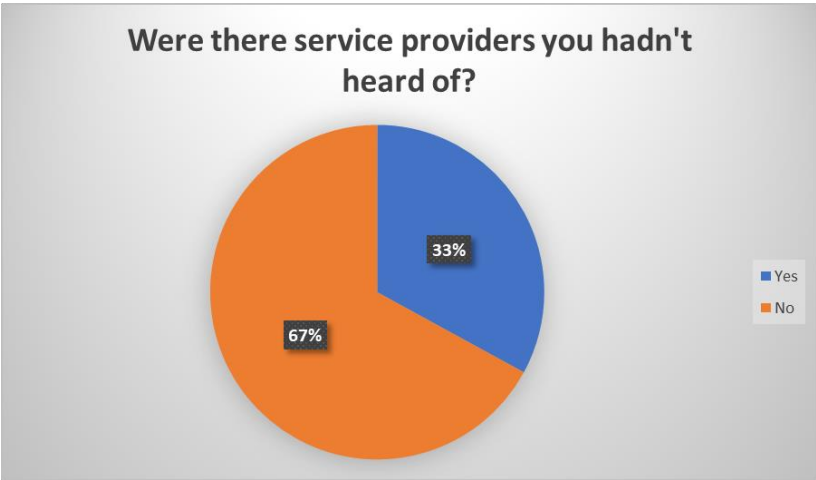
Similarly, to the question surrounding the overall look and feel of the magazine, the majority of respondents rated the type and size of the font as average (38 individuals), with the remaining individuals generating more negative than positive responses. A difference between the two questions is that this question regarding font produced more positive responses, however the responses were not enough to create the majority.

This suggests that more attention should be provided to the size and type of the font used to alleviate the negative viewpoints held.

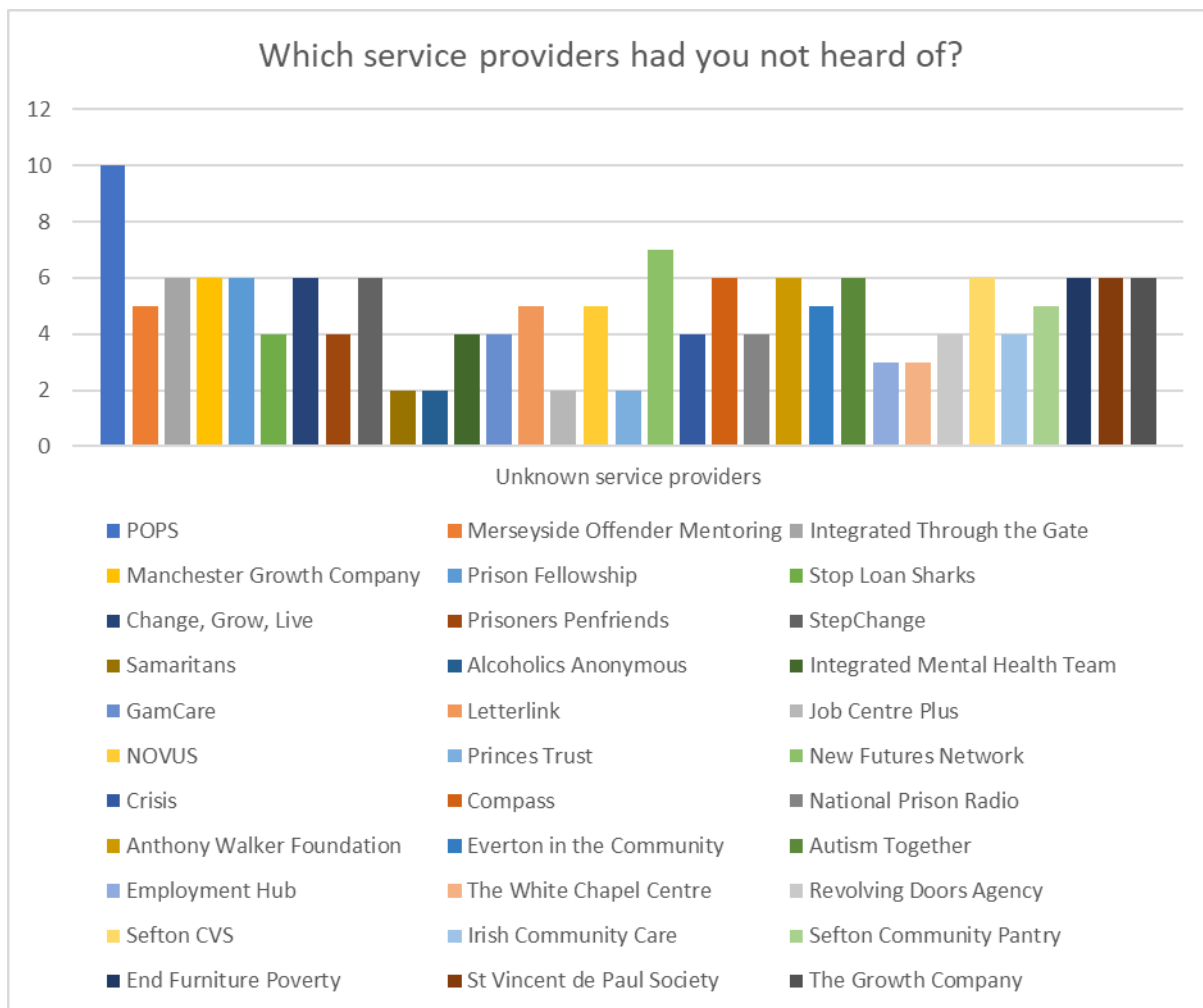


This question surrounding the range of service providers created an almost equal split between respondents, with 53% of individuals believing the magazine does have a wide enough range of service providers, whilst 47% of individuals did not believe there was a wide enough range of service providers.

There is not an overwhelming difference between the two responses, implying a potential need for more questioning regarding this area.



67% of respondents stated how they had not heard of all of the service providers listed. This is the majority of the respondents, with only 1/3 of respondents having heard of all services.

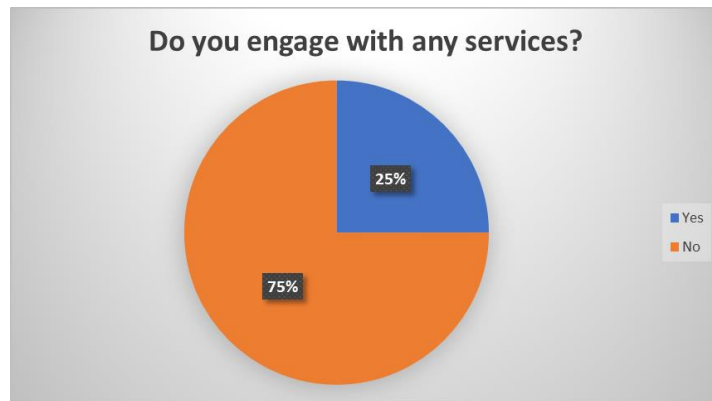


59 respondents stated how they had not heard of all service providers listed within the magazine. The graph above shows the service providers which were unheard of within the prison population.

The magazine therefore exposed the respondents to most of these services for the first time.

POPS (Partners of Prisoners & Families Support Group) was the service which the largest number of respondents had not heard of, with 10 individuals reporting they were unaware of this service. Other services which resulted in multiple individuals revealing they had not previously heard of them included: Prison Fellowship, New Futures Network, Autism Together and St. Vincent de Paul Society to name only some examples.

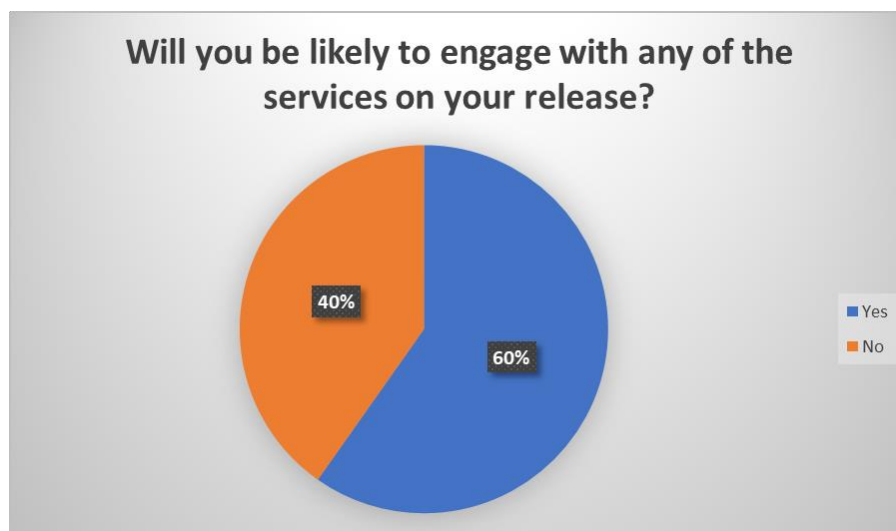
This highlights how there needs to be more promotion of service providers within prison, to ensure individuals within prison are not missing out on help or services which they may need. More work needs to be done to not only advertise these services but also to signpost individuals to services which may be most beneficial to them.



The question posed above was only received by 10 respondents as a result of a failure of the internal kiosk system to display this question.

Only 4 out of 10 respondents answered this question, with the majority stating that they do not engage with services.

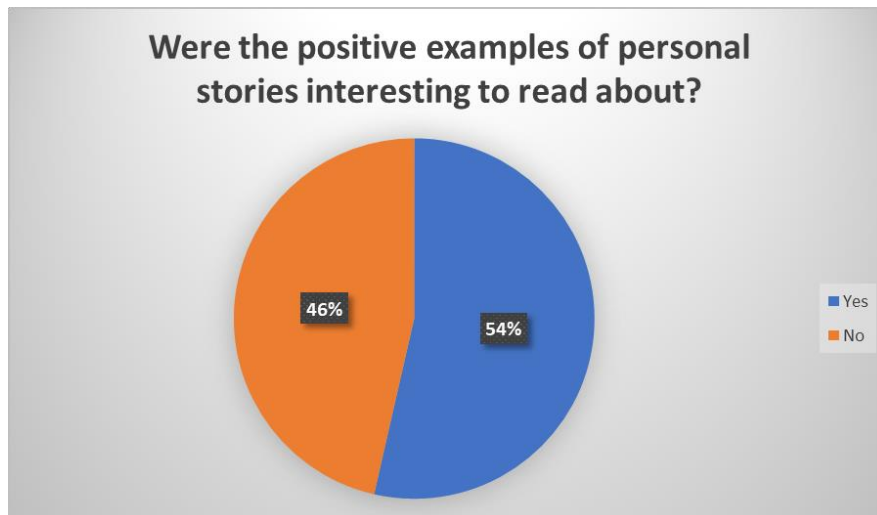
Only one individual stated that they do engage with a service, implying a low engagement with services within HMP Liverpool.



87 respondents answered the question on future engagement with services.

60% of respondents believed that they would be likely to engage with services on their release, with 40% believing they would not.

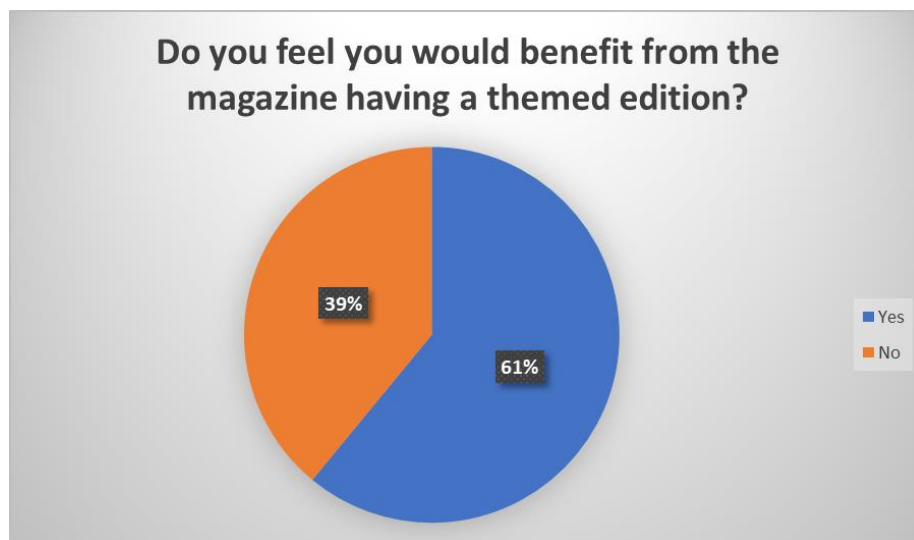
40% is a relatively high number of people who believe they will not engage with services, implying again that engagement with services at HMP Liverpool requires more focus. It could be suggested that individuals possibly are not encouraged to engage with the services enough resulting in a sense of pessimism regarding the help which is offered by. More research would need to be conducted in this area to establish the reliability of this suggestion.



The personal stories included within the magazine caused a split in opinion between respondents regarding whether they were interesting to read about or not.

84 respondents answered this question. 54% stated the personal stories were interesting to read about, whilst 46% of respondents stated they were not.

This almost even split between respondents connotes that in future, this area will need to be explored in more depth to establish whether the inclusion of stories is beneficial to the audience or not.



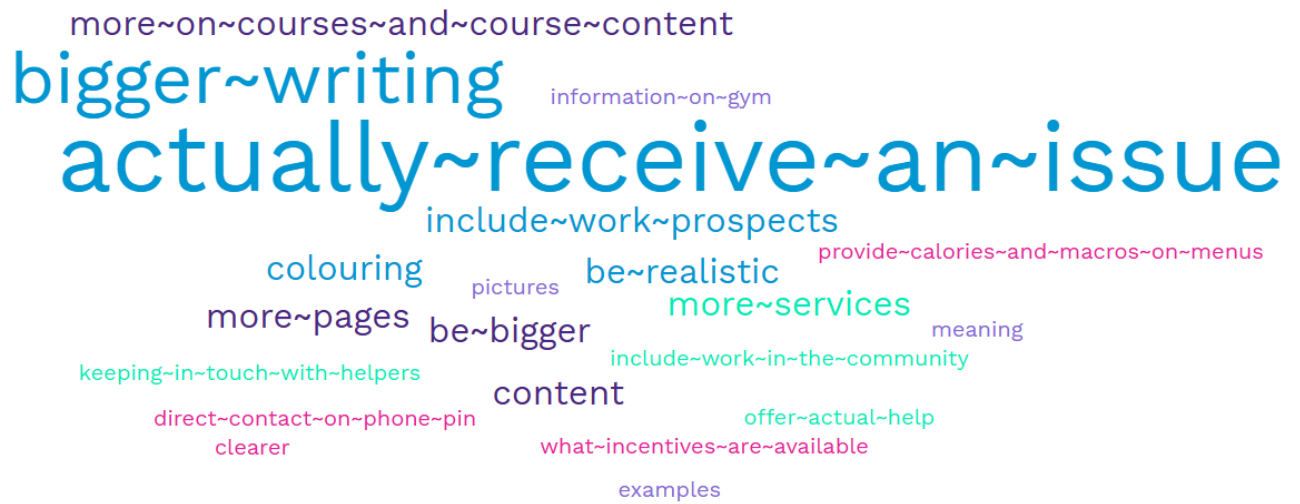
The idea of the magazine publishing a themed edition was welcomed by respondents with 61% of the 85 respondents claiming that they would benefit from this.

This could be a potential venture for the Beyond the Gate team to consider.

The remaining two questions on the questionnaire administered to individuals within HMP Liverpool were open-ended questions which produced qualitative data. The answers to the two questions have been presented in a word cloud to allow for the responses to be visually experienced, with the larger phrases being more present within the answers collected.

The first of the two question was: *Please list up to 3 ways in which the magazine could be improved.*

The answers are presented in a word cloud below:



67 individuals did not answer this question, meaning the answers presented above are the viewpoints of only 22 respondents.

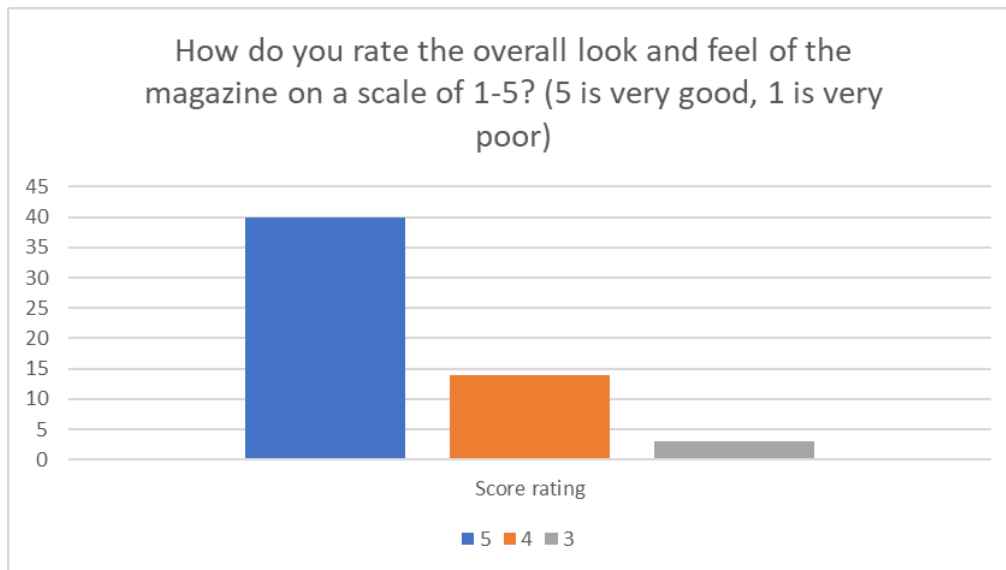
The second question was: *Please list up to 3 things you would like to see included/included more in the magazine.*

The answers are presented in the word cloud below:



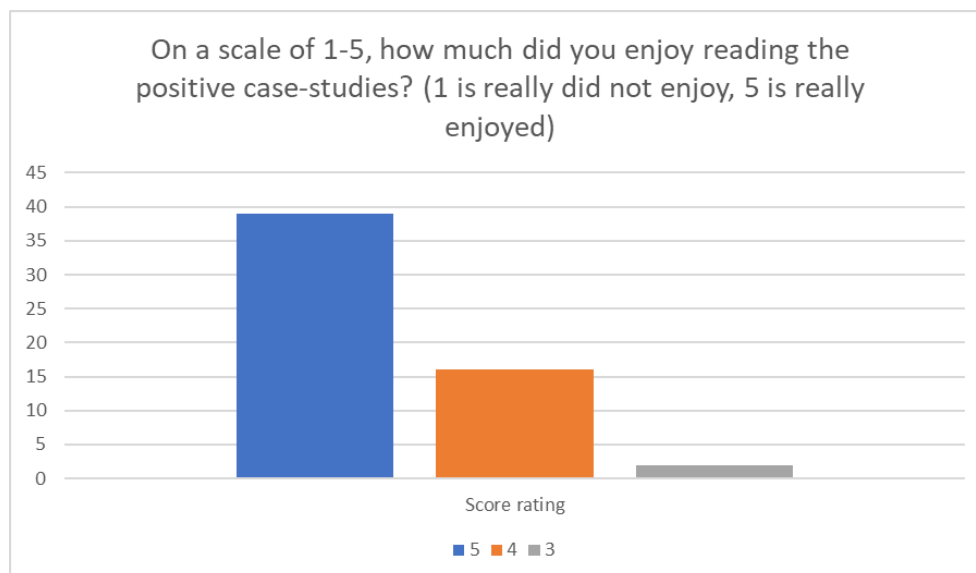
75 individuals did not answer this question, meaning the answers presented above are the viewpoints of only 13 respondents.

2. Family Questionnaire



The overall look and feel of the magazine was rated very positively by visitors within the family centre of HMP Liverpool, with 40 of the 57 respondents rating the overall look a 5 (very good).

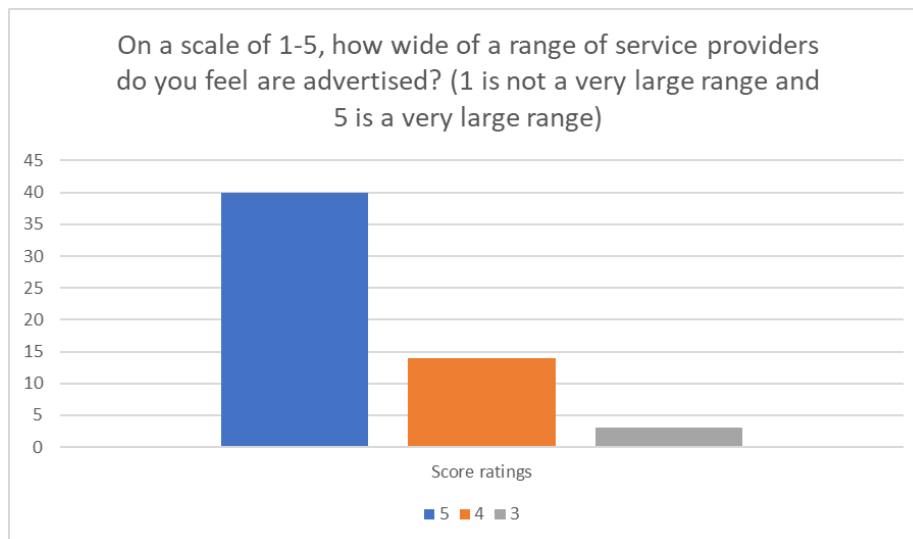
The lowest score rating received for this question was a 3 which is an average rating. This emphasises how the visitors within the family centre were very positive in regard to the overall look and feel of the magazine and was not able to comment negatively on the look or feel.



The positive case studies were rated very enjoyable by visitors within the family centre, with nearly 40 respondents rating the case studies as being really enjoyable.

This positive viewpoint expressed for this question is similar to the question above, with the lowest rating being an average rating of 3. There are no ratings which express the stories

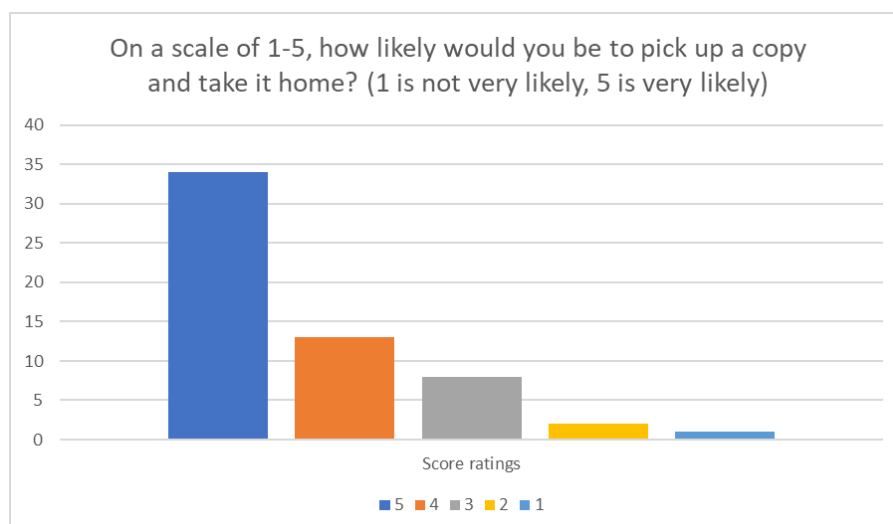
were not enjoyed, implying that the respondents all held positive views surrounding the positive case studies included within the magazine.



Similarly, to the two previous questions, this question regarding the range of service providers advertised generated a positive response from respondents.

40 respondents stated how they felt there was a very large range of providers, with around 13 respondents stating that there was a large range, and only 2 rating this range of advertisements as an average range.

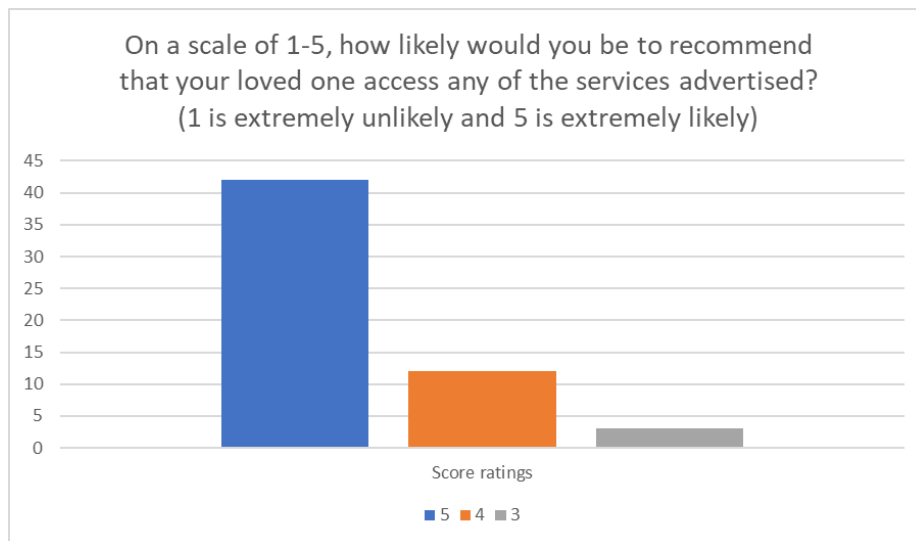
The positive viewpoints of respondents implies that they are happy with the range of providers and do not possess any negative views towards this element of the magazine.



This question regarding how likely the respondent would be to take a copy of the magazine home, is the first time a response of less than average (3) has been present for the whole questionnaire.

This however is still a very low proportion of respondents, with 2 individuals stating they would not be likely to take a copy home and only 1 individual stating they would be not very likely to take a copy home.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (34) expressed how they would be very likely to take a copy of the magazine home, highlighting a potential interest of family members to the magazine. This finding could be used to support the idea that family members would benefit just as greatly from the magazine as those individuals within prison.



Of the 57 respondents to this question, 42 respondents stated that they would be extremely likely to recommend the services advertised to their loved ones.

The remaining 15 respondents mostly rated themselves as likely to recommend the services to a loved one, with only 3 individuals answering 3 which is an answer of not likely or unlikely.

This again shows the support of family members and visitors to the magazine, with only positive views being expressed regarding the services included. This re-emphasises that the magazine may hold value to family members and possibly should be distributed to family members in addition to individuals within prison. Demonstrating the importance of the role that families and significant others have in the process of resettlement.

The question of: *Finally, please leave any other comments or feedback you think may be helpful in getting our product to be the best it can be*, was an open-ended question which resulted in qualitative data being collected and more detailed viewpoints of visitors being collected.

The main comment from this question revolved around the idea of the magazine being 'very helpful'. This referred to the idea that there was 'lots of useful information' within the magazine and in particular, the information would be useful to those within prison as it would 'answer a lot of the unknown'. A respondent mentioned the usefulness of the contents page for individuals within prison as it would help them navigate which elements

of the magazine were most important for their point of the journey. Around 32 comments were collected for this question, of which over 20 included the terms *'helpful'* *'useful'* *'informative'* *'full of information'* *'knowledgeable'*. This emphasises how the family members/visitors found a lot of value within the magazine and viewed it in a positive way.

This idea of the magazine being helpful was not only mentioned in regard to the individuals within prison but was also mentioned in relation to the family members themselves. One comment referred to the frequently asked questions section, referring to this section as *'helping answer confusing questions for me'*. This reveals how family members also find use in the magazine as it has been used to clarify grey areas which were causing family members both confusion and undue stress. The magazine is therefore helpful to both individuals within prison and family members alike. Another respondent mentioned how:

'the magazine would be helpful to inmates' family as it gives information we could discuss with our loved one and be on the same page and supportive'.

This reveals another potential benefit to family members as the suggestion is that the magazine could help bring the individual closer to their family through a shared understanding of the process and emotions they may be experiencing. The magazine is suggested as being a bridge between an individual and their family, with their family being able to help them through the process as a result of holding the same knowledge. This is a very important finding and reveals a two-fold benefit.

Other comments included: the magazine *'looks great'*, it is *'very easy to read'* and *'very good overall'*. Respondents were impressed by the stories included and the use of service numbers which respondents expressed as being a vital element to the magazine.

Two suggestions were made by respondents regarding the magazine. The first was to include more diverse imagery as *'imagery showed lack of diversity'*. The second was to

'maybe publish more (personal/positive) stories from inmates. To encourage more inmates to be positive on their release and future.'

Even with the presence of these two suggestions, the overwhelming sense from respondents was that the magazine is in its entirety a very positive resource of which is useful beyond those within prison and can hold use within the families themselves too.

Qualitative Data

From analysis of the qualitative data, the following themes will be explored:

- Title and Purpose
- Potential Benefits
- Distribution
- Design and Visual Communication
- Content: Owned and Featured/Other Media.

Title and Purpose

The title of the magazine was an area of conversation during the interview which was not anticipated by the research team. This mention of the title of the magazine came entirely from interviewees themselves, suggesting this was an area they felt they needed to comment on/address. The interviewees who mentioned the magazine title were predominantly prison workers, with mixed viewpoints being held on this element of the magazine.

One viewpoint was that the title implies that the magazine is only centred around release from prison and life outside of prison, when this is not solely what the magazine includes. This is due to the word 'beyond' which to some interviewees suggested after and not during prison. This was highlighted by an individual within prison who stated '*Beyond the Gate as a title suggests they help after prison.*' (Individual in prison). The connotation was that the magazine does not accurately reflect its content and does not suggest that it includes information regarding prison, the prison regime, and regulations. This section of the magazine regarding HMP Liverpool and the information provided regarding meal times, contacting loved ones, the process of the first few nights etc was deemed as the most important section of the magazine by interviewees, yet reading the title does not imply this information is included. A suggestion by interviewees was that the title should be re-visited to try to capture the finding that the magazine is extremely helpful for inside the prison in addition to outside the prison.

A prison worker accurately summarised the views of other interviewees when they stated that '*the title is open to interpretation*' (Prison Worker). Whether this was to be viewed as a good thing, the worker was unsure, however what was clear was that the title is subjective, with it being understood (as intended) by many but also perceived in an entirely different way by others. This openness of the title could lead to the question of '*what does it actually mean?*' (Prison Worker) which results in different answers to different individuals.

Other individuals spoke positively of the title stating how it '*shows progression rather than being titled "Behind the Gate"*' (Prison Worker). Another prison worker commented on how they felt the title does accurately reflect the prison process as release is always a priority and this is what the magazine is trying to portray:

'I think it's quite good if you consider that we are trying to promote preparing for release as soon as somebody lands at induction' (Prison Worker).

Another positive comment stated:

'It is what it is isn't it, it's self-explanatory. It's about services, it's about resettlement and it's about what support they can access beyond the gate. So...it's snappy, it's engaging and yeah, I quite like it.' (Prison Worker)

The main finding from the interviews regarding the title, was that interviewees would like to see the content more accurately reflected by the title. Suggestions for revised titles by interviewees included: *'Help Inside'* (Prison Worker), *'Inside and Outside the Gate'* (Prison Worker) and *'Through the Gate and Beyond the Gate'* (Prison Worker).

Another element of the magazine which created confusion and a variety of answers to be produced was the purpose of the magazine.

Interestingly, the majority of interviewees, both prison workers and individuals within prison alike, stated that they viewed the purpose of the magazine as being to provide information regarding HMP Liverpool and prison life. This finding is surprising considering only 13 pages of the magazine focus on this information. Individuals within prison stated how the magazines' purpose was to include important information which people need to know and to provide a *'heads up on situations you've not been in'* (Individual within prison). Individuals within prison stated how the magazine can be used to answer all questions a person has when they are *'confused and not in the know'* (Individual within prison). This implies that interviewees viewed the magazine as being most useful for those individuals who were new to the prison and needed guidance. Prison workers also held this view and believed the magazines' purpose was to provide information to the individuals within prison in the one resource. The magazine holds the purpose of informing individuals within prison of the *'little things that prison workers may forget to mention'* (Prison Worker). This suggests that the magazines purpose is to provide all information to individuals within prison, and ultimately provide a support to prison workers who may not be able to provide all of the information needed.

The idea of the magazine being a guide to individuals within prison was mentioned numerous times, with multiple individuals within prison describing the magazine as an *'essential guide'*. One individual described how you don't receive a guide to prison, but this was the next best thing. Another individual described the magazine as *'a manual to keep in your cell and refer to'* (Individual in prison). This idea of referring back to the magazine was mentioned by another individual who stated that being able to refer back to the magazine at a later date was extremely helpful as:

'when you enter prison you are bombarded with information and it is too much for your brain to handle' (Individual in prison).

This implies that the magazine is a resource than can be returned to when the individual feels ready to explore the information and is not simply a resource which is utilised at the start of a prison journey.

Other individuals within prison viewed the purpose of the magazine as being centred around prison life, with the purpose of the magazine being described as being to provide an introduction to prison life, to cover the main issues of prison and to describe prison rules. This reveals how for some individuals within prison, they viewed the magazine as being an aid to daily life.

This was also the view of some prison workers who described the purpose of the magazine as being to provide an overview and regime of prison. The purpose is described as being to provide *'like times and places and things like that'* (Prison Worker) emphasising how for some interviewees, the purpose of the magazine is to provide the basics of HMP Liverpool.

Other interviewees referred to the magazines purpose as being a source of positivity within the prison. One prison worker described the magazine as *'giving hope'* to individuals as they are able to see that they can survive in prison and that there are resources available to assist them along the way. An individual within prison described the magazine as showing those in prison that *'it is not the be all and end all being in prison. You can still be normal and do normal things'* (Individual within prison). A prison worker emphasised this point stating that the magazines' purpose is to show people that there are things available to them and to provide them with optimism and let them see how it is not all bad being in prison. The worker stated how a lot of prisoners often feel *'unhelpable'* so this magazine could be utilised to show them how this was not true. The underlying suggestion by this viewpoint is that the magazine has the purpose of giving individuals in prison a purpose and helping them see how there is support and opportunities available to them and that they are ultimately not alone in this process.

The most notable finding regarding the magazines' purpose is that no individual mentioned the idea of resettlement or reducing re-offending which the Beyond the Gate team state as the intended purpose of the magazine. This could imply that the purpose of the magazine is subjective, open to the interpretation of the audience and therefore could be viewed in a more flexible manner.

Potential benefits

A range of potential benefits were identified by those interviewed and as one interviewee stated, *'if this just stops one person from reoffending then it be worth it'* (Prison Worker). For staff, the magazine was seen as an innovative and unique resource that would enhance their engagement with individuals within prison. Those prison workers interviewed described the pressurised environment within the prison which had been compounded by having to deal with the challenges presented by the Covid pandemic. One aspect of this was the recruitment of new workers who were having to quickly absorb a complex range of information in order to support those in custody and prepare them for their release as captured in the following response:

"We had a lot of new staff start with us during the pandemic so we're having to educate staff. A lot of them for the first time into why activities and these kind of interventions that the magazine promotes quite heavily are important and kind of explaining the work that reducing reoffending does as a whole and why and how they can buy into it."

(Prison Worker)

The lack of knowledge as to what was available to individuals within the prison and the wider community, was perceived to be an issue that was experienced by individuals within prison and prison workers alike. Prison workers expressed feelings of being overwhelmed at times by the sheer amount of requests received from individuals in prison regarding prison procedures, activities, and support in the community to assist those preparing for their release back into the community and the range of resources individuals within prison could potentially access on their release. Even more experienced prison workers saw the benefits of the magazine as a means of ensuring that their knowledge of what resources were available for individuals within prison was kept up to date as this information was often subject to flux and change. Prison workers liked the idea of all this information being held in a single point of reference and saw the magazine as a potentially important mechanism to engage individuals within prison, help them navigate their sentences, 'signpost' them to engage with support available, and help them deal with what was sometimes perceived to be the monotony of prison life. Prison workers believed that the magazine could prove to be an important tool in reassuring vulnerable individuals within prison and addressing feelings of isolation. One prison worker went even further claiming that the magazine '*gives hope*' and that help was available. This was reinforced by the fact that it had been produced by a person with lived experience of imprisonment:

"What I learnt from it is that we can do better. We can communicate with the men through resources in a better way, in a way that's a bit more legitimate, a bit more credible. And yeah, I think you know, the whole point of the magazine as well is the fact that a person with lived experience of the criminal justice system has produced it and basically put it all together. So if we're talking about things like rehabilitation, reducing reoffending, supporting people with employment, we need to practice what we preach essentially and be able to provide funding for these opportunities and support prison leavers with their new ventures, with their ventures of self-employment, with their creativity" (Prison Worker).

It was seen as a particularly valuable resource that could be used in keyworker sessions:

'if they had a problem they could talk to the officer about that and what they wanted to know in the magazine if it wasn't clear enough' (Prison Worker).

It was also suggested that the magazine could be utilised as part of the 12-week resettlement board. It was acknowledged by prison workers that there would be challenges in funding the publication costs of the magazine and ensuring that the information contained within the magazine was constantly kept up to date. However, the benefits that the magazine could bring in terms of reducing the pressures on prison workers and enhancing support to individuals within prison was viewed by some as offsetting the costs involved in its production and distribution.

Although we did not interview prisoner's families, the potential benefits for this group were recognised by both prison workers and individuals within prison alike,

'... it is going to be mutually beneficial for families and loved ones and would answer a lot and reassure family members' (Prison Worker).

One staff member suggested that the magazine should be placed in the family visit centre another that it could be used to address issues raised in the family forum run within the prison.

Those individuals within prison we interviewed also welcomed the magazine, one stated *'why they haven't thought of this before I'll never know'*. In terms of what they perceived as being the potential benefits of the magazine, their responses were largely consistent with prison workers. They too identified it as a useful resource for their family members and liked that it was produced by a former individual within prison. Individuals within prison appreciated the practical information provided by the magazine and in common with prison workers, believed it could be a valuable resource for instilling hope and demonstrating that imprisonment *'is not the end of the world'*. Whilst it was generally acknowledged by those individuals within prison, that prison workers were operating in a highly pressurised environment, some perceived prison workers to be uninterested in them and lacking knowledge or understanding of their needs. Individuals within prison complained that their requests for information were not always answered and when they were, they often received conflicting information. As such the magazine could be a valuable alternative to what they perceived to be an unresponsive provision and would reduce their reliance on asking *'other lads or screws'* (Individual within prison). As one individual within prison commented, it

'would stop men from having to bother the officer's who get asked all kinds and often get annoyed and tell the men to "get off your bell" even though the men are only asking questions.' (Individual within prison)

Several individuals within prison we interviewed felt that the magazine should be aimed at new individuals, particularly those serving their first prison sentences as it *'answers all the questions a newcomer would have'* (Individual within prison). Some of those interviewed recounted negative experiences of the induction process and their first night in the prison and felt that the magazine would assist in reducing the stress of navigating the rules of the prison and what could be perceived as an intimidating environment. As one individual within prison observed *'prison can be a lonely place'*.

Distribution

From the interviews, the distribution process which occurred during the pilot of the magazine at HMP Liverpool was detailed. Prison workers described how the magazine was distributed as part of the first night package. The magazine was placed with essentials such as pillows and bedsheets so that the individual within prison could not miss the magazine. Prison workers stated how they thought this was the best idea as it meant that individuals entering the prison had access to the magazine, regardless of whether they chose to read it or not. Staff members also mentioned how the magazines were distributed to some individuals during induction, the important fact was that the magazine had to be distributed in the first 24-48 hours.

For those individuals who were already in prison, a copy of the magazine was delivered to their cells by a prison worker. This prison worker delivered a copy to each individual cell within the prison, to ensure that all individuals possessed a copy of the edition. This prison worker felt that this was necessary, as even if they chose not to read it:

“they’ve got it in their cell, so at least they’ve got it. And I know they’ve got the information there.” (Prison Worker).

The magazine was also placed in the library and on the prisoner information desks. A prison worker states that in future distributions of the magazine, this process would have to be followed again to ensure that all individuals currently in the prison received it, in addition to new entrants.

When questioned on what they thought would be the best time to receive the magazine, interviewees varied in responses. For the majority of both prison workers and individuals within prison, the overall consensus was that the first night/induction process would be the ideal time to receive the magazine:

“First night is when it should be given, 100%” (Individual in Prison)

“This is definitely the best time to receive the magazine” (Prison Worker)

Individuals in prison provided reasons as to why they believed the first night and induction were the perfect time to receive the magazine:

“It can be used to kill off some time while you’re sat in the cell.” (Individual in Prison)

“It’s important to keep busy.” (Individual in Prison)

“It would help to knock the scariness away.” (Individual in Prison)

Individuals interviewed described how it was important to be occupied on the first night to distract from feelings of anxiety. Feelings of depression were also alluded to, emphasising how important methods of distraction are. Having the magazine and learning essential information for prison, was described as being a way to ease the anxiety of the first night and help the individual to understand the prison life they are about to enter *“(the magazine) answers all questions that a newcomer would have.” (Individual in prison)*

Individuals state information is provided on the first night, however this information is not great and is often too much. Information provided was described as being presented in a complex format which jumps from one topic to the next, making it hard to understand. Individuals within the prison agreed that the magazine format was more useful and easier to understand.

Not all interviewed agreed that the first night was the ideal time for the magazine to be distributed. Prison workers voiced concerns that the individuals’ *“heads battered” (Prison Worker)* when they reach the first night wing, therefore the magazine would be too much for them to cope with. The suggestion was that this be given further on in the Induction

process when the individuals are settled in a cell on a wing. At this point the individuals in prison are described as being *“in a better headspace here” (Prison Worker)* and will have *“settled” (Prison Worker)* therefore being able to retain the information. An individual within prison agreed with this and suggested the magazine should be distributed at different points in a person’s sentence to cater for when they are most open to receiving the information. The idea of the magazine being distributed on the Induction Wings was supported by multiple individuals interviewed.

When interviewing the individuals within prison about the magazine, it became apparent that a lot of the individuals were unaware of the magazine and had never seen a copy:

“Didn’t know they done that in here me” (Individual in prison)

When questioned if they had seen this magazine before, 7/10 males answered that they had not. For the 3 males who had seen the magazine before, none had received it at the intended time of the first night induction. One male although having received it, stated he had never picked it up before so was unaware of its contents, his reasoning for not having read the magazine was that due to him being a re-offender, he simply *“knows it all” (Individual in Prison)* so would find it useless.

All other individuals’ viewpoints were positive, with individuals emphasising how important the magazine would be for providing information on the first night:

“Information is key (on the first night)” (Individual in prison)

“I didn’t know any of that...it would have been important to know it.” (Individual in prison)

“Some people just get left.” (Individual in prison)

Although individuals within prison mention that there are things to help, they state that this would have been the most helpful resource, if they would have received a copy or been aware of its existence.

Regarding the desired frequency of the magazine editions, interviewees emphasised that resources are not provided frequently enough and are rotated on a 6-monthly basis. This was suggested as being too long for individuals within prison, with them implying that this magazine should be provided more frequently. The majority of individuals interviewed specified that they would like the magazine monthly. One individual within prison described those within prison as

“looking for absolutely anything to read to keep themselves occupied” (Individual in prison)

The magazine being released frequently could help to combat boredom within the prison, being used as entertainment and as an educational resource. This need for frequent resources was connoted by another interviewee who spoke about the Inside Times (a prison newspaper)

“all the prisoners wait for the latest release as it provides them with something new and something to distract them.” (Individual in prison)

Prison workers were more likely to provide what they termed “realistic answers” so although one prison worker stated:

“I'd like to see it monthly... We would most definitely have the capacity to be able to fill monthly editions” (Prison Worker)

Staff were more likely to suggest that the magazine be updated yearly or twice a year for the reason:

“it would allow for changes to be accommodated for” (Prison Worker)

Format: Design and Visual Communication

Issue 01 is a 48-printed page, full colour magazine produced in an oversized A4 portrait format measuring 215mm x 310mm in size. It has a heavier (gsm weight) cover than the inner pages, a gloss lamination finish and wire stitched/stapled together. The inner back cover page also supports a pocket device.

Having not been involved in the conception or design process, it is assumed that the design, visual style, title, supporting strap line, structure for content and consistency have all been considered along with an editorial voice (to include visuals, language, and tone of voice) before publishing. Also, that all parties involved in the design development concede that the Design is central to its' success.

From interviews conducted with the Founder and Prison workers, it is evident that some collaboration, co-design and early dialogue shaped the magazine.

*“We talked through what we would like to see from the magazines perspective and how we would like it to look. Various agencies that we'd like to see contributions from”
(Prison Worker)*

This methodology is seen as good practice and usually forms part of the early creative research process. The creative design cycle, however, is lengthy and will normally follow a rigorous but universally accepted process of Research and Development before producing a Final Outcome. This activity and process is described by the Design Council as the double diamond theory: *Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver*.

[\(https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/news-opinion/double-diamond-universally-accepted-depiction-design-process/\)](https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/news-opinion/double-diamond-universally-accepted-depiction-design-process/)

Typically, when commencing creative development, the engagement with specialists from the creative services industry, for example a graphic designer is recommended as they champion objectivity and see the client's message as central to success. This affirmation was realised by Josef Muller Brockmann in *The Graphic Artist and His Design Problems* (Zurich, Niggli, 1968) *“the withdrawal of the personality of the designer behind the idea, the themes,*

the enterprise, or product is what the best minds are all striving to achieve". Today, graphic designers continue to advocate this practice as a method of visual communication.

"The job of a graphic designer is to understand the material that they are trying to communicate ...and then make an appropriate and unique design that communicates that content"

Quentin Newark / Atelier Works (Design Council – What does a graphic designer do?)
<https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/news-opinion/video-what-is-graphic-design/>

In terms of magazine design, it can be argued that there are three core components a graphic designer has to use, Typography, Imagery and Colour. These can be broken down further into Sets, Formats, Sizes and Shapes to be used in functional layouts across grids and other design formulas as an ordering system. Importantly this approach will inform the magazines own design language. In the process of making a magazine, consideration must be made to the interrelationship between type, image, colour, shape and composition. This approach is embedded in the practice of graphic designers and is a central to successful and effective outputs. *"Graphic communication is at the heart of successful and effective approaches to design"*

Noble, Ian & Bestly, Russell (2005) Visual Research.
London, AVA Publishing

In order to materialize the first issue, it is noted a small production team was approached to include the skills of a graphic designer.

The importance of testing with the audience cannot be underestimated as cited by Fendley discussing the design process, *"it all starts with the end user, getting yourself in the users shoes"*

Tim Fendley / Applied Wayfinding / (Design Council – The process of graphic design)
<https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/news-opinion/video-what-is-graphic-design/>

Beyond the Gate is also founded on these principles and has credibility due to the first-hand experience of the editor.

The research team further tested the audience through the use of a focus group. Having established the intention of the research, the interviewees began the process of establishing initial thoughts of the magazine and it's intended use.

"No description of visual organisation, or indeed effective designing, can take place without knowing something about the intended readers, circumstances of use, means of productions, and the content of the information, as each of these parameters offers its own constraints and opportunities"

Walker, Sue. (2000) *Typography and Language in Everyday Life: Prescriptions and Practices*.
Routledge

Qualitative Design analysis of Beyond the Gate magazine is very much subjective, and even when testing this theory with a specific target audience, it can still prove to be problematic. The design and aesthetic value of the magazine can only be completely voiced through visual research, visual reference and testing (with specific focus groups that are not influenced). Therefore, in order to truly understand the Design success of Beyond the Gate,

visual comparisons need to be drawn upon in the future. These can be tested against other comparative publications or similar literatures, where Design can be judged on three core components, Type, Image and Colour. And moving forward, other factors from format, print quality and manufacture to tactility and usability can be explored in the aim that quantitative analysis can also be drawn upon.

In the data collection methods, many positive viewpoints around the Design and Production emerged. Interviewees commented that type, image and colour used were all 'good' and that navigation was clear.

Regarding design, many individuals within prison commented on the positive use of colour and photography within the magazine. The use of colour was described as being eye-catching suggesting it would attract more readers. Words used by individuals within prison to describe the colour include: "helpful", "inspiring", "positive" and "inviting". One individual described the magazine as "...standing out" (Individual in prison) due to the use of colour which was seen as a positive. Regarding the photography, an individual within prison describes the photos used as making it easier to read the magazine and more inviting to the eye. The use of photography and colours were also alluded to in relation to the magazine not feeling like a typical prison publication.

Didn't look like 'prison publication' : Doesn't feel like it's a prison service publication (which is good) – doesn't feel as gloomy or authoritative (Prison Worker)

"very, very not typical of your usual prison service publication, which would normally be something that's photocopied a million times and looks a bit tatty" (Prison Worker)

"It looks different to other publications. So therefore it's a good thing because it doesn't have prison written all over it." (Prison Worker)

This use of colour was revealed to be something not used often within the prison but was something of which was advocated for as one prison worker stated that "normal black and white design loses a lot of people". The colour of the magazine was therefore a positive design element to the interviewees, in addition to comments such as the magazine feeling credible and professional which were also mentioned within interviews.

Focusing on the views of the production of the magazine, a variety of aspects were mentioned. Firstly, the magazine was praised in relation to its size with it being stated that "should not be any smaller" (Prison Worker) as "any smaller it would be thrown in the bin" (Prison Worker). Individuals within prison also appreciated the size of the magazine, "it is an ideal size...can't get lost or mixed up in paper" (Individual in Prison). In addition to this, the weight of the paper and the gloss paper used were mentioned by interviewees, with one prison worker stating that "it is strong in feel and suggests it is gonna last." The magazine is therefore viewed as having longevity through the design choices. The most important element of the design production to the individuals in prison was the sleeve at the back of the magazine which they found very useful for storing sheets and therefore not misplacing them:

“it’s useful because if you have a question you can write it down and place it in the pocket so you would remember to ask it when you had a chance” (Individual in prison)

Interviewees were also encouraged to voice what didn’t work and to suggest improvements for future issues.

Concerning the design of the magazine, the writing style caused the most negative reaction with interviewees stating that those within prison who struggle with literacy may find it difficult to read the large sections of text and wording of the information. The writing style should be revised with ‘plain English’ being utilised more. Additionally, prison workers in particular commented on the amount of writing, suggesting it was too much for the individuals within prison. For the individuals in prison, *“when they see big blocks of text like that, it’s a complete no go” (Prison Worker)*. Therefore, a suggestion from prison workers was to use less text on each page and to adopt chunking pieces of information together to break the pages up. This would help the pages feel less dense and less *“text heavy” (Prison Worker)*.

Observations made by the interviewers are that expectations in terms of Design for a publication such as Beyond the Gate aimed at this audience are very low, but the demand for information and knowledge in this setting/environment is very high. Critical and deep dialogue concerning Design, layout, structure, imagery, and overall visual style and aesthetic is minimal and an alien concept to the interviewees. Articulating what good or bad design is, analysing the semiotics of imagery or the appropriateness of typography was equally a strange idea to be discussing. Further focus groups with comparative visual examples would open up this commentary. Generally, however, the interviewees response to Design was overwhelmingly positive, and there seems to be an argument that in its current guise, the magazine appears to offer more and is a positive alternative to the current offering.

Content: Owned and Featured/Other Media

In any magazine understanding the audience is key to the success of that communication. Unlike traditional magazines who have clear and definitive target audiences that they understand (knowing their age, sex, ethnicity, income, buying patterns, lifestyles, location, and behaviours etc), here the audience is much wider. There are vast differences in age, literacy, language and preferred communication methods. Therefore, in order for the magazine to be successfully communicated understanding their audience (even though there are such a wide parameters) is integral.

For the purposes of this evaluation, it is important to consider the types of media content being published in the magazine. Owned Media is widely understood to be the content authored and controlled by the publisher, this may consist of editorial stories, case studies and/or interviews. In contrast Featured/Other Media is typically placed in dedicated sections of the magazine, known as advertising (often referred to as full, half, quarter, strip/column or box ads format), advertorials and other similar sponsored content.

In issue 01, it can be seen that within Featured/Other Media, approximately 40 adverts both local and national have been placed in a variety of formats. There are approximately 14 pages dedicated to site specific and generic service information such as Induction, Regime, Money, Canteen, Gym and FAQ’s. In terms of Featured/Owned Media, there is only one

editorial story (page 19, linked to the cover – Lee’s story). All other case studies and/or interviews are part of the advertising.

Typically, in the UK publishing market it would not be uncommon to find a glossy lifestyle magazine carrying as much as 80% of Featured/Other Media compared with its own editorial content. Regardless of the proportions observed here, the intentions and underlying themes of wanting to help individuals in prison and improve communication regarding services do come through. It is also received as genuine given the editor’s lived experience.

From further interview and questionnaire results, it can be seen an appetite for authenticity in the content, whether this information is found in the editorial or advertising (case studies). It is crucial that this is always seen as realistic to continue to validate engagement with the prisoners. On reflection, we can also identify themes of positivity and hope.

For the individuals in prison, the magazine is described as creating optimism in a person about their future and providing *“a bit of hope”* (Individual in prison). This hope is in reference to the stories included in the magazine in particular which are described as *“inspiring people”* (Individual in prison) and allowing someone to envision a more positive future for themselves. The stories show individuals in prison that *“it is not the end of the world”* (Prison Worker) and provide a *“little bit of hope that you could do it yourself”* (Individual in prison). Ultimately, the success stories included within the magazine were viewed as being positive and resonating with individuals.

The content of the magazine was furthermore praised for its adoption of a different approach that seems to work best as it is more human. This is in reference to the ability of the magazine to inform the readers of what they need to know within prison, in a clear and informative way. There is no attempt to conceal the reality of prison, but rather an accurate portrayal of prison knowledge and life is provided. This was appreciated by both individuals in prison and prison workers. This information on the prison in specific was most appreciated as it allowed individuals to understand the specific rules and regulations of the prison they were currently within. This practical information was the individuals in prisons’ favourite element of the design and was only described in positive tones: *“The information at the start of the magazine is most useful”* (Individual in prison)

Although the stories included within the magazine elicited many positive comments, there were also negative comments surrounding the stories. For example, one individual within prison described the stories as feeling fake, *“this is fake, I’ve heard this story enough times.”* This lack of realism regarding the stories included was mentioned by a number of individuals in prison who suggested there needs to be a wider variety of stories instead of simply stories surrounding reformed addicts. Stories should not be predictable voices individuals in prison, who state they can predict the stories now without even reading them. Instead, there should be a number of different stories which relate to different people. A suggestion was for some stories to focus on the realities and challenges of drugs as a lot of people are now *“desensitised to this”* and need *“a hard-hitting story”* (Individual in prison). Prison workers suggested that more stories about ex-offenders who have changed their lives around should be provided in order to provide hope to other individuals.

“I think what we need in it is like people have been in prison and given their story in there. I know that there's one in there about that, but a few more of success stories.”
(Prison Worker)

Furthermore, the content of the magazine was criticised for there being too many adverts. One individual in prison described this as being similar to *“the back pages of the echo”* (Individual in prison) with advertisements simply dominating the magazine. The advertisements were described as being just like the leaflets available in the prison which the individuals did not like.

One of the core themes set at the outset was one of resettlement, however this idea did not come through without prompting. Not many interviewees mentioned resettlement without a prompting question and even then, they were not very descriptive on the matter.

Lastly, some commentary referred to the magazine as an education tool rather than a magazine, and comparisons have been drawn to other publications found at other prisons such as ‘Inside Times’, ‘Cell Companion Book’, ‘in-house Styal magazine’ and the ‘Riz’. Interviewees all agreed this was an improvement on existing literature. At present the evaluation team have not seen any of these other publications, and therefore comparisons cannot be made, however this would be a good opportunity to further this research.

Recommendations

It was clear from the research that there was a real appetite for the Beyond the Gate magazine to be embedded into prison life. The following recommendations seek to ensure this becomes both embedded and sustainable within the wider prison estate.

Recommendation 1: There should be continued research into the Beyond the Gate initiative. This research could build on the methodology used within the evaluation by engaging with a larger sample (within the same prison or in different prisons) and over a longer period of time. This research could then result in a longitudinal study being conducted on the magazines impact on reducing reoffending in the longer term.

Recommendation 2: A third-party intermediate with lived experience of the Criminal Justice System should be involved in any future research processes. Having an intermediate with lived experience would create a more trusting relationship allowing for more honest answers to be provided.

Recommendation 3: As part of future research, consideration should be given to exploring what already exists (e.g. the 'Riz', prison newsletters etc) and on approaches in other countries. Scandinavia would be a good place to start as they have modelled prisons/institutions on resettlement and would have innovative methodologies.

Recommendation 4: An additional research project could focus on more in-depth analysis on the design of the magazine. Focus groups with individuals in prison and prison workers could inform a deeper understanding/range of perspectives into the design of future editions.

Recommendation 5: The Beyond the Gate team should focus attention on the design and content of the magazine to ensure this resembles a typical magazine format. Research into the process of making a magazine and following the suggested format of a lifestyle magazine for example. This would prevent the magazine reading as a series of advertisements.

Recommendation 6: The use of colour and the colours in the magazine were identified as being really important and their use should continue into future editions.

Recommendation 7: For the imagery used in the magazine to be representative of the diversity of individuals in prison.

Recommendation 8: Future editions of the magazine should include more stories, with a greater diversity of experiences and a focus on authenticity and locality alike.

Recommendation 9: For the Beyond the Gate team to consider the accessibility of the magazine. Within HMP Liverpool there is a newly designated role addressing issues of neurodiversity and the magazine would benefit from being looked at by this lead to ensure future editions were accessible to all. A suggestion from an individual in prison was for example for different colour acetates to be included.

Recommendation 10: It is essential for the success of the magazine that there is a nominated individual who holds the role as a 'link' between the Beyond the Gate team and the prison in which the magazine is distributed. The Beyond the Gate team should work with individual prisons to establish a named individual or role. This person(s) would ensure the appropriateness of information regarding the prison and its rules/regulations. They would ensure content and agencies were relevant and could assist in the distribution of the magazine.

Recommendation 11: It is important that the Beyond the Gate team assure 'buy in' from those who work within the prison (including both prison staff and outside agencies) to enable the networking of the magazine within the prison estate. Formal agreements should be put in place so that this is managed better, avoids any conflict of issues and is sustainable.

Recommendation 12: It would be a real benefit moving forward for the magazine to be co-produced. The Beyond the Gate team should work to establish an advisory board consisting of prison workers, individuals within prison, family members and organisation services to help assist in matters of content and design. Additionally, there could be an editorial board involved in the publication. Further, a strategic team of different stakeholders may benefit the Beyond the Gate team and make the process smoother.

Recommendation 13: A recommendation is for the Beyond the Gate team in conjunction with the advisory board to think about the aim and aspiration of the magazine. The magazine would need to be refocused to ensure the aim/aspiration is clearly expressed through both content and design.

Recommendation 14: The Beyond the Gate Team and their advisory board should consider how many editions of the magazine there should be each year. Two editions a year was considered adequate.

Recommendation 15: The title of the magazine moving forward should be considered by the established advisory board.

Recommendation 16: Enough copies of the magazine should be produced so that they can be distributed more widely to include prison workers, family members and the wider community, including organisations.

Recommendation 17: There is potential for this magazine to be used as an educational resource within schools, colleges, universities and organisations, to inform future practitioners, practitioners and service providers.

Responses to Recommendations

The research team provided the Beyond the Gate Team with an opportunity to view the recommendations prior to the final draft of the report being provided. The Beyond the Gate team provided comments and actions they plan to take in relation to the recommendations provided, of which both teams thought were useful to have present within the final report. The research teams' recommendations in conjunction with the Beyond the Gate teams' comments are provided below:

Recommendation 1: There should be continued research into the Beyond the Gate initiative. This research could build on the methodology used within the evaluation by engaging with a larger sample (within the same prison or in different prisons) and over a longer period of time. This research could then result in a longitudinal study being conducted on the magazines impact on reducing reoffending in the longer term.

Response to Recommendation 1: We would welcome further research into BTG, and with COVID restrictions now lifted, feel we could be of more service in the distribution process, for example, collecting weekly data on issues distributed. We feel this would also help counter the criticism which seemed most prevalent in word cloud on Page 18: "Actually Receive an Issue"

Recommendation 2: A third-party intermediate with lived experience of the Criminal Justice System should be involved in any future research processes. Having an intermediate with lived experience would create a more trusting relationship allowing for more honest answers to be provided.

Response to Recommendation 2: We wholeheartedly agree and our revised budget includes an Assistant Editor with lived experience, along with other key positions. One of our most important aims is to employ and train individuals with such experience to enrich the authenticity of the magazine.

Recommendation 3: As part of future research, consideration should be given to exploring what already exists (e.g. the 'Riz', prison newsletters etc) and on approaches in other countries. Scandinavia would be a good place to start as they have modelled prisons/institutions on resettlement and would have innovative methodologies.

Response to Recommendation 3: Noted, thank you.

Recommendation 4: An additional research project could focus on more in-depth analysis on the design of the magazine. Focus groups with individuals in prison and prison workers could inform a deeper understanding/range of perspectives into the design of future editions.

Response to Recommendation 4: With the lifting of COVID restrictions, BTG welcome the idea of interacting with individuals in prison and prison workers to provide live feedback and suggestions.

Recommendation 5: The Beyond the Gate team should focus attention on the design and content of the magazine to ensure this resembles a typical magazine format. Research into the process of making a magazine and following the suggested format of a lifestyle magazine for example. This would prevent the magazine reading as a series of advertisements.

Response to Recommendation 5: We are working with two local designers in conjunction with our original one to make the format more of a magazine. These designers will work with the service providers to provide a better flow to the content.

Recommendation 6: The use of colour and the colours in the magazine were identified as being really important and their use should continue into future editions.

Response to Recommendation 6: Noted, thank you.

Recommendation 7: For the imagery used in the magazine to be representative of the diversity of individuals in prison.

Response to Recommendation 7: BTG are committed to developing our workplace policies to be more inclusive and diversity-friendly, from our publication content to our hiring practices and as such are grateful for this feedback.

Recommendation 8: Future editions of the magazine should include more stories, with a greater diversity of experiences and a focus on authenticity and locality alike.

Response to Recommendation 8: Our intention is to include at least 3 real life stories in future editions, covering a diverse range of issue.

Recommendation 9: For the Beyond the Gate team to consider the accessibility of the magazine. Within HMP Liverpool there is a newly designated role addressing issues of

neurodiversity and the magazine would benefit from being looked at by this lead to ensure future editions were accessible to all. A suggestion from an individual in prison was for example for different colour acetates to be included.

Response to Recommendation 9: This was raised at a steering group meeting we had post-production of this edition. We hope to include a range of products to aid with neurodiversity, for example our new budget includes funding for Simplex Reading Aid rulers, and we are also including a “sticker” chart for those whose learning is more kinaesthetic. We have received unofficial advice from a teacher who specializes in teaching a neurodiverse range of students but will seek official advice as and when we produce.

Recommendation 10: It is essential for the success of the magazine that there is a nominated individual who holds the role as a ‘link’ between the Beyond the Gate team and the prison in which the magazine is distributed. The Beyond the Gate team should work with individual prisons to establish a named individual or role. This person(s) would ensure the appropriateness of information regarding the prison and its rules/regulations. They would ensure content and agencies were relevant and could assist in the distribution of the magazine.

Response to Recommendation 10: Our experience at BTG has taught us that the best publications are the ones where our communications with the media host (HMP Liverpool in this case) are 100% committed to the end product. Our link at HMP Liverpool was pivotal in securing content from each of the supporters.

Recommendation 11: It is important that the Beyond the Gate team assure ‘buy in’ from those who work within the prison (including both prison staff and outside agencies) to enable the networking of the magazine within the prison estate. Formal agreements should be put in place so that this is managed better, avoids any conflict of issues and is sustainable.

Response to Recommendation 11: Upon securing funding, BTG intend to appoint Manchester based Gunnercooke, a legal firm with interest in community causes. If BTG is not something Gunnercooke would undertake, we will seek their advice in the appointment of a different law firm.

Recommendation 12: It would be a real benefit moving forward for the magazine to be co-produced. The Beyond the Gate team should work to establish an advisory board consisting of prison workers, individuals within prison, family members and organisation services to help assist in matters of content and design. Additionally, there could be an editorial board involved in the publication. Further, a strategic team of different stakeholders may benefit the Beyond the Gate team and make the process smoother.

Response to Recommendation 12: We have approached numerous people to make up this board and feel that a breadth of experience is definitely required to develop the magazine.

Recommendation 13: A recommendation is for the Beyond the Gate team in conjunction with the advisory board to think about the aim and aspiration of the magazine. The magazine would need to be refocused to ensure the aim/aspiration is clearly expressed through both content and design.

Response to Recommendation 13: We feel that BTG is multi-purpose and means different things to different people.

- For the individual in prison - information, help and hope.

- For the prison worker - information to help them help those in their care.

- For the family of an individual in prison - hope for the future, a connection, a shared experience with their loved one at a time of separation.

Recommendation 14: The Beyond the Gate Team and their advisory board should consider how many editions of the magazine there should be each year. Two editions a year was considered adequate.

Response to Recommendation 14: Two editions per year is reflected in our printing schedule.

Recommendation 15: The title of the magazine moving forward should be considered by the established advisory board.

Response to Recommendation 15: We have so far come up with the name THINK BEYOND THE GATE – we feel this clears up the confusion as to who can benefit from the publication.

Recommendation 16: Enough copies of the magazine should be produced so that they can be distributed more widely to include prison workers, family members and the wider community, including organisations.

Response to Recommendation 16: Our new budget reflects a 25% increase in publishing.

Recommendation 17: There is potential for this magazine to be used as an educational resource within schools, colleges, universities and organisations, to inform future practitioners, practitioners and service providers.

Response to Recommendation 17: We welcome the opportunity to share BTG with everyone.

Although recommendations have been provided, these are to assist in the sustainability of the magazine and ensure its future success. The magazine has succeeded in its aims of providing help within one main resource and the Beyond the Gate team have succeeded in producing a valuable resource, achieving what it set out to do. The benefits to individuals within prison, prison workers and family members are important to re-emphasise, with this magazine catering to a wide audience and providing undisputable support in a number of different forms.

