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**The Hardman Trust Awards: the motivations, experiences and
outcomes of applicants.**

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis, excluding references, abstract and appendices has a count of 17810 words.

This thesis, or any part of it, is not previously been, or is concurrently being submitted for any purpose other than the MSt examination.

This thesis, except as indicated by specified references to or acknowledgements of other sources, is my own original work.

Abstract

The Hardman Trust, a registered charity, awards financial grants to individuals with a prison sentence of ten or more years for men, seven for women, as they approach release. The grants are awarded in recognition of rehabilitative achievements and to support successful reintegration back into society. Applicants must participate in an interview and provide sufficient evidence to satisfy the Trust's criteria, in order to win financial investment. There is currently no formal research on the effect that the Trust's awards have on applicants and this explorative study aims to into why applicants apply for the grant, how they experience the process and what impact the award can have on desistance from crime. Qualitative interviews were conducted with fourteen recipients of the Trust's awards over a period of two months.

These interviews revealed that the impact of gaining an award from the Hardman Trust extends far beyond the initial financial objective. The financial award leads to further opportunities such as additional funding or fulfilling employment allowing new life paths to be explored. Receiving an award provides an enabling environment for prisoner re-entry, where positive achievement and individual potential are recognised and formally celebrated. Trusting relationships and a sense of community are developed during the application process. As an example of social capital, the endorsement and acceptance from the Hardman Trust and the wider community, appears to increase both the individual's self-belief and provide a layer of emotional resilience which endures far longer than the initial award.

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And what can I say to the Interviewees? You were all a privilege to meet and to listen to, you all had amazing stories to tell and remain a credit to the wider community. Keep going because, as I have warned you, I may well be looking for you in five years' time to continue this exploration

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Introduction

The work of the Hardman Trust can be seen as a clear example of social investment that aims to support desistance, that is a move a way from criminal activities, and civic reintegration, before and after release. Established in 1994, by a prison chaplain, at HMP Parkhurst, it continues to award grants to long term prisoners as they approach release. In the words of the Patron of the Charity, the Right Honourable Lord Woolf QC:

Everyone responds positively to encouragement. This includes prisoners.

It is important that, when prisoners achieve, this is publicly recognised.

Recognition will promote further achievement, which will be of benefit to the Prison Service, the morale of other prisoners, and the public.

This is what the Hardman Trust is about. As an independent charity devoted to the recognition of prisoners' achievements, the Trust provides the encouragement prisoners need if they are to make the best use of their time in prison.¹

To apply male prisoners have to be serving a sentence of ten years or more, while female prisoners, where the average sentence length is less, need to be serving a sentence of at least seven years. Crimes fitting these criteria are predominantly murder, serious aggravated assault, death by dangerous driving, armed robbery and importation of drugs with the aim of supply. On average between 60 and 100 awards are made each year. There has been no previous research on the Hardman Trust.

The Hardman Trust is the only prison-based charity that interviews all applicants rather than responding to written applications. Informal, strength based interviewing, examining both past successes and future goals of the applicant, is undertaken by a battery of

¹ Taken from <http://www.hardmantrust.org.uk/patrons-message.php>, downloaded 11/10/2015

regional volunteers. An enabling environment for the interview, in the absence of custodial staff, is chosen to encourage candidates to speak openly. Assessors will report on four dimensions of the interview: the character and attitude, achievements while in prison, appropriateness of the award and finally an overall gut feeling about the individual. Awards are assigned only to the top scoring candidates.

Successful applicants, along with their families, are invited to participate in an award ceremony where their achievements are publicly endorsed. Ceremonies are hosted in the visits centres of a variety of prisons that share a commitment to resettlement with the Hardman Trust. Local dignitaries, such as the local High Sherriff, attend to present the awards, along with supporters and financial sponsors of the charity. When receiving awards, the winners often emotionally share their hopes for the future with the wider audience. .Most importantly, the door' remains open to all. Many award winners choose to update the Trust of their successes as time progresses, while others choose to return to award ceremonies to watch others receive their awards. A third of Trustees are previous award winners.

The work of the Hardman Trust provides a service at a critical stage of the offender journey and needs to be understood within the larger criminal policy framework for prisoners re-entering the community at the end of their sentence. As prison numbers increase both in England and Wales and internationally there is a growing awareness that by sending more people to prison, the majority of whom will be released, a new challenge of desistance and successful reintegration is created.

By putting people in prison, society has created a separate reality, namely the transition from prison, and has an obligation to individuals who undergo that transition, as well as those affected by it, to mitigate the harms and promote the benefits associated with prisoner re-entry. (Travis 2005, p.312)

Present policy and research appears to over-accentuate the period of incarceration and as a result fails to view the whole prisoner journey from incarceration through to reintegration and acceptance in the community (Travis 2005; McNeill et al. 2012; Maruna 2011). In the era of managerialism, service provision for release remains firmly bedded in risk assessment and needs analysis, based on aggregate statistics of the population as a whole (Crewe 2011a; Crewe 2011b; Crewe et al. 2011; Liebling 2011). Many prisoners, as a result, when released, remain feeling labelled or wearing 'invisible stripes' (LeBel 2008). Fuelled by the media, the general public tend to view released prisoners as a risk, convinced that such people will commit further crime. Such danger is to be avoided and therefore calls for increased incarceration and risk assessment is legitimised in order to achieve public protection (Boutellier 2004). Reintegration becomes almost impossible because public opinion leads to prisoners on release feeling stigmatised and on the periphery of communities.

Informal justice, in contrast, in the form of supportive community reintegration, such as initiatives like the Hardman Trust, could provide a more supportive and thus successful route to desistance, or move away, from crime (Braithwaite 1999; Chiricos et al. 2007; Gove 1980; Plummer 2009). Yet little direct research in this area has taken place perhaps because:

Desistance from crime is an unusual dependent variable for criminologists because it is not an event that happens, rather it is the sustained absence of a certain type of event (in this case, crime). (Maruna 2010, p.17)

As desistance theory develops, and gains salience amongst practitioners, there are growing demands to explore this more positive avenue believing it open doors to opportunities, for individuals to break the cycle of crime successfully. Strength based

approaches would be maximised if there is multidisciplinary involvement and community endorsement. (Maruna & Immerigeon 2004; McNeill et al. 2012; King & Maruna 2009; Burnett & Maruna 2006; Maruna 2003; Travis 2000). For effective policy development to embrace desistance there is first the need to understand what interventions and practices aid desistance and reintegration and appreciate desistance from the perspectives and interpretations of the people undertaking it (Maruna 2010; Maruna 2011; Appleton 2010). By interviewing the beneficiaries of the Hardman Trust Awards, from the released offender perspective, a greater understanding in this area can be achieved.

There is growing interest by practitioners and academics, surrounding the concepts of re-entry rituals and desistance signalling for prisoner reintegration (Braithwaite & Mugford 1994; Maruna 2011; Maruna 2003; Maruna 2012). There remain very few documented practical applications. Gaining a financial award, such as a grant from the Hardman Trust, can potentially provide such a positive experience for a prisoner. This study can therefore showcase a working example thus enabling greater understanding of the practical applications leading to positive reintegration.

While increased managerialism has often led to top down approaches for rehabilitation, desistance models provide opportunity to focus more on the individual, relationships and networks. Despite a web of third sector organisations making connections with prisoners on release, there are limited academic studies documenting their progress (Farrall 2004; Fox 2014; McNeill et al. 2012). Community involvement through organisations such as the Hardman Trust, are strong examples of 'social capital', (Coleman 1988), where involvement with people and the wider community can often lead to far greater gains than those achieved by the individual alone.

As an explorative case study, this research examines the Hardman Trust award system to address the gap in research outlined above and thus understand its contribution to

supporting and encouraging prisoners to desist from crime on release. The main questions explored in the study were:

Why do Prisoners apply?

How do they experience the process?

What are the short and long term outcomes and effects for recipients?

What are the implications for desistance from crime?

Literature Review

Too often, discussions of the purposes of sentencing and corrections are constrained by organisational boundaries ... we attempt to compare the value of incarceration to the value of probation or parole. By compartmentalising the analysis of re-entry goals into debates about the separate and relative values of imprisonment and community corrections, we pay a price. (Travis 2005, p.2)

When evaluating any re-entry to society after a period of incarceration it is important to understand the whole journey of the individual. By examining the complete process, it is possible to gain a greater understanding of the individual's experience and the implications for desistance. This literature review, therefore, covers three main areas: first it summarises the prisoner experience at the point of applying for an award; second, it examines labelling, stigmatization and positive signalling; finally, it outlines the relevant areas of desistance literature such as life stories, re-entry rituals, community involvement and strength based reintegration.

Prison Experience

Generally, prisoners first engage with the Hardman Trust as they enter the final stage of their sentence and reach the prisons that are focussing on release and resettlement. Many of these are classed by the prison service as 'open – prisons' where no formal wall or boundary allows the rehabilitation of the individual to be tested before release. After rigorous risk assessment the individual can qualify for temporary release from prison to allow them to explore employment opportunities and strengthen family ties. Awards are often given to allow training for employment on temporary release. There remains limited research on this critical stage of imprisonment, but, two studies by Pratt (2007) and then

Shammas (2014) completed research in the more liberal Scandinavian penal system. Pratt (2007) concluded the pains of imprisonment eased, while, Shammas (2014) identified new challenges facing prisoners in their final months before release. He noted lack of physical boundaries caused anxiety and confusion for prisoners used to having very little control over their daily lives while new found responsibility for their future was often onerous. The ambiguity of coping with a prison sentence but also beginning to interact with the local community as a normal citizen was unsettling. This study will add to the research available on prisoners as they approach release.

Labelling

Upon release, many prisoners will talk about the feeling of remaining 'labelled' as an 'ex-convict' effectively wearing 'invisible stripes' (LeBel 2008, p.89). The public have a vision of what an offender looks like, and an assumption that those offending characteristics remain (LeBel 2008; Maruna 2012; Appleton 2010).

Labelling occurs when an act is perceived as unacceptable by society. The act itself may not be bad, but rather is deemed undesirable by society. Therefore the individual who partakes in the act by default is seen as deviant (Plummer 2009). Becker (1963), in his work studying marijuana users in the sixties, described them as 'outsiders' where the rules created by wider society has forced rule breakers to become 'outsiders' due to their participation in the unacceptable act. Having been stigmatised, the individuals, Becker suggested, may find it easier to accept the label rather than fight it. Labelling people as criminals Robert Merton (1968) argued was a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' as a return to crime becomes inevitable. Desistance by the individual is difficult as they remain caged by society's assumptions (Gove 1980).

They [labelling theorists] argue that once a person has been labelled a deviant – particularly if that person has passed through a degradation ceremony and been forced to become a member of a deviant group – the person has experienced a profound and frequently irreversible socialisation process. (Zamble & Quinsey 1997, p.13).

The stigmatization of prisoners has been under researched, LeBel (2008, 2012). It has proved especially difficult to research quantitatively with LeBel (2012) choosing a social psychological approach himself to attempt to understand labelling from the perspective of the individuals who are stigmatised. A methodological approach he felt had previously been missed. His results showed that perceived stigma was often much greater than actual stigmatization. A comprehensive study of 95,919 convicted felons in Florida by Chiricos et al. (2007) examined the effects of labelling. Reconviction rates for offenders who were given probationary sentences, that did not yield a formal criminal record, were compared with individuals who were convicted of felony. Results showed that individuals who had been legally labelled were significantly more likely to reoffend. Researching the implications of having a criminal record in America, Saxonhouse (2004) notes the negative effects arising from legally labelling reduces employment opportunities, access to welfare and the ability to vote and highlights the impact this has on recidivism rates. Saxonhouse (2004) concludes by calling for further research on re-integrative shaming, first outlined by Braithwaite (1999) who accepts the need for public shaming but also calls for a reciprocal gesture by the community to re-accept and thus de-label. There are two significant weaknesses of traditional labelling theory. First there is an assumption the stigmatised individual is powerless and unable to instigate change themselves. Secondly the positive aspects of societal reaction are rarely considered. As a result some academics suggest that there is a need for de-labelling. By sending an individual to prison there is a societal responsibility automatically generated at release to facilitate reintegration. For acceptance to take place, society needs to feel confident to accept there

has been a change in role of the former prisoner from taker to giver (LeBel 2008; Maruna et al. 2004; Travis 2005). In order to achieve this goal, the positives of the individual need to be publicised. Bushway and Apel (2012) and Maruna (2012) describes this as 'desistance signalling', and have all been vocal in calling for a 'revolution' in criminology and a move away from the traditional risk assessment and an over dependency on rehabilitation programmes and instead to focus on positive signalling to achieve reintegration. Research examining the effectiveness of desistance signalling leading to a positive de-labelling of individuals is growing. A study of employment preparation courses in America by Bushway and Apel (2012) recorded a greater interest by employers to engage with people with criminal records if they have completed an employment preparation course. Graduation from the course appears to signal to the employer that they are being offered a committed individual. Research has shown that positive signalling provides increased access to employment, community acceptance, and increased social networks (Travis 2000; Travis 2005; Maruna 2003; Maruna 2011; King & Maruna 2009). It also provides the opportunity for individuals to manage their own status/stigma and indeed was noted as a coping mechanism in the work of Uggen, Manza and Behrens (2004) who discuss the civic reintegration of the 'less than average citizen' (p261).

To maximise the potential of positive signalling to, Maruna and Lebel (2003) call for an increase in formal opportunities that can showcase achievements and progress of the individual to the wider community where:

'contributions can be recognized and publicly 'certified' in order to symbolically 'de-label' the stigmatized person.' (p97)

This is examined in greater depths within the review of desistance literature.

The development of positive signalling has similarities to the much earlier work developed by Charles Horton Cooley, in 1902, which he called the 'looking glass self'. Cooley believed that individuals form opinions of themselves based on how they believe others see them. To do this the person must imagine (rightly or wrongly) how others must perceive them. Accordingly, the individual will adjust himself to the image (or in this case the label) he feels other holds of (attributes to) him. Cooley describes all people as sitting on a continuum of pride and shame and his interpretations of others will determine exact positioning (Shaffer 2005) which suggests perceptions of, and by, others can have a significant role in desistance.

Desistance

In providing awards, the Hardman Trust aims to support individuals to move away from a life of crime. The last area of literature to be reviewed is the multi-faceted concept of desistance. The three desistance theories: ontogenic; sociogenic and social phenomena; will be discussed.

Ontogenetic Desistance Theories

In the 1940's ontogenetic theorists, such as Sheldon and Eleanor Gluek, as a result of their longitudinal study of 500 former inmates of a Massachusetts Reformatory, proposed that ageing was the only factor determining desistance or persistence in crime (Glueck & Gleuck 1937). Empirically, many quantitative studies since have taken place to illustrate the consistency of the 'age crime curve', with criminal convictions reducing as individuals mature in their behaviour either finding less opportunity for crime or being tired of participation and the consequences once caught. Empirical studies have repeatedly

plotted an age crime curve that has not significantly changed over 150 years (Hirschi & Gottfredson 1983).

Sociogenic Desistance Theories

A move to examine the sociogenic forces affecting desistance from crime argued that desistance also involved personal choice, for instance growing tired of crime or forming social attachments to other individuals, societies or institutions. These factors led to decisions not to engage in further crime, and are often referred to as the positive effect of a good job and love of a good woman (Sampson & Laub 1997; Shover 1983). This angle on desistance is contested by Giordano et al. (2002) who, by developing a theory of cognitive transformation, proposes that employment and marriage have less impact on future life paths than the availability of 'hooks' or opportunities for change. In 2004, Bottoms, Shapland, Costello, Holmes and Muir presented a joint theoretical framework arguing that desistance could be achieved through the combined effect of risk and demographic factors, social influence and agency (Bottoms et al. 2004).

What is absent from some desistance research is the understanding of desistance from the perspective of the individual who either achieves or does not achieve a move away from criminality (Burnet & Maruna 2006; Sampson & Laub 1997). While Maruna (2003) acknowledges the importance and effect of maturity on involvement in crime, he warns that on its own, any such research on desistance will not focus on the differing levels of input by the individual or the subjective phenomena. Caspi and Moffatt's (1995) research into maladaptive and antisocial behaviour concluded that even if different individuals are exposed to the same environment they will not have the same experiences or interactions with it. Weaver and McNeil (2014) suggest that desistance needs to be less guided by the current concerns of criminal justice systems and instead focus on the social networks between the individual desister and the society they are operating in.

Social Phenomena Desistance Theories

Often known as secondary desistance, social phenomena theories recognise that the process is uniquely personal and subjective (McNeill et al. 2011; McNeill et al. 2012). Three sub areas - life stories, strength based reintegration and re-entry rituals will be explored further.

Life Stories

As yet, very few desistance studies have been undertaken to examine the process from the desister's perspective. Shadd Maruna, in 2001, published a five year study (the Liverpool Desistance Study) of fifty matched desisters and persisters in crime through quantitative and qualitative analysis of life story narratives. Maruna concludes that offenders move forward by reinventing themselves and reconciling in their minds that their criminal activities remain in the past while their reformed, law-abiding character is in the present (Maruna 2010). In his study, the sense of personal agency and self-evaluation, as realised through the internalised narrative, was a fundamental part of the process of reform. Maruna concluded that there were three distinct chapters in desisters' life stories: the identification of the true self, motivation or agency to achieve and a desire to give back to society. In his study in Liverpool, the cohort of persistent offenders would employ 'tragic optimism' to illustrate how good had come out of the bad. This same framework was later employed by Catherine Appleton in her study of 138 life sentenced men who had been identified through earlier work on behalf of the Parole Board (Appleton 2010). Her results showed that, in contrast to Maruna's study, in long term prisoners on release there was a much greater focus to achieve a simple, ordinary life in order to lead a crime free life. Although there was still a significant change in life story from criminal to family provider.

Strengths Based Reintegration

Over the last decade, risk assessment of prisoners has become over powering and restrictive in an attempt to appease politicians and the public in the need to feel safe in a world that overstates the dangers posed by prisoners, through sensational press and political statements (Boutellier 2004; Appleton 2010; Feeley & Simon 1992). Using the terminology 'tightness' Crewe (2011) and Liebling & Crewe (2007) discuss the 'power of the pen' with prisoners all too aware that an adverse comment on a record sheet is very difficult to erase and may adversely affect their opportunity for release (Crewe 2006).

Critics suggest that risk assessment and needs analysis are little more than increased public monitoring and social control and fail to focus on the importance of life histories (Maruna & Immarigeon 2004; Maruna et al. 2004). Academics argue that without listening to and understanding the journey of the individual achieving desistance will be difficult. As a result research has repeatedly called for a policy shift from this preoccupation with risk analysis to one that recognises and builds on the success and progress of the individual (Maruna & Immarigeon 2004; Maruna 2003; 2012; 2011; 2007).

Rarely does the criminal justice system reward for positive things that ex-offenders accomplish. Efforts in employment settings, neighbourhood groups, job training programmes, family matters, self-help groups, college classes and volunteer placements generally go officially unrecognised by the system. Maruna (2010 p161)

There is increased salience for a strength based approach to integration by academics and practitioners (Braithwaite & Mugford 1994; Maruna et al. 2004). Kirkwood and McNeill (2015) in examining the process of successful integration of ex-offenders, draw on the

work for the Home Office by Ager and Strong in 2004. This work identified four indications of successful integration that would support and aid desistance: basic needs such as housing, education, employment and health; social connections; social facilitators and access to rights and citizenship. Academics call for a strategic shift from the current narrow focus on behaviours, needs and risks of marginalised groups to a new focus on moral rehabilitation (McNeill et al. 2012). Allowing individuals to feel they have a valued contribution to make to their community rather than dehumanising them. This concept of feeling good about oneself appears to be a necessary prerequisite if released prisoners are able to cope in the real world (Maruna 2012; Burnet & Maruna 2006; Farrall 2004).

Maruna (2010), in his Liverpool Desistance Study, documents similar challenges faced by individuals released from prison and attempting to desist from crime to the ones identified by Kirkwood and McNeill (2015). For desistance to succeed many participants in the study needed to feel in control of their future but also society needs to be open to accepting them back. A strength-based approach to re-integration would provide support for the desister and reassurance to the society that progress in the right direction was being made. Appleton's research (2010) on prisoners after release with life licences used quantitative analysis of reoffending statistics, complimented by qualitative interviews of 'lifers' and their probation officers, to understand their reintegration journeys. While her research illustrated the effects of the risk averse 'new penology' on decision making at the top of the criminal justice system, it also concluded that, on the front line, there remained ample examples of supportive strength based initiatives for the individuals with active post release supervision. On a smaller scale, several qualitative and quantitative studies have provided strong examples of the high success rates of individuals participating in drug courts, that focus on positive achievement, compared to offenders who have no formal support on release (Brown 1991; Collica 2010; Hannah-Moffat 2004).

A shortfall in the area of strength based reintegration has been the lack of research examining how the third sector and informal networks can support desistance. Kirkwood and McNeill (2015) have produced a small study on social networks of six long term recidivists and Armstrong and Ludlow (2016, forthcoming) are exploring a new concept of 'improbable friends' examining the relationships between volunteers and prisoners. No large scale studies in this area of desistance literature were found.

Re-entry Rituals

Any prisoner who applies for a Hardman Award, by virtue of going to prison, has already experienced a series of 'degradation rituals' (Garfinkel 1956), from the point of arrest, to the court room appearance, to entry to prison and finally the adjustment to prison life (Sykes 2007). Each ritual may have a lasting impact on the experience of the individual and while the public may see this as a just response to people who chose to break common laws, it in itself is an identity-robbing moment (Maruna 2011; Uggen et al. 2004).

In contrast to this structured process of degradation the majority of prisoners are released from prison with little initiation back into society:

... when it comes to reintegration – turning prisoners back into citizens – we typically forgo all such ritual and try to make the process as stealthy and private as possible, if we make any effort at all. (Maruna 2011, p.4)

Academics have begun to challenge policy makers to consider acknowledging the moral obligations of society to provide a re-entry ritual once the punishment is served. Maruna (2011) has initiated work in this area by first examining examples of redemption rituals. Looking beyond criminal theories Maruna starts from Durkheimian theory, suggesting that rituals provide a moment of shared responsibility and endorsement, a cathartic shared

experience and, more importantly, provide a bridge between two situations. He illustrates this with the example of a wedding where people come together to make promises and celebrate all that can be achieved in the future and draws the parallel that the wedding group focus on what could go right rather than pay attention to the statistics of marriage failure. The re-entry of the prisoner, he argues, should likewise focus on celebrating how the prisoner could contribute to the community rather than on aggregate statistics on the likelihood of reoffending (Maruna 2011; 2007; 2003).

There are limited working examples of formal re-entry rituals for prisoners. The best example is Drug Courts, where addicts work with the court system to demonstrate they are law abiding citizens. A series of targets and goals are set and reviewed regularly by a judge with sanctions for non-compliance and there is a graduation ceremony on completion of all goals to signal a full return to being a participating citizen. The benefits of such a process include the provision of a pathway that cuts across the traditional dichotomy of prison and community supervision, public recognition and involvement and visible public validation through the appointed judges (Council 2008; Travis 2005; Brown 1991; Collica 2010). In an attempt to build on this limited research, Maruna (2011) examines the process of ritual in the context of the prisoner journey, arguing that a structured re-entry ritual would provide a full circle from the degradation ceremony that is initiated on entering the criminal justice system. A potential framework is constructed for re-entry rituals which maximises the shared energy and emotions captured by rituals allowing outsiders to be welcomed back and feel they are included. In reality, rituals need to be repeated to recharge batteries and reaffirm commitment (Maruna 2011). This is probably best illustrated in the work of the twelve steps of the AA where achievements are applauded and endorsed at every meeting. Rather than the more traditional treatment programmes, where after successfully completing courses the ex-prisoner was deemed ready to complete the rest of his journey on his own, re-entry rituals would focus on community involvement and support. The community would provide wider support and

encouragement thus sharing the challenge of desistance (NRC, 2008). The arena would be one of positive achievement rather than possible failure, and by involving the community the effects of stigmatisation would be reduced (LeBel 2008). Re- entry rituals would focus on the challenges and achievement, a distinct move away from risk assessment which is the central feature of the criminal justice system (Feeley & Simon 1992; Appleton 2010).

Risk Assessment interferes with the symbolic message of the rite of passage, A reintegration ritual would occur because the person deserves it, not because they were deemed 'low risk enough' to go through one. (Maruna 2011, p.20)

A fifth element may, over time, as the public becomes more receptive, be an opportunity for the ex-offender to have his slate wiped clean (de-labelled), thus challenging much of the established theory on negative labelling of offenders (Maruna & Immarigeon 2004).

The literature review has highlighted several gaps in existing academic research. There are few studies identifying the full range of needs of prisoners as they approach release. While theories and frameworks for positive signalling and re-entry courts have been shared, there is a lack of case studies illustrating the strength based reintegration in practice (Farrall 2004; McNeill et al. 2012; Fox 2014). Similarly, the need for social networks and community acceptance is acknowledged, yet there is limited research on the contribution of social capital investment from small scale charity organisations (Weaver & McNeill 2014; McNeill et al. 2011). Completing an explorative study on the Hardman Trust Awards, from the perspective of the prisoners who have applied is therefore timely and will provide an opportunity to consider the wider contributions it can make towards desistance.

Community Integration

Some desistance studies have examined the need for supportive social interaction to achieve successful desistance, Appleton (2010) in her study emphasised the positive impact of trusting relationships while Armstrong and Ludlow (2016, forthcoming) have developed the term 'improbable friendships' in their research of volunteer programmes in the United States and the United Kingdom. Embedding into a community, can be as important in achieving a move away from crime as the more traditional explanations such as age, a good job and the love of a good woman (Sampson & Laub 1997). In fact, Maruna (2010) goes as far as to suggest this *secondary* desistance is enduring and therefore should be the primary goal on release, as it would then provide a platform to achieve what is often seen as the *primary* goals of desistance such as the job and the woman to achieve the future. Yet the number of studies looking at desistance and the wider community are limited.

To understand the relationship between the individual and the wider community, it is therefore necessary to look more widely at literature. Christian Smith (2010) in his book, 'What is a person?', proposes that the development of an individual cannot avoid being influenced by relationships and the community that surrounds them. He uses the concept of '*emergence*' to define:

the process of constituting a new identity with its own particular characteristics through the interactive combination of other different entities that are necessary to create the new entity but that do not contain the characteristics present in the new identity. (pp.25–26)

To gain greater understanding of the concept of community, the work of Bauman was examined (Bauman 2014; Best 2013). Bauman chooses to contrast two hypothetical

communities. The aesthetic community reflects the communities more readily seen today where successful individuals, who perceive little need for community, focus merely on tending their needs. For convenience, it makes sense for this type of person to surround themselves with like-minded people, thus providing cohesion for the individuals who *'fit in'* but simultaneously creates barriers to people on the periphery of society who do not match the requirements. On the other hand, ethical communities embrace differences in personalities creating a much more inclusive community. Bauman (2014) argues that the ethical community:

would be woven from long term commitments, from inalienable rights and unshakeable obligations which thanks to their anticipated (and better still institutionally guaranteed) durability could be treated as known variables when the future is planned and projects designed. And the commitments which make the community ethical would be of the fraternal sharing kind, reaffirming the right of every member to communal insurance against the errors and misadventures which are the risks inseparable from individual life. (p72)

Ethical communities achieve more together than individuals on their own and therefore compliment the work of Smith (2010). Both theories present a strong argument for the ability of released prisoners to access a positive community environment that offers acceptance and support in the long term.

Methodology

This study has the aim of examining the outcomes and experiences of individuals who have won a Hardman Trust Grant to further their development and how this aids them on release from custody. This chapter outlines how this research was accomplished.

Methodological Approach

The literature review shows that there are significant theoretical frameworks around the release and reintegration, such as re-entry rituals, labelling, and social investment and therefore formed an starting point for the methodology of this research. The studies completed by Maruna (2010) and Appleton (2010) which all focused on prisoner re-entry and provided strong examples of tried and tested methodology which proved extremely useful. An adaptive approach to research was used to ensure that as themes emerged there was an opportunity to seek answers in additional literature and develop new ideas unshaped by previous research.

The original intention was to adopt a mixed method approach incorporating a survey of all previous Hardman Trust applicants alongside a limited number of interviews to allow some triangulation of results (Cresswell 2009). However, at an early stage it was clear that tracing a sufficient sample size of 100 respondents would be unlikely. Only release addresses were held for applicants and many of these were temporary accommodation/hostels or a 'care of' address with a friend or family. The methodology was therefore adapted to be purely qualitative, with the aim of gaining depth and understanding of the individual experience of award winners:

Those who engage in this forms of enquiry [quantitative research] support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning and an importance of rendering the complexity of a situation. (Cresswell 2009, p.4)

The research from the outset acknowledged the importance of the subjectivity of the individuals being interviewed (Robson 2011; Cresswell 2009):

Social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world they live and work, individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meaning directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple leading to the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. (Cresswell 2009, p.8)

While critics of data collection through qualitative interviewing, argue that subjectivity will weaken the validity of responses, Sandberg (2010) defends the benefits of narrative stating there is a 'positivist preoccupation' (p447) with truth. He argues that nuances in the different stories and anecdotes told during an interview provide additional themes, and therefore greater depth, for research. For instance, in this study, Jason described how since qualifying as a lawyer post release:

Every single day I get letters from people in prison, saying, can you help me, can you help me? Some of them are real begging letters as well.

From the interview alone, it would be difficult to establish the authenticity of the frequency or amount of letters but the strength of the statement by Jason shows a need by him to demonstrate he is 'giving back'. Subjectivity can also be present in the researcher, whose own experience, personality and culture can shape interpretation and therefore

necessary to keep in mind during the interviews (Burgess 1990; Robson 2011; Cope 2010).

Methods – Where, When, Who

Gaining access to research can often be the first stumbling block for many would-be researchers. As Lofland and Lofland (1984) state:

...when gaining access, it is necessary to be armed with connections, accounts, knowledge and courtesy. (p24)

Two 'gatekeepers' were identified: the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the Hardman Trust. Although all the individuals in receipt of Hardman Trust Awards were no longer in prison, due to their sentence type and length, the majority were still the responsibility of the National Probation Service, meaning that permission was required from NOMS in order to undertake the research with them. An application to NOMS's National Research Committee was submitted and accepted. Permission to access the records of previous award applicants was asked for and granted by the Hardman Trust.

The Hardman Trust database of past award winners had varying levels of contact information. Only thirty-one individuals had two or more contact fields filled. When field research is time-bound, it is recommended that time is taken to maximise response rate by being realistic with the target group (Burgess 1990) and therefore the initial contact was made with this identified group as it provided the most efficient method of locating willing applicants within the time available. While there are limits to the generalisation of findings from such a sampling technique, it is often used in new areas of research or when substantive information is required from a particular population segment (Bachman &

Schutt 2011). Before contact was made, a decision was made to interview all willing respondents to avoid any bias through selection.

An introductory email was sent out with background information on the research and a request to reply if the potential participant was interested in finding out more about participation. Positive responses were received by twenty one applicants, although four subsequently 'disappeared' after initial contact. Seventeen interviews were scheduled and wherever possible interviews were geographically grouped (around interviewee's home locations) to ensure minimum travel time. The interviews were spread over two months and involved travelling over two thousand miles. Three interviews were cancelled at the last minute, two due to illness and one to work commitments. This number of interviews still seemed sufficient, as a feeling of saturation was achieved towards the end of the research process, while subject fatigue was avoided.

The final sample comprised twelve men and two women. Whilst it was disappointing not to have a more even gender spread of applicants, this was in line with the approximate split of awards between males and females over the past five years and reflects the difference in female and male populations in custody. All the applicants had been released, and the length of time since gaining the award varied from a few months to fourteen years.

Within the sample of fourteen, no unsuccessful candidates came forward to be interviewed, although four candidates had not managed to draw down their award at the time of interview. Appendix A provides a summary of each applicant, their award, timescales and where they believed they would be if no award had been won. Three applicants had received more than one grant from the Hardman Trust. The total money given per person ranged from £482 to £1660 (across two awards), with a mean grant of £627.75. A significant finding was that four of the fourteen applicants had yet to utilise the award. Out of the four, one interviewee was fighting bureaucracy to have the money released, while Judy, who aspired to be a barrister after graduating, had 'not cashed it yet

because it is in a rolling fund, yeah, for the next steps'. The final two had chosen to focus on other priorities first, such as time with family, with the knowledge 'if it takes me a year to get it or two years to get itI know that the money is on hold' (Ron).

During formal coding of interviews there was a lack of differentiation in narratives between those who had used the grant and those who had not. As a result the typography outlined above was not used further during analysis.

Data Collection

Informal semi-structured interviews with undertaken with each of the participants. As Bachman and Schutt (2011 p238) point out:

What is unique to the in-person interview, compared to other survey designs, is the face to face interaction between the interviewer and respondent, if money is no object, in-person interviewing is often the best survey design.

In preparation for interviewing, the researcher attended a Hardman Award Ceremony, and encouraged award winners, their families, and accompanying prison service staff to write down one sentence, on a postcard, about their experience of the Hardman Trust. Comments generated themes to provide a focus for the development of interview questions, namely that the award process was interwoven with their pre-release preparation, eased release and remained significant in their reintegration. From this, initially, semi structured interview questions were developed to cover the individual experience at each stage from initial application to benefits of the award post release, see Appendix B.

While the questions were effective in covering all stages of the process, a pilot interview highlighted that interviewees would reveal much more information if they were encouraged to tell their story, rather than be guided by the prompt questions. This approach was similar to the *'free association narrative interview'* developed by Hollway & Jefferson (2013) which had evolved from the biographical interpretative methods used by researchers interviewing Holocaust survivors. Hollway and Jefferson believed that when a story is told it often masks the real story that is repressed underneath so highlighted the need to *'elicit intact'* the hidden message while taking care not to *'destroy'* with the researcher's own views and experiences (2012, p.32). The interview schedule was therefore relaxed to allow self-narrative, although the original semi-structured questions were retained as a prompt sheet, to ensure that the central topics were covered by all participants. Such interviewing techniques also sat comfortably with a desire to ensure that the interviewee felt relaxed and ultimately empowered by the interview, giving them a voice in their own right. An approach initially advocated by feminist researchers but now applied much more widely (Hollway & Jefferson 2012; Bosworth 1999).

Throughout the interviews, verbal input from the interviewer was minimised while non-verbal linguistics in the form of eye contact, affirmative nodding and body language were maximised. Participants were asked to nominate the locations that they felt most comfortable in, which ranged from homes, work places, pubs and an Ikea Restaurant. Safety issues had to be observed when interviewing in home locations but these provided the most relaxed settings, with the bonus of meeting members of the family and hearing their views. These observations, with the family's permission, were recorded in field notes. Interviews in the workplace allowed recognition of the full achievements of the individual, which was often humbling. Interviews in public locations did present problems of privacy and quality of recording but these were always overcome, even if transcribing took longer as a result. On average, the interviews lasted 60 minutes. One interview had to be

completed by telephone, due to a sudden relocation to Scotland, and was noticeably shorter as it proved more difficult to build up rapport with the interviewee.

As the interviews progressed, there were opportunities to follow up issues that had been brought up in previous interviews. All the interviews were digitally recorded. Field notes were also taken to record observations such as tone, body language. The main body of the interview was then transcribed, at the earliest opportunity after the interview. On several occasions further emails were sent and phone calls made to the interviewee to gain greater clarity and understanding. For instance, when interviewed, Chris, made several references to 'pro-social community', so to ensure the correct interpretation was given to his comments further emails were sent to ask for a wider explanation and to understand how the Hardman Trust linked into it. By the final interview, a feeling of saturation had been achieved.

The amount of time taken to identify suitable candidates and then visit them for interview was underestimated and subsequently the narrow window for data collection proved to be a challenge and at times exhausting as over 2000 miles were covered. Despite this the researcher found the primary data collection an extremely rewarding procedure, and saw her skills in interviewing develop during the process. One area that did concern the researcher initially was the level of '*truth*' and whether '*truth mattered*' in the interviews. In describing their changes in fortune, the interviews appeared to exaggerate their achievements:

I've got two thousand quid on me now. I normally walk round with two grand on me all the time (Leo)

As the interviews progressed, the importance and impact of self-belief, provided some explanation for the excessively positive accounts. If an individual could recount a story

that was uplifting and provided self-assurance, it could 'serve an important symbolic and psychological function' (Maruna 2010, p.25). In effect the story allowed the individual to de-label themselves. While driving back from each interview the researcher felt empowered with the newly collected data but also humbled with the trust afforded by the interviewees to analyse and interpret her findings responsibly.

Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative research notes begins in the field, at the time of observation, interviewing or both. (Bachman & Schutt 2011, p.282)

From the first interview, issues and themes started to emerge and were noted in the field notes at the end of each interview. The adaptive design of the research allowed for minor adjustments to be made to allow new themes to be considered in subsequent interviews. For example, the concept of developing relationships, 'They seem to care' (Mike) and being part of community, 'It's like a little club' (Jason) had not been flagged initially yet seemed to provide durability to the award process:

I applied to the Trust five, six years ago and I am still meeting them today (Bob)

The main body of analysis began with the examination and coding of each transcript to highlight emerging themes. To ensure validity of the research, any findings had to be seen as credible on three levels – by the researched, by the researcher and by any potential reader (Cresswell 2009). It was also important that differences in responses were recorded too, rather than be missed due to the excitement of seeing the emergence of more consistent themes. Other '*deficiencies of the human analyst*' (Robson 2011, p.468) that the researcher had to be mindful of included: data overload; lack of consistency; over

confidence in judgment and co-occurrence. To limit deficiencies, three transcripts were simultaneously coded by an ex-colleague from the criminal justice sector, who works in the field of resettlement, and compared for any areas that had been overlooked. Coding is by no means a linear process and many revisits to the original transcripts were needed with the adoption of new codes and ideas (Cope 2010). The chosen codes came from both existing literature and emergent themes. Six themes were identified: financial; opening doors; turning points in life; labelling; narratives of change and reintegration into the community. The work of McAdams et al (1996) provided a concise framework to examine the turning points in lives of desisting individuals and had previously been used in both Maruna's (2010) and Appleton's (2010) large scale desistance studies. When examining narratives of change, the stepped stages identified by Maruna (2010) of core beliefs, personal control and making good were employed. The other themes remained more organic in their development.

Other Considerations

Cresswell (2009) identifies four areas that should be considered to ensure that research is ethical – professional integrity, relations with professional bodies, care and protection of interests of the subjects, and data dissemination. A researcher has to gain the trust and respect of both the subjects to be interviewed and the identified 'gatekeepers', and therefore viewed as someone with integrity. A balanced and justified research proposal was sent to both NOMS and the Hardman Trust, which detailed the methods that would be employed, how data would be stored safely and finally destroyed and who would share the ultimate findings. Contact details were made available to answer any concerns that rose during the project. Encouragingly, no issues were raised.

It was important from the start that individuals participated on the basis of informed consent. All participants received background information, Appendix C, outlining the purpose of the research, what their input would be and how they could withdraw from the process at any point during the fieldwork stage. Each individual was offered contact details of a third party to contact if they were unsure or unhappy with the research for any reason. This was provided in writing and discussed before the interview started to ensure the procedures had been understood. They were then asked to sign a final consent form, Appendix D, to record that they understood the process and that interviews would be anonymous and all paperwork kept safely. Some participants were happy to be named but due to potential public interest in some of the crimes they had committed, ultimately this was deemed inappropriate. The use of actual names could also have allowed confusion or conflict over ownership of data and the interpretations thereof. All data was therefore anonymised with pseudonymous names (Cresswell 2009; Burgess 1990).

Since the researcher is a trustee, personal involvement in the Hardman Trust was a potential cause for concern. Each participant was assured that for the purpose of the research they were being interviewed by a researcher and not a member of the Trust. With hindsight, rather than this being a negative, the researcher, by being informed, could utilise her understanding to engage the participants' interest and gain trust thus achieving flowing interviews in a relaxed environment (Bell 1999; Bilby 2008).

There is a risk with any interview, particularly life narratives, that the interviewee revisits past experiences that then cause further harm or upset, and a researcher should be prepared to help or signpost the individual to gain help should such a situation arise (Hollway & Jefferson 2012; Burgess 1990; Cresswell 2009). This was anticipated, and the contact numbers of probation officers and charities were obtained in case extra support was required. Interviewees were given an opportunity at the end of the interview to

express any concerns. Fortunately, all interviews were completed without any distress, with many of the candidates remarking how much they had enjoyed the experience.

Research Questions

To understand fully the experience and outcomes of the Hardman Trust Award Winners, four research questions were developed:

Why do Prisoners apply?

How do they experience the process?

What are the short and long term outcomes and effects for recipients?

What are the implications for desistance from crime?

These questions will now be explored in the next chapter.

Findings and Discussion

This study focuses on the experience of the grant application process and award ceremony alongside the benefits, both short and long term, of attaining a Hardman Trust award. Fourteen interviews were undertaken with past award winners. The chapter that follows highlights a number of key outcomes for recipients of a Hardman Trust Award: financial investment, a bridge to re-entry, de-labelling, narratives of change and enabling social networks.

Financial Gains

The Trust's mission statement states that the primary objective is 'to provide financial awards to help exceptional prisoners achieve their goals upon release'². Most winners received around £600 either to contribute to education courses/qualifications or professional tools to enter trade occupations. In all the applications, the initial and sole motivation to apply for an award was financial:

Well I mean, I was hoping to get money, cause I wanted some, to do a fork lift driver course. (Bob)

I didn't know whether I was in [to university]. I didn't know whether I was gonna be able to raise the money ... my family's not rich so they couldn't afford to. I couldn't get a loan. I tried to get a loan an stuff, so like, I'm kinda, like yeah, I was up against it. (Archie)

² <http://www.hardmantrust.org.uk/>, downloaded 26th September 2015

Awards are tailored to enhance opportunities for specific career development upon release. Applicants appreciated that their individual needs were being addressed rather than merely being offered a 'one size fits all' approach. The size of the award, especially in comparison to other grants won, was also identified as significant, by all participants:

It's a lot of money and other charities are offering like, I got twenty pounds and sixty pounds and stuff, You can't do a hell of a lot with that, can hardly buy a book. Whereas six hundred pounds, you are on your way, you know, it's changing things for you. (Zara)

Interviewees repeatedly described the wide array of pressures, including financial, as they approach release, echoing much of the work of Shamma (2014). They identified a lack of options for financial support:

Yeah, the running costs, because going to Uni, it ain't about just like paying your fees and what not, but you got your meals, ain't ya, like what are you supposed to do for food? You need a pen, you need a brush, you need a tin of paint, you need this, you need that. There's all them odds and sods that keep adding up – kerching, kerching kerching [noise of a shop till]. (Leo)

The successful attainment of a grant immediately eased this pain, 'it was one less thing to worry about' (Mike). These concerns echo the findings in historic studies on desistance which highlight the benefits of having a degree of economic security (Maruna 2010; Appleton 2010; Sampson & Laub 1997).

Opening Doors

Leading on from the financial award there appeared to be a 'knock on effect, I could call on others' (Chris) or in Jason's case 'a million doors opened' by the Hardman providing direct references to other charities or by the success of the award being used as evidence of agency and initiative in written applications:

It was like lighting the blue touch paper. It really was, Hardman gave me a thousand, and then I mentioned Hardman in the Longford Application and then I got a letter from them saying yeah we will give you two thousand, So I've got three grand now. I needed five so then I spoke to the University and they talked about structured payments ... (Archie)

Applicants noted the benefit of the grant providing a specified outcome with the money dedicated to mutually agreed qualifications or work resources, which was in contrast to generic resettlement initiatives provided by the prison. This was received in a positive light as it was seen as an 'investment, rather than charity, because you're not like feeling you have to beg.' (Archie). Integral to each interview was the requirement to produce business plans and evidence of costs. Success was won by individuals, who convincingly outlined what they personally could deliver in the future, using past achievements as their evidence:

The Hardman have given me the money and invested in my idea of what I wanted to do. (Mike)

By providing an informal business case at interview, the process became a professional pitch for money rather than charitable benevolence. Assessor reports score individuals on

past achievements and appropriateness of award, for instance links with overall sentence plan and employment opportunities.

They were quite happy to give me the money for heavy goods, buses, so quite specific but really good because my background is transport so it keeps you focused on what you want to do. (Ron).

They gave me a thousand pounds to buy gym equipment when I got released. I've got a gym down in the cellar. (Jim – personal trainer).

Eleven of the fourteen candidates indicated that they wished to repay the grant when they had sufficient capital, viewing it like a business loan:

Once I sort myself out, I want to donate something towards the Hardman Trust, even if it's to pay back the six hundred pounds they awarded me, then it can be awarded to somebody else. (Ron).

When this offer was explored further with interviews it was clear that they did not have the same commitment to other charities or organisations. Discussions with the Hardman Trust Administrator revealed that they have on a few occasions received money back from previous award winners, with one particular winner bequeathing approximately £25,000 to the Hardman Trust on his death.

Participants explained that the tailoring of grants allowed them 'the upper hand' (Zara) and a 'realistic chance' (John) applying for jobs, directly attributing success in securing their preferred employment within weeks of release to the specific contribution made by the Hardman Trust.

I bought a laptop computer and from there that allowed me to go from prison straight to work. I was in work within, well go out on Thursday and I think I started work on Friday. Without that I wouldn't have been able to work. (Jason)

Practical solutions and support offered by the Hardman Trust appeared to mirror the findings in Appleton's (2010) study of lifers who flagged both being listened to and practical solutions as key contributors for success on release. As sociogenic scholars highlight, a good job, that the individual enjoys, providing economic security is a key component of successful desistance (Sampson & Laub 1997; Healy 2013), providing a platform of stability that is more appealing than the buzz of crime (Farrall 2004; Maruna 2010).

Research around employment on release also suggests that it provides further opportunities in the form of growing social bonds (Weaver & McNeill 2014) and an opportunity for positive signalling (Bushway & Apel 2012). All of the interviewees recognised, with hindsight, that there was indeed a far wider range of outcomes beyond the initial financial gains:

Oh yeah, a fucking thousand pounds is nothing. I've got two thousand quid on me now. A thousand quid is fuck all, but the belief that people, a lot more intelligent and cleverer than me, who live a better life than me, in that they have never lived in the dark side, but they have faith in me and then I think you're better than that, to go back to that way of life. (Leo)

Maruna (2010) notes the need to open the black box surrounding desistance to examine what is inside as there are often secondary outcomes. He suggests that if individuals can be exposed to alternatives, which is what the Hardman Trust facilitates, they are more likely to have self-belief and '*leap*' into the new world resulting in additional outcomes:

It's not just getting the money, not getting the certificate, it's the mental state of mind that it puts you in, the positive. (Jim)

A Turning Point in Life

Douglas McAdams et al. (1996), in examining desistance within life narratives, suggested that desisting criminals often had a turning point in life where the criminal life was superseded by a more rewarding crime free one. The transformation can be divided into four stages for discussion:- self-mastery; status victory; achievement; responsibility and empowerment.

Self Mastery

The relaxed nature of the self-narrative interview seemed to provide a safe environment for the interviewee to talk. Participants were not asked to disclose why they were in prison but the majority of the interviewees (11/14) talked freely about their criminal record. In each case, they placed this period firmly in the past and illustrated their self-assessed progress since going to prison. Examples of determination and motivation to achieve progression, despite obstacles, were readily given by all:

I can't do anything about the past. I cannot change the fact I have a conviction.

That's a weight around my neck for the rest of my life. How I intend to deal with it is up to me. (Ron).

I was my own man and taking that into consideration, I started from 2008, making my changes. (Mo, sentenced 2008, released 2013)

These statements echoed the Trust's expectations at interview with regards to the '*character and attitude*' of the applicant. Interview guidance material states to obtain maximum scoring applicants must show:

High levels of co-operation, interaction with the prison: demonstrates excellent initiative in learning and self-development and take responsibility and accountability for own actions. Well prepared for interview. Takes responsibility for past actions and future plans. (Hardman Trust, internal documents)

Having contextualised their journey, all the accounts included motivational statements:

I think I was in fifth gear, I don't think anything would derail me. (Mo)

The more you do, the more you push yourself, it looks like you are ready, you're wanting to go, you're ready to face society again and be a better person (Pat).

I have learned not to listen to what people say, I was already doing a law degree and I knew I would go further. (Judy).

Motivation and commitment allowed applicants to overcome obstacles. Often they were applying for 'just loads of different funding places all through my sentence' (Zara), usually with limited success: 'I must have seen seven, eight rejection letters but never gave up' (Archie). Having gained opportunities, they were committed to maximising them:

I'd say, I can't come out and exercise, I have to finish this essay ... I got these earplugs from the works department. (Chris)

I rode my bike 20 miles each day of my placement for two years. (Mo)

All the interviewees described how their motivation helped them overcome barriers to the employment market, such as criminal record checks, to achieve things. They felt superior to those prisoners tempted by criminal activities on release.

I will achieve. I won't be one of these guys that has gone out and come back in. Despite everything, I'm working, against all odds, I will make it and what's happened is, I didn't just do it for myself, I paved the way for other inmates.

(Mo)

Status / Victory

McAdams et al. (1996) identified a period of achievement, where the individual rises above his/her peers through success. This was evidenced in the responses and descriptions of the structure of the award scheme. Central to their motivation to apply was that an award had to be '*won*', it was not an automatic cheque in reply to a letter. The Trust gives awards to '*exceptional prisoners*', who have two endorsements from the prison and a clear, realistic costing for what they are asking the Trust to support financially. Applicants were motivated by the selective nature of the award decision-making:

The prison grapevine, which is usually quite reliable, said they were like, highly regarded ... they were quite rigorous and that they made sure the money or the award went to the right type of person. (Bob).

Every applicant felt they were 'in with a shot' (Judy) – but knew that it 'wouldn't just be given out to anyone' (Mike). Nine of the interviewees talked about the extra effort they put into the application compared to other grant applications:

I wrote a great personal statement. (Bob).

There's the filling in and things, I had to put in a lot more effort, rather than just getting on the phone and saying 'can I have a couple of hundred quid?', but with Hardman, there's a bit of a push needed. (John)

Winning an award within a competitive process clearly meant a lot to each applicant:

You know it is not an easy award to get and so that's what makes it more valuable to me. (Bob)

Some interviewees obsessed about the success/failure rates:

How many people get turned down, Amy? Do a lot of people get turned down?
(Archie).

Achieving success provided the applicants with evidence that they were the exceptional prisoners, not a failure to be written off forever. Winning an award through an interview, compared to written requests to other charities, further heightened their sense of achievement:

People can write, you know, a sob story on a piece of paper and a lot of people do that. (Zara)

Having an interview, which Chris described as ‘an emotional experience’, ‘gives you a chance to show them face to face’ (Zara). The strengths-based approach to the assessment was appreciated and was experienced as motivating. Success in their application appeared to be an immensely emotional reward to the applicants, initiating a new positive stage of their lives:

Aww, brilliant, absolutely brilliant. I’ve got the top Award as well. I’ve got the highest amount that they can give you. So it was six hundred pounds they gave me. Yeah, I was over the moon. (Bob)

... but getting this Award, was like amazing, it was, and the staff they were proud of me as well. I remember the staff saying, you know, mate, not many people get The Hardman Trust Award. (Pete)

The Award Ceremony - held in a host prison with all award winners and their families invited - further endorsed their successes. Past and present award winners alongside invited members of the prison and figures from the local community celebrated individual achievement. The Award Ceremony allows re-entry into the community to be a positive opportunity for all (Burnet & Maruna 2006). By focusing and celebrating success with the wider community, the Hardman Trust Ceremony in effect advertises the skills and opportunities the award winners are able to share with a wider pro – social community. The positivity was reflected in the emotional way Award winners spoke about the day:

There is that buzz. Some people cried when they spoke about their awards. (Jason).

I was in a suit, I was a person. (Bob).

At the Award Ceremony, winners gained respectability from staff, family and the wider community and experienced, often for the first time in ages, being treated as an equal and as person. This feeling proved enduring:

I remember getting home from the Ceremony and sitting on my [prison] bed and thinking, ah this is a lovely day, and I knew I would keep going the next day. (Judy)

Achievement/ Responsibility

The award system focused on the achievements of the individual and their future potential. Interviewees felt that the process was a cathartic experience, where they were listened to and positively encouraged. This was often contrasted with examples of faceless risk assessments completed on paper by the 'system', a problem highlighted by both Appleton (2010) and Maruna (2010):

You can have a risk assessment when you are not there and they [Prison Service] give you a letter saying refused.... But on paper, cause I do have quite a lot of history going back to when I was a young kid and mental health and all sorts, I do sound quite mental, but I'd been doing talks at school and loads of other stuff but nobody had updated the reports They [Hardman Trust Assessor] came in person and seeing what I had done, they were quite surprised. (Jim)

All the interviewees talked earnestly about the responsibility they felt to maximise the outcomes from their award:

To not succeed would be letting down the Hardman Trust, the people who had faith in you. (Ron)

If I had then come out and carried on committing crime, it would have been a bit of a joke, wouldn't it, after you had been given all of that help. (Jim)

This determination not to let an individual, or in this case the Hardman Trust, down provides further motivation to move away from crime and lead a normal life (Bottoms et al. 2004). In describing their achievements, ten out of fourteen interviewees talked about them gaining full time employment in a sector they had qualified themselves for with support from the Trust. Two had transition jobs which would lead to self-employment. One was at college, sponsored by the Hardman Trust, but was confident of becoming a barrister in the next two years and writing her life story in four. The remaining two were not in employment due to health conditions, but had clear plans and timescales for getting back to work.

Empowerment

McAdams et al (1996) suggest that the individual becomes energised or empowered as a result of the association with some good force. This is echoed by Giordano et al (2002), who talks of the necessity of '*hooks for change*' for empowerment to take place. The Hardman Trust clearly provided this, as across the fourteen interviews the word 'belief' or 'believe' was used over two hundred and thirty times - an average of seventeen times per person. At the award ceremony, the applicants were already presenting themselves in a different way from before they had contact with the Trust and this new found belief endorsement was often used in Parole Hearings as evidence of their turnaround,

Yeah and they were like, buzzing, the judge or whoever he was. He was like 'yeah that is fantastic' and he was asking me about the Award and how I'd done, what I had been doing and yeah, it was brilliant. (Bob)

Judy talked about the award system being a life changing experience:

Something happened, I don't know how to explain it, I think going to that Award, I realise it was the best thing I did for myself. They stood up, people who were at the Awards, there were quite a few people, who understood where I was and talked about similar experiences. It didn't make me feel like a prisoner with no hope, I was there to collect something; for me was a proud moment. I no longer felt shame, I could feel proud as despite everything all these people knew I was working so hard inside. I didn't feel ashamed anymore, I thought you should be proud of yourself. (Judy)

Many of the applicants described the Hardman as a '*bridge*' from their life as a prisoner, with little control, back into a hectic life of community, family and financial responsibility. This bridge not only gave them access to the world they were returning to, it also gave them a positive focus and an opportunity to build a life away from crime.

Labelling, Stigmatization or Positive Desistance Signalling?

Labelling of prisoners has often been cited as having a significant impact on successful employment and reintegration on release (Saxonhouse 2004; Chiricos et al. 2007). In each interview, the award winner was directly asked to describe if they had ever felt stigmatized or labelled. Only five applicants described feeling labelled but felt it was short term; in the immediate months post release. Four related their experiences to job applications where, once their past had become known, they either did not progress past interview or had their employment apologetically terminated. All examples remained in the past. The final applicant felt that his tattoos (gained in prison) expressed negative signals to his client base, and as a result was investing in laser removal and was confident that

this was a short term hurdle. Resonating the work of Giordano et al (2002), all the other applicants approached the issue of '*labelling*' from a perspective that it was often a perception of the individual who was declaring himself labelled:

They don't want to mix because they think everybody knows about Nobody knows There is no stamp on your forehead! (Pat)

If you don't want society to perceive you as a criminal – lose the stigma yourself.
Start believing in yourself (Mo)

These responses were mirrored by stories contrasting how they themselves managed to rise above being labelled, implying they were stronger and more motivated than the average prisoner:

It was hostile, but I persevered and in the end, good things come out of it, but I wouldn't allow it, I demanded to be treated as an equal. (Mo)

In fact, eleven participants had actively pursued careers in which the impact of labelling would be relatively limited, often making use of previous contacts or entering self employment. Four had chosen to work in an environment that supported or aided serving or released prisoners, thus turning what could have been seen by a wider community as a negative label into a positive attribute. A past criminal record allowed them to be experts in their work, thus gaining respect from outsiders:

They [student interns] come from parts of the city and they've never ever encountered anyone with a criminal conviction and then they come here and they see all these inmates working with the kids who are like us [ex-offender charity workers], ten, fifteen years ago and this is what we have to try preventing. Now

this is why we deliver these interventions, because we don't want them kids to go down the path we went. (Mo)

The development of these roles is in effect a coping mechanism as it gives meaning and structure to the ex-offenders life. By becoming a '*wounded healer*' the individual is providing a positive signal to the wider community that his past life is behind them and instead is earning redemption (Uggen et al. 2004; Burnet & Maruna 2006; Maruna 2010).

As it was shown earlier in the review the award process also provided the opportunity to be de-labelled as the assessment focuses on applicants as individuals not prisoners, who have strengths and opportunity. Often for the first time, the individual feels his change in behaviour is recognised by others, in a manner that de-labels him or her (McNeill et al. 2012).

Bob describes this de-labelling when he returned as a past winner to an Award ceremony:

None of them knew that I'd been in prison, you know, I was in a suit, I could sit and listen to their stories and they didn't know, they probably did not even think that I was a prisoner and it was kind of good to feel that. (Bob)

By winning an award, the applicants also gained respect from friends and family.

I said 'here mum the Hardman trust gave me £1000 quid' and she said 'you must be doing something right' the pair of us were in disbelief. (Leo)

For my Nan to say she's proud of me, cause there was a time when she had, like, armed police knocking on the door, ... for her to say she is proud and I feel good I have made her proud, before she dies you know, she is an old lady. (Jim)

By accepting unconditionally that the prisoners on release need to achieve reintegration, the Hardman Trust chooses to support positively the transition of the individual from 'giver' to 'taker' (LeBel 2008; Maruna et al. 2004; Travis 2005). Outward-facing award ceremonies signal to a wider audience the opportunity for desistance by the individual (Bushway & Apel 2012; Maruna 2012).

Narratives of Change

While redemption rituals and positive signalling are outcomes associated with the immediate period of re-entry, it is also important to examine the longer term experiences of winning the Hardman Trust. Considerable time in each interview was spent describing life path changes that were facilitated by the Hardman Trust, three stages have been employed: core beliefs; personal control and making good (Maruna 2010).

Core beliefs

Many of the applicants had applied for funding to further specific careers they felt they *would* have found themselves in, had their previous life offered more opportunity:

I always wanted to go to University, when I was younger I wanted to go but obviously my life took another route, It just wasn't possible, it didn't happen. So I always knew, I always knew, I thought, yeah, I did I knew. I knew I had the ability to do it. (Archie)

It was always in me, if I say I want to do something I can, I can do good things upstairs I have got ten, fifteen books on personal training and all my certificates

but back in the day I had kind of lost myself, didn't know who I was, didn't really fit in anywhere, I had always been on drugs . (Jim)

All the interviewees talked about their past in a measured way, with a clear distinction that separated the person that they were then from the person who they were at the time of the interview:

I'm a family man, my kids don't think I am an ass anymore. (Pat)

Changed the dynamics big time ...middle aged man doing a fucking art degree ... tried and convicted. (Leo)

Fieldwork notes often recorded a drop in voice when talking about their past, and it often felt as if the interviewee was looking back at themselves from the outside:

...cause my offence was quite a severe one, it would like scare a lot of people...
(Zara : Field notes : lowered voice, looked away)

Several of the interviewees also noted that despite promises on release that they would go back and visit friends on the inside, they had found themselves not doing so as they felt they had moved on and had little remaining in common with serving prisoners:

I visited one of the lads I know, a couple of months ago, at one of the prisons and I just can't even relate to any of it anymore, you know, he's my friend and that, but I just, you know, like, people walking out into the visitors and giving you evils and I'm thinking, whoa, what's wrong with all these people. It's mental, you know and I used to live amongst that and probably used to be like that myself. (Jim)

Through developing a new sense of self, and highlighting their achievements, interviewees reworked a sense of personal legitimacy and self-belief (Maruna 2010).

Personal Control Over Destiny

Life narratives distinguished between the *then* and *now*, usually pinpointing a moment of realisation that they did not like themselves as they were and therefore needed to change:

I had just been sentenced to 13 years and I was thinking what am I going to do with my future and I thought now I have found myself in this situation I am going to turn it around and do something positive in the future and work with ex-offenders, qualify in some way. (Chris)

So I got a life sentence, but the life sentence, half way through that, I was blagging the system that I was doing good, but I was still selling drugs on the wing and then one day I just stopped and looked at myself and I didn't like who I was ... I tried to kill myself but then I gave myself to God and very quickly I started to change my life. (Pete)

Having realised the need for change, Interviewees talked enthusiastically of their future and how they planned to achieve it. Interviews were littered with examples of personal motivation and planning for the future:

So it [The Hardman Award] has given me, like, a focus and I think, 'God, I can actually do that job'. (Zara)

I worked hard for it, cause I set my mind to it and that's what I wanted to do and do it, to sit there for six years and come out with nothing that would have been a complete waste of time. (Jim)

Often the first contact the applicants had with the Hardman Trust was shortly after this change in mindset. Exactly half the applicants, seven, used funding for educational courses completed in prison, courses that would never have been considered or achieved before imprisonment. All of these applicants had family backgrounds with no history of tertiary education. Scholarly achievements provided reassurance that their outlook on life had changed and they were better people than before and could make greater contributions to society as a result.

Giving back to society or 'making good'

Interviewees' accounts were often emotionally charged and hyper moral (Lofland 1969), especially when they reflected on their acquired ability and need to give back to society:

It is all about redemption for me, I made some serious mistakes and let a lot of people down. I took a life, a young man's life ... he will never see another birthday or Christmas. So, you know, I am responsible for a lot ... I wish to spread my wisdom, or some of my knowledge I have gained over the years, to sort of enlighten people and educate them to deter them from following in my footsteps
(Mo, Partner of a Charity)

Examples of success served to exonerate their past and reduce the need to feel guilty (Maruna 2010):

I think every day that I don't offend I'm giving something back. Every day I stay out of the dark side of life, I'm giving something back. (Leo)

I'm giving back to my kids, obviously, to my friends, spending a lot more time with them... paying my taxes ... (Pat)

Four of the interviewees believed that their understanding and experience of the past placed them in a unique position of understanding ex-offenders. Three had senior roles in charities working with people who had been released from prison or groups on the margins of criminality. One interviewee had established his own legal practice which included a monthly pro-bono drop in session. Two further interviewees were still establishing their careers, but hoped in the future to provide mentoring or job placements to other people leaving prison. Although all accounts were passionate about giving back to society, such career decisions also appeared to benefit the individual, through providing personal therapy and stability.

The remaining seven were concentrating on establishing a legitimate life with modest expectations, in which pleasure and satisfaction were derived from relatively mundane or *'realistic'* things:

So the money I spent on tools from the Hardman Trust means I could save up and do other things with me kids, furnish me place. (Pat)

I don't want a flash car, I only want a reliable car, what's the point in having two cars, I used to have a motorbike, fantastic but yeah, it's kind of like, they're material things I no longer need and it's kind of try to be a family man and a provider, do as much as I can, By doing the training [funded by Hardman Trust] that can give me a better wage packet for that. (Ron)

By being able to reconcile their criminal history and clearly placing it in the past, award winners managed to move on and focus on the emergence of the *good self* which gives back to society. Asked to describe where they felt they would be had they not been given an award, seven of the applicants thought that they might have reverted to crime while a further three depicted a drifting state with no plans (see Appendix A). The Hardman Trust in essence allowed a story to be created. It also provided a platform for practising and sharing this story or self-narrative with the wider community. The opportunity to retell on multiple occasions, including through the research interview itself, served to reinforce these outcomes.

New Identities

While every candidate acknowledged individual achievements leading to a positive change in their life story, three sub groups emerged, and are summarised in Table 3: the Professional Ex (Brown 1991); Aspiring Professional Ex and Ordinary Lives (Appleton 2010).

Table 1 Identity Change

Type	Description	Applicants
Professional Ex	Uses past negative experiences as a point of strength or wisdom to help other people.e.g. direct employment engagement with offenders or ex offenders	Jason*, Pete*, Mo*, Chris*
Aspiring Professional Ex	At present re-establishing family ties and gaining employment but with hope of sharing life experiences with other prisoners on release in future	Mike*, Archie*, Judy*
Ordinary Lives	Focus on providing for family, legitimate employment, focus on avoidance of debt or temptations to return to former self	Ron*, Pat, Jim, Bob*, Zara, John*, Leo*
-* Indicated in interview a strong desire to repay Hardman Grant in future or contribute time and patronage to the Trust (n=11/14)		

Four candidates provided a narrative of the Professional Ex (Brown 1991) where a generative script was presented to illustrate how their criminal past was now a source of wisdom. Aspiring Professional Ex-es had more recently been released from prison but had long term goals similar to the professional ex. Half of the interviewees retained more modest goals of maintaining a very ordinary life, in ways that resonated with Appleton's (2010) findings. Being able to provide a credible life story with future potential, such as the life stories above, are a key requirement for success with the Hardman Trust. As part of the assessment, the Assessor is asked to score the candidate overall, as a person, taking into account any gut feelings they may have. Guidance notes suggest for maximum scoring:

The applicant is confident, resilient and aware of own strengths and weaknesses. Applicant comes across as genuine and compassionate. Applicant acknowledges benefits to others: family, community and wider society. (Hardman Trust, internal documents)

If a candidate could not show at least partial improvement in character, it would prove difficult to justify that they would be a worthy recipient of the grant.

The 'Ready Brek Glow'

Award winners' vocabulary: 'buzz' (Bob), 'resilience' (Jason), 'emotional' (John), described the energising effect of the award process. Gaining the award appeared to separate them from many of the obstacles facing released prisoners by providing confidence to step out each day and pursue dreams. This acquired inner strength bore similarities with the iconic Ready Brek television advert of the 1970's, where a young boy purposively

walks to school, battling through wind and rain, aided by extra energy from his heart warming breakfast of Ready Brek Porridge. Feelings of strength and resilience are achieved through a glowing fluorescent orange body armour around the boy. To explore this 'Ready Brek' feeling, the 'glow' was dissected into three separate: self-belief, relationships and enduring community.

Self-Belief

All interviewees agreed that winning the award was about 'more than money' (Archie). It was the 'recognition' (Pete and Bob), 'it made me feel good' (Pat), 'it goes back to that belief thing again' (Archie). All reflected that the Trust *appeared* at an extremely negative period in their lives. The predominance of risk-based thinking not only frustrated them but also ate at their confidence:

All the way through your sentence they worry about whether you are going to escape, they are worrying about whether you are involved in drugs, violence ... when you get to the end of your sentence no one cares unless you do something wrong what I couldn't get was confidence I got helped [by the Hardman Trust] over this bit into that bit where I knew I could get. That gave me back the confidence – for the want of a better analogy and that gave me the impetus to just get on with what I had in my head. (Jason)

By focusing on the positive, from the start of the application process, the Hardman Trust enabled their self-belief started to grow:

... being inside for quite a few years and even lots and lots of promises, that never did really materialise. Then I started getting good feedback, quite an amazing feeling, really. (John)

This self-belief was further strengthened by the endorsement of their achievements by outsiders:

It made all the difference, just having that, you know, people who believe in you, It's made all the difference and giving you that more self-belief. (Chris)

It gives you belief. It gives you trust that people do believe in you, to have someone that you feel was behind you ... it gives you trust that people do believe you and someone actually looks at you and says, yeah, I think this person is right for change now. (John)

The visible endorsement by others (in this case, the Hardman Trust) functioned as a 'looking-glass' (Cooley 1902) through which award winners began to believe others could see them as virtuous.

Relationships

The strongest, and least anticipated, theme to emerge from the interviews was the multi layered relationship between the applicant and the Hardman Trust. Despite the personal interaction with Assessors, the interviewees, in general, focused on the Hardman Trust as an entity in its own right, without reference to individual members. When asked to describe the relationship, the Trust was personified:

It's alive, it really is. (Jason) My old Mate (John)

I was kinda fighting on my own to do this thing that I wanted and then, like, all of a sudden, I've got an ally standing next to me. Do you know what I mean? The Hardman Trust was next to me, like, backing me up as well. (Archie)

The impact of encountering the Hardman Trust was often contrasted with their relationship with prison service, where they described a feeling of powerlessness or a culture of 'them and us' (Ron):

Number One The Prison Service wouldn't give you a sixpence for an ice cream.

Number Two they're faceless people and from day one the Hardman cared. (John)

It [the award] comes from people that do actually care, whereas in the Prison service nobody really seems to think that you are worth it, some people in there do care, but as a whole, it doesn't look like it cares. (Mike)

Even the two interviewees who were initially sceptical of the process altered their views after they met the Hardman Assessor:

I just thought of this as tick box process, this was my mind set almost militant, I thought to myself I am a young Pakistani Muslim, so they would probably have said go on let him have a fair share too, otherwise it is not across the board ... I couldn't have been more wrong, because he gave me a fair shout. (Mo)

In describing their interviews with the Trust, interviewees used phrases such as 'personal touch' (Archie), 'equal' (Judy), 'care' (Mike), 'She understood' (Zara). The interviews were free flowing, with few time constraints and were led by the applicant, including Bob who explained that he had even taken the interviewer down to the prison farm to show her first-

hand his fork lift plans Interviewees were encouraged to tell their stories, but - most importantly - they felt that they had been listened to:

It was strange, when you're in prison you're quite sensitive in terms of reading relationships and what people are thinking and most times people are sceptical about what you are saying and often maybe not really believe you, that you are genuine, I could see that [Name of interviewer] genuinely believed in me, that's why it seemed so emotional at times. When I was talking about it I could see that he believed what I was saying and had an interest in what I was wanting to do, you know, and I began to believe it was possible. (Chris)

Interviewees talked about the tone:

It was the manner you were spoken to. Some people get a tone in their voice, sort of like you are muck, we are doing you a favour, the way they phrase things. I didn't have that with the Hardman, just a general conversation, more focused on what I wanted to do, and how it would help me in the future. It wasn't negative' (Ron)

Award winners described the interview as a shared experience between equals which was very important to them:

There were quite a few people who understood where I was and talked to me.... It didn't make me feel like a prisoner with no hope, I was there [the Award Ceremony] to collect something. (Judy)

Several examples of gaining trust were given which meant a lot to the award winner:

Suddenly they [The Prison Governor] trusted me, they gave me a car and we had to make our own way to the Award Ceremony, so yeah it felt really good. (Bob)

For award winners who had gone through the process more than once, an enduring respect developed, summarised by Chris who had received his first award fifteen years ago:

I think it is always there. I mean as soon as I got my job, the first thing I wanted to do was to call Guy Armstrong [founder and assessor], you know to say, look what I am doing now. Thank you so much ... I did send a letter because I couldn't get hold of him and then after I heard unfortunately he had passed away. I had an amazing journey from the time that I sat down with him and I wanted to say thanks that you believed in me and you know, that was hard I could not share it with him.

(Chris)

The award process provided an opportunity to link with people from outside the prison, often from walks of life that were different from the applicants. These 'improbable friendships' (Armstrong & Ludlow forthcoming) were greatly appreciated and appeared long lasting:

None of my family have ever been to University, We're all working class people from the East End. Stalwarts, none of that nonsense, you know what I mean like. So, all of a sudden, it was like having something new and exciting for us as a family and then having sort of like, people more intelligent than me, sort of saying 'Oi you can do this', like it was quite encouraging. (Leo)

There is something about somebody else, who you don't see twenty four seven, who says yes... People from the outside, who could have been influenced by the

media, the Daily Mail, but they have seen that you are special. People don't realise what the effect is of somebody from totally outside and saying yes to a prisoner. They don't realise the effect that has. Part of the reason why I am getting to where I am today is because that confidence stays with you always, at award ceremonies, at meetings, in college.... (Judy)

An Enduring Community

From application to gaining an award from the Hardman Trust usually takes about a year, with the money then being available to draw down for another year. But the analysis of the process alone, overlooks the greater durability of the award. By investing in the individual, the Hardman Trust is a strong example of what Coleman (1988) defines as '*social capital*': i.e. the potential benefits to the individual arising from interactions with other people and social structures. As Bob summed up:

that certificate means as much to me today as the day I got it. Every time I read the wording of my achievements it makes me buzz.

while Jason, about to be appointed a Trustee of the Charity, explained that:

Two years on and I haven't missed a meeting I always see somebody I know, or I see a prison officer that I know and they can't help themselves but come up and say something and it takes me back, but it doesn't take me back to there it takes me back to here and all that I have achieved ... it does reenergise you, I still get a buzz.

The relationships borne out of the Award System appeared to have a binding effect that created an enduring community of support:

It's all about belief and confidence. You've got somebody that believes in you and it's not a Charity that just gives you something and forgets you.... Still with me today, yeah. (John)

The Hardman Trust does not identify '*community*' as an objective or outcome but the relationships which are forged give rise organically to a supportive community: 'it is like a club' (Jason). The Award ceremony in particular was seen as a community event where all attendees had the opportunity to see other people in a different way:

They say bring your family, it's not a problem. It's a welcoming environment, as opposed to get an award behind a brick wall, that nobody is going to fucking see. Bring your family along, it's a nice day out and then you think, well there are people who are alright ... (Leo).

After receiving an award an informal arrangement to return to future award ceremonies exists, allowing the participation with the Hardman Trust to continue ensuring that they remain feeling a valued member of the community:

It was good, it was an odd feeling going in [to the award ceremony] but I was really excited to be going back in as a person, who had been through the process, got an award, got released and is still in the community as a success story and not reoffending (Bob).

All applicants highlighted the uniqueness of the ceremony with no comparable examples being given.

Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to understand and interpret the motivations, experiences and outcomes of Hardman Trust Award winners and the resulting implications on desistance from crime. Six comprehensive outcomes have been extracted from the data: financial investment; catalyst for change; positive signalling, a turning point in life, positive signalling, emergence of true identity and community reintegration. These will now be discussed in turn.

First, the financial award itself led to further doors opening with regard to employment and additional funding. The Trust's awards gave financial support for long serving prisoners to achieve their goals on release. All interviewees agreed that a significant grant was a necessity to succeed when leaving prison, preventing them from slipping back to crime in order to survive. Secondly, this simple act operated as a catalyst for change, often achieving further financial investment through match funding from other charities and institutions. As the awards were tailored to individual employment or educational needs on release, the winners felt better equipped to access to the job market and often secured employment within weeks of release. Financial support, even at the relatively low levels of £600, reinforced by accessing employment, eased the financial '*pains*' or pressures experienced on release. The interviewees felt that the process of rebuilding relationships with friends and family, that had been damaged whilst in prison, could as a result be expedited. By being able to lead '*normal ordinary lives*' (Appleton 2010), desistance was strengthened.

Award winners also found the selection and grant giving process a rewarding and positive experience, which they directly contrasted with their experiences within prison.

Descriptions of prison life were preoccupied with feelings of '*them*' and '*us*' and frustration

that paper based risk assessment was rarely reflective of the person that they felt they had become. In contrast, experiences with the Trust were positive, with interviewees appreciative that they were being listened to and supported. The over-riding focus of the application process remained strengths based and forward looking, focussing on successes rather than failings. All interviewees described being granted an award as a significant event or turning point in their lives. A simple certificate evidenced to the wider world their motivation and agency to improve and therefore was extremely important to them. Certificates were presented as evidence of progress at Parole Hearings and often remained framed on the wall, in public view, years after release. Recognition empowered award winners. A distinct change in emotional thinking was detected which paralleled previous studies on desistance that note the positive impact on psychological wellbeing (Zamble & Quinsey 1997; Maruna 2010). All applicants felt increased responsibility to lead a crime free life, as a result of the investment the Hardman Trust had made in them.

The strength-based approach of the Hardman Trust exemplified good practice on a small scale initiative. It supported award winners while they are desisting from crime. This parallels research on secondary desistance advocating that policy makers should consider a strength-based approach as a valid alternative to the present 'carrot and stick' policy that has emerged from political commitment to being tough on crime (Maruna et al. 2004; Travis 2005). Similarly, in their study of art based projects in prison, McNeill et al (2011) recognise the importance of a strength based on two levels:

Although we tend to focus on offenders' risk and needs, they also have strengths and resources that they can use to overcome obstacles to desistance – both personal strengths and resources and strengths and resources in their social networks. (2011, p.7)

Fourth, the Hardman Trust Award Process provided an opportunity for offenders to be de-labelled on release, rather than stigmatised due to their history. By providing an award ceremony, the Trust provided an opportunity for redemption and reintegration back into the community. Through celebrating success with peers, family and the wider society, the winner felt de-stigmatised and allowed to feel like a 'normal' person again or as effectively described by Bob, simply "me, a man in a suit". Bushway and Apel (2012) and Maruna (2012) describes this as '*desistance signalling*', and have been vocal in calling for a *revolution* in criminology and a move away from the traditional risk assessment and an over dependency on rehabilitation programmes. Research has shown that positive signalling, like that achieved by the Hardman Trust, comes at a relatively small cost but the results can be much greater: increased access to employment; acceptance in the local community and buy in from the local community (Travis 2000; Travis 2005; Maruna 2003; Maruna 2011; King & Maruna 2009).

Several themes of Maruna's (2003) modelling on the rituals in redemption can be seen in the service delivery of the Hardman Trust. Throughout the award process, participation from all sides remained equal with collaboration being at the heart of each event. Rather than adopting a mentoring approach, a framework of celebration was used to provide an opportunity for individuals released from prison to feel legitimatised within the wider community. Although personal ownership of desistance is required, desistance studies have highlighted individual capital on its own is not enough; social or community contribution is also needed, especially in the early stages of transition. (Farrall 2004; McNeill et al. 2011; Uggen et al. 2004). The support shown by the Hardman Trust appears similar to the pedagogy known as '*Scaffolding*', which, building on the work of Vygotsky, is when teachers provide a safe environment for the individual that is conducive for learning and self-development (Pea 2004).

Over the longer term, winning the Hardman Award helped to frame the development of a new life narrative which placed applicants' crimes in the past, allowing their '*true identities*' to emerge and allow them to give back to society. Like the generative script identified by Maruna (2010), all of the interviewees talked frequently about the need to repay society. At the most simple level, all applicants identified not committing further crime as the most visible example that they had successfully transformed into a better person. Rebuilding relationships and providing for families legitimately was equally important to all those interviewed. Several of the applicant winners transformed their experience of prison into a peer support skill to use within the charitable sector.

The final theme to emerge was the creation of strong relationships and an enduring community. The equality of interactions between Hardman officials and past and present award winners allowed a community to grow and strengthen. The safe and supportive environment nourished the growth and development of the individual allowing the effect of positive endorsement to remain far longer than the award. Applicants talked about the buzz and empowerment of the Award Ceremony remaining with them in the long-term in the form of self-belief and knowledge that members of the community were publicly backing and supporting them. This phenomenon felt like a kind of 'Ready Brek' glow: In the same way that the child in the 1970's television advertisement is set up for the day by being given a nourishing warm breakfast, an award winner of the Hardman Trust can face the world with increased resilience and protection from the elements.

The study of the Hardman Trust exposed a gap in criminological theory to understand the emergent feeling of the 'Ready Brek' glow and therefore there was a need to look wider for an explanation. No individual can live in isolation and everybody is influenced by the social networks they develop (Smith 2010). The ability to form such social networks will be shaped by the openness and willingness of the community that they live in. An '*ethical*

community' which celebrates differences and individuality will be easier to break into than a one more focused on individual achievement (Bauman 2014). Applying this to the process of the Hardman Trust, someone who engages with the Hardman Trust has the opportunity, through interaction, to build relationships in a welcoming community and emerge with a level of self-belief and endorsement which allows both resilience and determination (the Ready Brek 'glow') producing far greater outcomes than if the interaction had not taken place.

In conclusion, there remains a lack of research in social capital projects such as the Hardman Trust (Weaver & McNeill 2014; Fox 2014; Coleman 1988). Time and resources limited the size of this study. Despite being small scale, which limits opportunity for generalizing, the findings still illustrate the degree small scale social investment can, through community involvement and commitment, bridge existing criminal justice silos and structure a future away from crime for individuals leaving prison. It is recognised that by only having voluntary involvement with the research, and as a result only successful applicants, it was not possible to document and understand individuals who failed to win a financial grant. As a stand-alone case study The Hardman Trust has exemplified good practice illustrating, even with limited funds, how supportive, positive interaction from an outside agency engaging in community friendship can lead to successful reintegration and desistance from crime. In this era of financial austerity, it is to be hoped that merits of this simple formula created by the Hardman Trust can be shared with academics and stakeholders in the criminal justice system. Although the study is not large enough to lead to generalisation for desistance with longer timescales and greater resources, this study begs to be extended in the future into a longitudinal research project which possibly compares a wider spectrum of Hardman Trust applicants. Finally, the findings of this research could also be used as a platform to compare outcomes with other social capital initiatives that support desistance from crime or support community reintegration for marginalised groups.

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Appendix A: Summary of Awards Given

Name	Date of Award	Amount	Date drawn	What award was given for	What if there had been no award?*
Mo	Oct-12	£ 1,000.00	07/01/2013	Level 3 IAG	(1) Would have still got to same place (2) would have taken longer, less confidence (3) reverted to crime
Jason	Apr-12	£ 482.00	30/04/2012	Laptop	(1) Would have got to same place (2) Would have taken longer
Chris	Apr-13	£ 800.00	12/11/2013	Builder's tools	(1) Believed God was providing guidance, so money would have come from another charity (2) Without any money most people would revert to crime
Leo	Oct-11	£ 1,000.00	01/12/2011	Fine Arts degree	(1) Drifted (2)mixed with wrong company, reverted to crime
Pat	Oct-13	£ 550.00	09/12/2014	Trade tools	(1) Would have still got to same place (2) would have taken longer, less tie with family
Jim	Apr-13	£ 700.00	27/06/2013	Business start up	(1) Wouldn't have found employment in area that he loved (2) Reverted back to crime
Archie	Apr-13	£ 1,000.00	11/09/2013	MSC degree	(1) Would have got there (2) Would have had less self belief, much harder to get funding
Archie **	Feb-14	£ 600.00	02/12/2014	MSC degree	
Bob	Apr-13	£ 600.00	30/06/2013	Push bike	Fears he would be directionless and drift back to crime
Ron	Feb-14	£ 600.00	Not as yet	HGV Class 2	Fears he would have no plans for future, would remain stuck in low paid job and therefore under financial pressure
Mike	Apr-15	£ 327.00	Not as yet	Work Tools	Fears he wouldn't have any plans for future
Zara	Apr-15	£ 600.00	Not as yet	Horsebox Training	Fears she would be less employable and struggle to get a job
John	Nov-15	£ 435.00	01/02/2012	Gas fitter's course	(1) Would be bitter and twisted (2) reverted to crime
Judy	Feb-14	£ 600.00	Not as yet	Bar Exams	Would have given up pursuing her dreams
Chris	Oct-98	£ 250.00	not available	OU module	Possible that he would have reverted to crime.
Chris **	Apr-02	£ 500.00	not available	Post grad studies	
* Each Interviewee was asked to imagine what route their life would have taken if they had not won a grant.					
Through the interview the answer to this changed in some cases and are displayed in number order.					
** Denotes where a second application was made and secured					

Appendix B: Initial Questions:

Welcomes, how are you, tell me about yourself and time in prison? (10 mins)

Applying for the Award (5 mins)

How did you hear about the Hardman Trust?

What was it that made you apply? What did you hope for?

What were you originally hoping to get out of it?

Did you have any other sources of income or support set up for release?

Interview (5 mins)

How did you prepare for the interview?

What was the interview like for you? What did you get out of it?

How did completing the interview make you feel?

Gaining the Award (5 mins)

What were your reactions/feelings when you were told you had got a Hardman Award?

What did it mean to you? Did it make you feel more confident in your abilities?

Who did you share your news with and how did they react?

Award Ceremony (10 mins)

Did you attend the award ceremony?

If not – why not?

If yes – why did you want to go?

Did you take family and friends with you?

How did you feel when you were presented with the award?

How did your friends react?

What was good and bad about the Award Ceremony?

How did you feel as you went home? [more confident? proud? supported?

Using the Award (20 mins)

What were the immediate gains from the award?

Did it provide more assistance than just the financial award?

Did you find having this award opened up more opportunities for you? What were they (prompts further funding, new doors and opportunities being opened, recognition from probation officer)

Have you had the opportunity to give something back to wider society as a result of the award (Prompt – job, community involvement, peer help, role model for family)

How did actually getting the award differ from what you thought you would get from it?

In what ways do you feel the Hardman Trust Award provided / eased your journey from prison to resettling? Has it aided you feeling reintegrated (if so in what ways)? Has any other opportunity provided a similar experience?

How would you describe the relationship you had / have with Hardman?

Did you apply for a second award? Do you think the benefits of the award lasted longer than the financial grant – if so in what way?

What direction do you imagine your life would have taken without the Award?

Is there anything else you would like to share with me or think that I have missed?

Thanks and sum up

Finally, if you had to choose three words to describe Hardman ...

Appendix C: Interview Information Sheet

The Hardman Trust Awards – the motivations, experiences and outcomes of Award winners.

Amy J Barron

Who Am I?

I am a second year MSt Student at Cambridge University who is studying criminology. I have previously worked in the Prison Service for England and Wales but now I work in the construction sector. For the past four years I have been a Trustee of the Hardman Trust, and am particularly interested about the process of rehabilitation.

Why am I completing this research?

As part of my course I have to complete a thesis, as rehabilitation has always interested me, I am keen to use the award giving by the Hardman Trust to gain a deeper understanding of the experience of individuals who are released from prison and face re-entry into the community. My research seeks to understand the full benefits, soft and hard, of the award giving. The completed research will also be made available to the Hardman Trust to assist with planning next steps for the charity.

How can you participate?

The research will primarily focus on interviewing fifteen previous award winners. In the informal interview I will ask questions about your experience of the Hardman Trust, the interview is likely to last for around an hour. If you are chosen as one of the people I interview, I am happy to travel to a mutually convenient meeting point.

If you do not have the time to participate through interview, I would still welcome your feedback and views and I can be contacted by post, email or through the Hardman Trust facebook page. Your friends and family can also provide feedback in this way.

What will you do with the information from the interview and will it remain confidential?

Interviews will either be digitally recorded or written notes will be taken. These will later be transcribed. All information will be held securely and only available to me, the researcher. At the end of the study all notes will be destroyed. A consent form for you to sign ahead of the interview will explain this in more detail.

If I use any quotes from the interview, the names and details of your life will be changed to ensure that no reader can 'work out' who you are.

What happens if I change my mind?

You will be able to ask to stop the interview at any point, or once the interview has taken place you can request for it to be excluded from further study. This request can take place up until 30th September 2015, when I have to start writing up the research. If the request is made before this time I will immediately destroy all material associated with your interview, without question.

Appendix D: Consent Form

Project title: The Hardman Trust Awards: the motivations, experiences and outcomes of award winners.

Researcher: Amy J Barron, Trustee Hardman Trust

Please tick the boxes if you agree with the following three statements.

- | | YES |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the study (or have had it read out to me and have understood it), and have had chance to ask questions. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I do not have to answer any of the researcher's questions if I do not wish to, and that I can withdraw at any time, without giving reasons , until 1 st September 2015. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I agree to take part in the study, which means being interviewed by the researcher. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please answer **YES** or **NO** to the following two statements by ticking the appropriate box.

- | | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4. I agree to the interviewer recording and taking notes during the interview. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I agree to let the researcher use quotes from our interviews and conversations, as long as this is done in such a way that I cannot be identified. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Name of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____