

PRISONERS EDUCATION TRUST: ANNUAL LECTURE

18 October 2011

He who opens a school door closes a prison": Victor Hugo

Learning to be free in the rehabilitation revolution

Good evening.

First of all can I thank the Prisoners Education Trust for inviting me to give your annual lecture this evening and to thank you John, for those words of introduction?

I also want to add my thanks to Clifford Chance for letting us use this wonderful room this evening. If you want, we can skip the speech and spend the evening admiring the wonderful view. Perhaps not.

Victor Hugo said: *"He who opens a school door closes a prison":*

I want to use that as my theme tonight. I want to support Ken Clarke's call for a rehabilitation revolution, urge him on, and to argue that if it is to be successful – if we are to reduce reoffending and close prisons – then education, in its broadest sense, has a crucial role to play. When I was speaking to your Director, Pat Jones, earlier this evening she told me about the transformational effect your work has on individuals. And isn't that what education does – transform? And isn't that what a revolution is all about – transformation?

I am going to talk about three things. First, I thought it would be helpful to say a little about the experience and perspectives I bring to my role and to say something about the work of my inspectorate. To establish my credentials, such as they are.

Second, I am conscious that in speaking to you tonight I follow some very eminent individuals who had enormous expertise about prisons and their place in the criminal justice system. And I know that I speak to a very knowledgeable audience.

So I am not going to try and blind you with facts and figures but I do want to share with you what has shocked and surprised me since I was appointed to this post fifteen months ago.

Finally, I want to focus on the state of education in our prisons and suggest some of what I think is necessary if education is to play its part in reducing the risk that prisoners reoffend and helping them return to productive and law abiding lives in the community.

So let me first say a little bit more about the experience and perspective I bring to the topic and a little about the work of my inspectorate.

As you mentioned in your introduction, before I took up the office as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons fifteen months ago, I was the first chairman of the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

What I found in that role, rather to my surprise, was what most people complained about was not that that had been roughed up in the cells or falsely accused but that they had been the victim of crime and they felt that the criminal justice system, of which the police were the visible face, had failed them. Sometimes that was one serious crime; sometimes it was persistent offending that made their lives a misery.

My experience of speaking to many victims was not that most wanted vengeance, but that what they did want was for it to stop, for the wrong that had been done to them to be unequivocally acknowledged, to know what had happened and to ensure that they and others were safe from similar crimes in future.

I live in London and although, touch wood, neither I nor my family have been victims of serious crime, and so I do not compare my experience with that of some of the victims I have met, you cannot live in London and not be a victim of crime of some sort and on those occasions when it has happened to me and my family, I have felt the same sort of anger, fear and frustration as other victims.

But I regret that as a society we seem to have talked ourselves into a position where prison is seen as the only valid response to those feelings and society's support for and acknowledgement of victims of crime is apparently only legitimately measured by the length of a prison sentence.

However, those concerned with prison reform make a fundamental mistake if they appear to downgrade the experience of victims of crime or dismiss their concerns.

The stance I have taken as Chief Inspector is this:

The classic purposes of prison are to punish the offender. To protect the public. And to rehabilitate. I do not resile from any of these. But let me be clear. Going to even the best run prison for even a short period of time is a very severe punishment indeed. In my time as Chief Inspector I have found no holiday camps. But prisons should be used as punishment not *for* punishment.

Once in prisons, of course prisoner should be held securely and safely. But do not think for a minute that is ever enough. The need to hold prisoners safely and securely is a constraint – a necessary constraint - not an objective. The objective for every prison must be to try and reduce the risk that they reoffend after release and return.

I remember on one of my first inspections, Bure in Norfolk, a very good prison. Inspectors reported to me enthusiastically that the governor had as his vision that every member of his staff should see it as their job to reduce the risk that the prisoners would reoffend after they were released. This was good practice, unusual, to be applauded I was told. I did a double take. Surely every member of staff in every prison thinks it is their job to reduce the likelihood that prisoners will reoffend? Apparently not.

There is also a point to be made here about prison numbers. The point about prison capacity is not can you squeeze enough bunks in the cells to fit everyone in. The point about prison capacity is do you have enough resources to do anything useful with people when they are there.

That is pretty much what we look at when we do an inspection. Are prisoners being held safely and securely, are they being treated with respect for their human dignity? - of course we look at that. But more than that. Are they encouraged, do they have the opportunity, are they expected to engage in activity that benefits them and are they prepared for their release in to the community and helped to reduce the likelihood of reoffending?

I give Brixton, an overcrowded, London local prison we went to last year as an example. It had taken an enormous effort to get some basic things done. No one had died since the previous inspection. The wings no longer stank of dope. The vermin were more under control. The quality of learning and skills was good for those who could access it. These were real achievements and took real blood sweat and tears. But they were no where near enough. The prison was simply too small for the number it held. There was not enough space to keep prisoners occupied – many prisoners got three hours out of their cell in the morning or in the afternoon and that was it.

My responsibilities are set out in the Prison Act of 1952.

That requires me to inspect or arrange for the inspection of prisons in England and Wales and report to the Secretary of State on the *treatment of prisoners and conditions of prisons*. Treatment of prisoners and conditions of prisons.

What that means in effect is that that I report on outcomes for prisoners not the management of prisons. Our starting point is what we see happening on the wings, not budgets and targets on a computer screen.

Subsequent legislation has extended my remit to immigration detention facilities, police cells and court custody. I also inspect military custody by invitation.

I am supported by an able team of about 50 inspectors and other staff. About half of the inspectors are former prison governors with the rest from a wide range of backgrounds. Between us we carry out a full inspection of every prison every five years and a follow up risk based inspection in between.

We inspect against published standards known as 'expectations' which you can find on our website. And we use prisoner surveys, discussion with individual and groups of prisoners, discussions with staff and other visitors, data and records and last but not least observation. We triangulate our findings from all of these and then under the four headings of safety, respect, purposeful activity and resettlement say whether we think outcomes for prisoners are good, reasonably, good, not sufficiently good or poor.

We make recommendations after our inspections, the prison has to produce an action plan telling us whether they are accepted or not and I am pleased to say that

most are accepted and on those follow up inspections I have attended, we normally see good progress as a result.

I have looked back at the assessments my predecessor Dame Anne Owers made of the prisons she inspected over the last six years. Her assessments showed overall but inconsistent improvement. Prisons as a whole are safer and more decent places than they were six years ago – although that is not true of every individual prison – but progress on purposeful activity and resettlement lags behind and that is something we need to address.

Let me emphasise here that although I will inevitably use this speech to focus on what more needs to be done, I acknowledge the tremendous achievement represented by the progress that has already been made.

The most crucial feature of my role is its independence. I decide what I will inspect when. I can require access to any prison, speak to who I want, see what I want, go where I want and I say what I want in my reports which are all published and freely available. 75% of our inspections are unannounced. We turn up at the door and tell them we are coming in.

Independent inspection is particularly important in a custodial setting. Of course, the nature of those held, the imbalance of power between prisoners and prison officer and the fact that the work of the institution takes place behind high walls, out of sight, creates the conditions in which it is all too easy for abuse or neglect to take place.

But a greater risk in my view, is the normative effect those conditions create.

Away from the normal correctives of the market or democratic accountability, it is easy for even well intentioned staff to become accepting of standards that in any other setting would not be acceptable.

Anne Owers, in a telling phrase, used to talk about the virtual prison where the prison governor's sincere description of his or her prison bears little relation to what we find is actually happening on the wings.

When we tell some prison governors, as we have done, that we have found bullying, filthy cells, association regularly cancelled, common external areas used as a dumping ground for human excrement, prisoners in wheelchairs, stranded by a too steeply sloping walkway, mocked by other prisoners and left to fend for themselves while prison officers walk by, they react with surprise.

Do not be too pious about that, it happens in many organisations. My own inspectorate has got used to things it should not have done and I would be surprised if that were not the case in the Prisoners Education Trust too.

Independent prison inspection is a light shone on one of society's dark places and in my view, the greater the independence, the brighter the light.

So there I was, hardly ever been in a prison before, and then suddenly immersed in the prison world, visiting and reading reports about scores of prisons. Of course, I

had read about prisons before and I think I had a good intellectual understanding of what went on. But that's not the same as standing on the wings and smelling and hearing it. So I will tell you what shocked me.

Let me return to the Justice Secretary. I hope it's not presumptuous to say we had a similar experience. Both of us were last involved in the criminal justice system about twenty years ago. Both of us have done other things since. And both of us last summer rather unexpectedly found ourselves with major responsibilities for prisons.

This is what he had to say in his first speech as Justice Secretary, announcing a 'rehabilitation revolution':

I said soon after I was appointed that I am amazed that the prison population has doubled since I was Home Secretary in the early 1990s. It stands at more than 85,000 today. This is quite an astonishing number which I would have dismissed as an impossible and ridiculous prediction if it had been put to me as a forecast in 1992.

He went on to say:

There are some nasty people who commit nasty offences. They must be punished, and communities protected. My first priority is the safety of the British public.

But just banging up more and more people for longer without actively seeking to change them is what you would expect of Victorian England.

It is time we focused on what is right for today's communities.

Too often prison has proved a costly and ineffectual approach that fails to turn criminals into law-abiding citizens.

In our worst prisons it produces tougher criminals. Many a man has gone into prison without a drug problem and come out drug dependent. And petty prisoners can meet up with some new hardened criminal friends.

I found myself asking the same questions.

Do we feel any safer because we lock twice as many people up as we did a decade or so ago?

Can we really do no better than 'bang people up'?

How can it be that so many prisoners go into prison without a drug problem – and leave with one?

I was working with young offenders for NACRO in the 1980s and I remember Vivien Stern, now Baroness Stern, then the Director of NACRO, making a speech to express her concern when the prison population was close to 45,000. Like the Justice Secretary I suspect, I had not followed the increase in prison number very

closely since then. I knew the population had grown but I too was astonished to find it had more or less doubled.

So who is in prison?

At the beginning of this week, the prison population of England and Wales stood at 87551. 2275 more than a year ago. 4205 of these were women and 9820 were young offenders.

The characteristics of prisoners are I am sure well known to this audience:

- Almost 1 in 3 having been in care as a child compared with 1 in 50 of the population as a whole.
- Ten times more likely to have been excluded from school than the general population.
- Most with reading and numeracy levels below that expected for 11 year olds.
- Two thirds unemployed before imprisonment, one third homeless.
- Three quarters suffering from one or more mental disorder.
- Two thirds of men and half of women drug users.
- Most men and almost half of women abusing alcohol at dangerous level.

Let me describe the population at a typical Cat B local prison we inspected recently. I will not mention the name as the report is not yet published.

At the time of our inspection, almost half the men were unconvicted and held on remand. A third of those sentenced had less than six months to serve. On average, the prison reception processed 1200 men (equivalent to the total size of the population) moving in and out of the prison each week.

Two out of five prisoners were foreign nationals – and under a quarter of these had English as their first language.

1 in 10 incidentally were travellers – which is a very disturbing figure.

The mental health in reach team looked after more than fifty prisoners with the most severe and enduring mental illnesses and 14 prisoners had been transferred to specialist mental health services in the six months before the inspection. However many more prisoners with less acute or treatable mental health problems needed support.

Almost 300 prisoners were receiving interventions from the drug and alcohol team.

232 prisoners were waiting for literacy classes and 72 for numeracy.

16% of prisoners entered the prison without accommodation. 20% of prisoners had debts they were very worried about. Just under half thought they would have trouble finding a job when they were released.

I do not say this to excuse what the prisoners had done or to suggest that these backgrounds reduce the impact of their crimes on their victims. But I think two points arise from this.

It is certainly the case that some people are dumped on the prison system who should be dealt with elsewhere. One of the most shocking sights I have seen was at another London prison where a young man – although he seemed like a boy to me of about my own son's age – had been sectioned but there was no place in a secure hospital available for him. So he remained in the prison, unable to care for himself, seriously ill with the decent prison staff at their wits end, while he and they waited for a more suitable place to come up. It was a disgrace.

There are undoubtedly many others where their offending behaviour is a symptom of their distress rather than a cause of it and who ought to be helped elsewhere.

The level of need in women's prisons is even greater and more pervasive.

At Bronzefield women's prison for instance, there was a shocking level of self harm (although one that is not untypical for a women's local prison). In the twelve months before our most recent inspection, there had been getting on for 3000 self harm incidents – more than seven a day. Six out of ten of these involved tying ligatures and just over half of the women involved had harmed themselves more than once. One woman had harmed herself 93 times in one month. Records for the use of force by staff showed that a high proportion were interventions to prevent women tying ligatures to themselves.

So we should not underestimate the difficulty in working positively with this constantly shifting, challenging and needy population.

And what are we doing with this people once they are inside?

Ken Clarke talked about 'banging people up'. In too many prisons that is pretty much all that happens.

When I started this role I was missing something. The way our inspections work is that the inspection team turns up, usually unannounced, and the inspection lasts about a week. I join them on Thursday, get briefed by the inspection team leader, meet the governor and then go and have a look round the prison myself for three or four hours. I choose where I want to go but I have an officer to help me find my way round.

Of course, what I want to do is go to where things are happening: reception, the segregation unit, healthcare, the workshop the governor is rather proud of. I go on to the wings during association and talk to prisoners.

The trouble is, all that activity gives a very false picture. In too many prisons, nothing much happens at all.

I decided to see one inspection through from start to finish. So on one of our rarer announced inspections, at Rochester Young Offenders Institution, before the inspection proper had started, I went with our researchers up and down every wing landing entering every third cell and handing out survey forms and then going back in the afternoon and picking them up.

It was a lovely sunny spring day. We went round the wings mid morning handing out forms and we went back mid afternoon to collect them back in. My abiding impression was of cell after cell with young men locked in, a makeshift curtain across the window, the light off, daytime telly in the background, sleeping their way though their sentence. It was truly depressing experience.

Part of the problem at Rochester was that the security department seemed to be running the prison. Almost everything needed their approval and of course the safest answer was no. The prison ran such complicated keep apart lists that the whole place ground to a halt. And while it was relatively safe while prisoners were in their cells – they had to come out sometimes and then of course all that unspent energy, that had not been used constructively, simply created havoc. Banging them up did not even keep the place safe – let alone prepare them for release.

At least the cells were not too bad at Rochester. Lots of cells are little more than a large toilet. Two men in a space not much wider than my outstretched arms - and about three times as long. The air thick with cigarette smoke. An unscreened toilet. Graffiti on the walls. Furniture for one. Meals eaten in the cell, one man at the table, another next to the toilet with his plate on his lap.

And why are meals served at such peculiar times? Breakfast packs in the evening, lunch mid morning, supper in the afternoon. In one prison we were in recently, where the food budget was very low, prisoners were buying extra food from the canteen and then heating up inside kettles.

One of the few sensible things you can do in a prison is get people who have lived very chaotic lives into a normal routine. You get up at a normal time, you have meals at normal times, you are responsible for getting yourself to work or education. Collecting meds, visits, the gym, the library are fitted round work and education, like they would be for you or me, not work and education fitted around collecting meds, visits, the gym, the library. Some prisons seem to manage that, why can't they all?

Laundry. At Holme House prison for instance, there were no wing laundries and no opportunities for prisoners to launder their own clothes or have their clothes washed in preparation for court or release. When they sent prison-issue kit to be washed, they received different and damaged kit back. So it was always too big or too small – trousers hanging round their backsides or half way up their legs.

In our survey, less than half the prisoners said that they received enough clean and suitable clothes. No clean pants. I suppose that does not sound too terrible but it would be like that throughout your sentence. There would be nothing you could do to

fix it. You would get the message, wouldn't you, that you were of absolutely no consequence at all?

It seems to me that this loss of autonomy, the inability to fix even the simplest things for yourself, must terribly undermine rehabilitation. Rehabilitation must be about taking responsibility for your own actions. Prison is all too often about losing it.

And then there is drugs.

I think we are too complacent – or fatalistic about drugs in prison. I spoke to an officer in a prison with a big drug problem recently and asked him why he thought that was so. He shrugged. It was a big problem in the local community, so it was a big problem in the prison and nothing could be done. That was the way it was.

Let me spell out what this means. Again I will use evidence from a recent inspection that we have not published yet so I will not name the prison. The prison has a serious drug problem. Almost half of prisoners told us that drugs were easy to get in the prison. The random mandatory drug tests had a positive rate of 16.5%. About 1 in 6 – *1 in 6* – of prisoners told us they had developed a drug problem *while they were in the prison*. Drug use and the debt with which it was associated was a significant factor in high levels of bullying and violence. 36% of prisoners told us they had felt unsafe at some time in the prison and almost one in five told us they felt frightened at the time of the inspection – both figures worse than when we last inspected the prison and worse than similar prisons.

Another feature of this prison was that far too many prisoners on an ACCT – suicide and self harm procedures – were held in the segregation unit, along with others there for their own protection or as a punishment. Whatever the reason, the segregation unit had a limited and punitive regime. And too often the default response to the prisoner's behaviour or needs was to transfer them out of the prison.

So what we were told was happening, by prisoners and staff, was that prisoners who had drug debts, were deliberately self harming to get put on an ACCT. Once they were on an ACCT there was a good chance they would be placed in the segregation unit. Once they were in the segregation unit there was good chance they would be transferred out.

And don't think this was something prisoners always bring on themselves. I saw one incident recently where they had intelligence a prisoner was bringing a large quantity of drugs into the prison.

He was, but he had passed the drugs to another prisoner who happened to be on the van bringing him in. When they did not find the drugs on the suspect prisoner they searched the other man and found them. So the hapless prisoner who had the drugs found on him then not only had to face a spell in the segregation unit as a punishment – but also had a huge drug debt he had to pay off – and we were not confident the prison was on top of the issue.

I don't accept more cannot be done. There are prisons, like Manchester, that do seem to have got on top of the issue without allowing security measure to stifle the normal day to day running of the prison.

You can first of all make sure your drug treatments system is properly resourced and organised – because when it is, you reduce demand.

You can use intelligence to target all the routes drugs are coming in – throw ins, mail, visits, returning prisoners – and staff; not floundering about with blanket measures that give the appearance of activity but achieve little.

You can properly supervise your administration of prescribed drugs. You can carry out your random and suspicion testing rigorously.

So be really clear, drugs in prisons isn't about letting prisoners chill out in their cells. It's about prisoners being battered for their debts in the showers. It is not acceptable.

The first requirement surely for any place where education happens is that it is safe – and drugs are a major factor that undermines that safety.

So let me turn to education.

I have already mentioned the educational disadvantage that typifies the prison population:

- Ten times more likely to have been excluded from school than the general population.
- Most with reading and numeracy levels below that expected for 11 year olds.

But that does not tell the whole story. The range of achievement is tremendous. Your own survey found 36% no qualification but almost 6% educated to degree level. Age ranges 18 to 80. Many foreign national prisoners do not speak English.

And then there is the nature of the prison environment and all the other issues prisoners are dealing with that I have already discussed.

Faced with that need, the average cost of a prison education place is about half the cost of a secondary school place.

We conduct our inspections of purposeful activity which includes prisoner learning, skills and work in partnership with Ofsted.

Let me give you a snap shot of what we reported in our latest annual reports:

- My inspectorate reported that purposeful activity was the weakest area of prisons we inspect. It was not good enough in almost a third of the prisons we inspected last year.

- Ofsted's latest annual report on education in England states its serious concern at the worsening performance of learning and skills provision in prisons. Five out of the 27 prisons and young offender institutions inspected were judged to be inadequate for learning and skills compared with two in 2008/09.
- Although the number of learning, education and work places had increased, there were still too few to meet the needs of the population
- The quality of what was provided was mostly satisfactory.
- Literacy and numeracy provision and ESOL needed improvement.
- Information sharing between prisons, as prisoners transferred between them, had improved and it was rarely necessary to repeat assessments.
- Standards of teaching were satisfactory.
- Attendance and punctuality is often poor and so classroom and workshop occupancy is low. We often find occupancy of learning and skills places averaging around 60% - which is simply infuriating when there are not enough places to meet demand. Manchester had occupancy of over 90% so it can be done.

As you probably know, the government has recently published an Offender Learning Review and that does provide grounds for encouragement.

- There is a promise to give governors more say in local delivery and more emphasis on local delivery agents including charities and social enterprises. This should mean a more flexible delivery, relevant to the area where the prisoner is likely to resettle. This assumes though that prisoners will be in prisons close to home.
- There will be more money for offenders with learning difficulties with a focus on communication skills and listening.
- Electronic learner records will be introduced –which hopefully should stop all the re-assessments.
- There will be a full roll-out of virtual campus planned which is great – but what about wider internet access? I don't see how you can prepare prisoners for life outside prison without teaching them how to use the internet. That is a whole speech for another day.
- Prisons will be grouped (in clusters where there is regular movement between each prison) so that continuity and progression can be improved.

All of those points are very welcome.

I want here to mention my concern about funding prisoners' access to Higher Education. I recognise the difficult in providing free education for prisoners when it is

costing ordinary students £9000 a year. But it would be a terrible shame if the life changing rehabilitative opportunities access to higher education offered some prisoners was lost – so I do hope a way round the problem can be found.

There are other areas of the Review where I think the devil will be in the detail.

- The review focuses on vocational and employability skills rather than education. There will be a focus on functional skills early on in sentence then vocational training and employability skills at the end. I don't think that is a problem in itself provided it does not become an exclusive approach.

It seems to me that just as, if not more important than acquiring specific trade skills, prisoners need to acquire the habits, experience, responsibility and social skills necessary to get and hold down a job. Taking responsibility for getting to places on time. Solving problems when you are there, dealing responsibly with disputes. You learn these just as much in education as you do in work or vocational training. This links a bit to the government's plans to establish working prisons (again). I think that is all well and good but we should also use to capacity the learning and skills provision already in place and are too often under-used.

- New contracts will be outcome-based and there will be payment by results in getting prisoners into work. I am not against payment by results. If it helps concentrate providers minds on what happens beyond the prison gates, so much the better. But in education more than in other areas, there is the danger of cherry picking. Who will persevere with the difficult and challenging prisoner who masks his lack of confidence with aggression or bad behaviour if results and therefore payment seem uncertain?

I remember in Cookham Wood, a very troubling YOI which had had a lot of violence and a lot of very bad behaviour, they had a fantastic art workshop. I saw the art tutor there spending a long time with one boy, who had been a real trouble to the staff, getting him to produce some beautiful work. And of course that was not all he was doing because while all that was happening he was getting through to the boy about his troubles and his behaviour in a way no one else had been able to do. How will the results of that kind of thing be measured and paid for?

Arts in prison, often run by small voluntary groups, has a particular role to play in providing the first step that many prisoners take into education and encouragement to reflect on their own behaviour. I know that many arts projects are worried about how they will fare in the new funding arrangements.

Before I took on this role I was trustee of a project called Good Vibrations that ran Indonesian percussion projects in prisons. I have to confess, it really wasn't my thing. Sitting on the floor drumming – not my thing at all. I got involved as a favour to a friend. So I went along one day, rather reluctantly to see a performance in a prison. Rather to my amazement it worked. A group of prisoners that the prison had struggled to engage had worked together for a week and produced a wonderful performance. They glowed with pride and all the evidence from the follow up the

project did was that many of the participants went on to other forms of education and training. What was also good about the performance I saw were all the local musicians who came in from the community to join the performance – so it was something that not just benefitted the prisoners but helped engage the community in what was happening behind the prison walls in the centre of their town. I was a cynic confounded.

One of the issues this project faced, as do many arts projects, is the nervousness ministers and officials had about anything that smacked of ‘treats for prisoners’. I think there have been some projects that were insensitive to victims but in my view the arts have an important role to play in prisons and I hope ministers and officials will be bold in allowing them to do so.

So, drawing to a close, I think we need to turn things round. Rather than have education and resettlement as ‘nice-to-haves’ once the important business of the prison has been done, they need to be seen as a central purpose.

Let me end by saying some on the things I think would be happening in a prison where deduction was excellent.

1. First and foremost the prison would provide a safe and decent learning environment. The basic running of the prison needs to be sound.
2. Of course, there needs to be a range of learning, skills and work opportunities to meet the range of needs in the prison population, relevant to the local community and economy and of sufficient quantity and quality. Programmes to address offending behaviour and to meet practical resettlement needs should be sufficient for the population.
3. Prisoner staff relationships are key. We learn through example. All prison officer should be expected to model behaviour and they should know, though a personal officer scheme or in some other way, enough about individual prisoners to encourage their participation in purposeful activity.
4. As far as possible, prisoners should be exposed to the routines of a normal day, expected to attend work and education regularly and punctually and fit other activities around this. If that means rearranging staff shift patterns – so be it.
5. The community should be involved – local employers involved in the provision of work, voluntary and community groups running resettlement and other activities and funding arrangements should be sufficiently flexible to allow the participation of small local groups.
6. Prisoners should be encouraged to provide mentoring support though schemes like toe by toe and your own scheme of peer mentoring for distance learning.
7. There should be targets for literacy and numeracy. I am not a great fan of targets but I think this is one area where they could be useful. No one who

has been in prison for any length of time should leave prison without the opportunity and encouragement to have improved their literacy and numeracy.

8. Security should be proportionate to the needs of the prison and focussed on enabling things to happen safely rather than eliminating all risk.
9. Release on temporary licence should be used to widen the work and training opportunities available and prepare prisoners for release.
10. Last but not least, arts projects that encourage prisoners to work collaboratively, apply themselves to a task and increase their insight have a positive role to play in the range of provision available.

You can argue about this list and add or subtract items. But I don't think most of these things require huge additional resources. All of them happen in some prisons, most of them happen in a few. However, I recognise there is a capacity problem.

But I repeat. Education in its broadest sense is crucial to rehabilitation. Our aspirations are much too low at present and Ken Clarke was right to call for a rehabilitation revolution. You can argue about the detail but it won't be achieved unless we place education and rehabilitation at the centre of a prison's task – not some luxury add-on.

As far as I am concerned education and rehabilitation are right at the top of my list of priorities and I will be pushing them very hard in my inspections. I am grateful for the opportunity to share some of my thinking with you this evening and I look forward in working with the Prisoners Education Trust and others here tonight to refine and push this agenda in future.

Thank you.