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NEW RESEARCH SHOWS ARTS PROGRAMMES CAN CUT CRIME AND SAVE TAXPAYERS' MONEY

The arts play an important role in the criminal justice system and can reduce crime and save taxpayers' money, according to a major new report published today.

One arts project, Only Connect, more than halves expected rates of re-offending, from an estimated 57.5% without the charity to 25.9% with the charity. This generates savings of over £3.2m to the criminal justice sector over six years.

The report, *Unlocking Value*, was commissioned by the Arts Alliance and produced by charity think tank and consultancy New Philanthropy Capital (NPC). It explores the value of the arts in criminal justice by examining the results of three organisations - Clean Break, Only Connect and Unitas – who each work with different groups of offenders.

All three projects improve people's life chances and can generate substantial savings to the public purse.

"With a spiralling prison population, shocking rates of re-offending, and steeply declining budgets, we urgently need to find new ways of working" says Tim Robertson, Chair of the Arts Alliance. "This report makes it clear that arts-based interventions can help to reduce re-offending, and in doing so also save serious amounts of public money. The criminal justice sector needs to open its doors to arts organisations and find new ways of working in partnership with them."

Re-offending costs the government between £9.5bn and £13bn a year, with two in five adults re-offending within a year of release¹. Last year the Ministry of Justice announced plans for using payment-by-results contracts more widely in the criminal justice sector.

"Arts organisations are under increasing pressure to show the value of what they do" says report author, David Pritchard. "This report is a step in the right direction but we need to see more charities collecting data to show the impact they have on people's lives. The government can also help by providing greater access to data on reoffending. At this time of budget cuts, we call on private funders, arts charities and the government to work together to overcome these problems and help paint a clearer picture of the value that the arts can bring."

The report, funded by Arts Council England, is officially launched today with a public debate at London's Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre. The debate, chaired by Lord Ian Blair, former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, is part of a wider

programme of events in connection with *Art By Offenders, Secure Patients and Detainees*, the UK's annual showcase of work by prisoners and others in secure settings, held at Southbank Centre.

Lord Blair is the current Chair of the Thames Valley Partnership, a charity that aims to find long-term solutions to crime and social exclusion. He says:

"The exciting thing about the arts is that they have the potential to tackle deep-rooted problems and can even have a transformative effect on a person's life, particularly for young people. This can help them turn away from crime and start to lead purposeful and positive lives."

Vince got involved with the Only Connect programme while he was in prison. He says:

'It wasn't just the performing at Only Connect which gave me confidence but the level of support I received as well. I was listened to and for the first time someone asked me what I wanted and what I needed. Thanks to the charity I am now married and studying towards a sports degree. The biggest boost for me was when my son gave a speech at his school about his 'role model' and he chose me. It just shows that you can change things around if you are given a chance.'

Lucy Perman MBE, Executive Director of Clean Break, says:

"We know from our service-users and partners that the theatre education we provide for women offenders delivers strong and tangible results in terms of progression to education, volunteering and employment. This new study now shows the economic benefit and savings to the public purse which provides us with powerful arguments and robust financial evidence to persuade government and commissioners to invest in this important work."

- Ends -

For further information or interviews with charity spokespeople and participants in arts programmes, please contact Ben Caspersz at ben@claremont.org.uk or on 07738 195 625 or Ana Gardner at ana@claremont.org.uk or on 07976 521205

Notes for editors

- The *Unlocking Value* report is published on 25 October 2011. A **launch event** will take place at 6:30pm on Tuesday 25 October at the Level 5 Function Room in the Royal Festival Hall. The event, organised by the Arts Alliance, is a debate on the subject of the Economic Case for Arts Interventions in the Criminal Justice System. Speakers will include David Pritchard, Head of Measurement and Evaluation at New Philanthropy, and Martin Stephenson, Executive Director of Unitas, and service users from Clean Break and Only Connect. The debate will be chaired Ian, Lord Blair of Boughton, former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. This is a free event.
- The report was produced by New Philanthropy Capital and commissioned by the Arts Alliance to explore the value of the arts in the criminal justice sector by quantifying their economic costs and benefits. The full report will be available from www.philanthropycapital.org/publications

- **New Philanthropy Capital (NPC)** is a charity consultancy and think tank dedicated to helping funders and charities to achieve a greater impact. NPC provides independent research, tools and advice for charities and funders in the UK and internationally. Their vision is to create a world in which charities and their funders are as effective as possible in changing people's lives and in tackling social problems. For charities, this means measuring the results of their work and using evidence to learn and improve, as well as to attract support. For funders, it means using evidence of charities' results to make funding decisions and to measure their own impact. For further information, see www.philanthropycapital.org
- The **Arts Alliance**, managed by Clinks, is the national body for the promotion of arts in the criminal justice sector, and is funded by the Ministry of Justice, Arts Council England and the Monument Trust. Further information can be found at www.artsalliance.org.uk
- The *Unlocking Value* report focuses on three arts based initiatives:
 - Clean Break is a London-based theatre company for women who have offended or are at risk of offending. An analysis based on the outcomes of 20 women who graduated from the theatre education programme took place in July 2010
 - Only Connect is a London-based arts charity for prisoners and ex-offenders in prison and in the community. The analysis is based on 72 members who have been released from prison.
 - Unitas is a national charity that uses creative activities to help disadvantaged young people get back into education, employment or training. Its Summer Arts Colleges are intensive education projects for young people at high risk of offending. The analysis is based on outcomes data from 2009, when 323 young people enrolled on the scheme.
- **Arts Council England** champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2011 and 2015, we will invest £1.4 billion of public money from government and an estimated £0.85 billion from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk. Arts Council England provides funding for the three projects detailed in the report as well as for the report itself.
- **Art By Offenders, Secure Patients and Detainees** is the UK's annual showcase of work by prisoners and others in secure settings at Southbank Centre, and is held in partnership with the Koestler Trust and the Magistrates Association.

Case Studies

Clean Break is a London-based theatre company focussing on women with experience of the criminal justice system. The charity commissions and produces plays on the themes of women, crime and justice in theatres and prisons, runs a theatre education programme from its North London studios and in prisons and community settings around the country. Clean Break's education programme is for women who have offended and women who are at risk of offending because of drug and alcohol use or mental health needs.

Nina*

Nina's problems started when she was a teenager and was badly bullied at school. Her home life was difficult and when she was 14 she was thrown out by her dad. By the time she was 16 she had left school and moved out permanently from home. Nina says, *'I was living for the party scene, going to all the festivals and it was during this time that I first tried heroin.'*

At 17 Nina was pregnant and using heroin every few days. In 2000 she was arrested for dealing ecstasy at Glastonbury and was given an 18-month prison sentence and placed in a special mum and baby unit in the prison.

Over the next few years, Nina remained hooked on heroin and when her son was three years old, he was removed from her care and went to live with her parents while she lived on a traveler site. Despite trying various detox programmes, by the end of 2006 Nina was homeless and living on the streets. Even when Nina did get onto detox programmes she would fall back into using drugs once she left because she went back to living with other drug users.

In 2009, after having a second child, Nina completed a three month treatment programme and realised she would have to break away from her old lifestyle if she was to stay clean and build a new life for herself and her daughter. It was at this time that Nina decided to get in touch with Clean Break. She had known about the charity for a couple of years and thought it might be the perfect place for her to start to get her life back on track. *'I knew I could do some good things but I just hadn't had an opportunity before. I had done theatre at school and when I read about Clean Break I knew it was somewhere I could express myself and be with women like me.'*

Nina started on her first course with Clean Break in 2010. *Clean Break has helped me to see what I really want to do with my life. I don't feel judged when I'm there and I trust them which is saying a lot because I find it very difficult to trust people.'*

Nina recently worked with the National Youth Theatre and is now applying to university to do a course in applied theatre. She is still attending Clean Break's courses and the charity is helping her with her application for a university place. *'I've come alive again really and regained my belief in myself. I now know that I do have value and what I think and say does count. Clean Break were there for me when I had no-one else and they helped me find my niche in life. Against all the odds I now know what I want to do with my life.'*

Only Connect is a London-based arts charity for prisoners and ex-offenders. By supporting prisoners and ex-offenders to create arts projects, belong to a community of members and impact young people at risk of crime, Only Connect aims to help them transform their lives and the lives of the next generation.

Vince

Vince was in his teens when he first started committing crime. He lived on a tough estate in London with his mother and three sisters. At the time, Vince says he saw his mother as 'the enemy' because she was so hard on him. *'My father wasn't around so my role models were the well-to-do criminals on the estate. I liked the fast cars and the pretty girls and when I committed crime I was accepted into the 'group'. There was a lot of camaraderie and they didn't tell me off.'*

When he was 17, Vince received his first prison sentence and by his thirties, he had been in and out of prison several times. In 2006, he came across Only Connect after being chosen to take part in a drama course the charity was running at the prison. *'The day we were due to perform I was really fearful because it's a tough crowd to perform in front of. At the end of the play I didn't dare look up but then I heard the applause and I found myself in tears. They genuinely liked it and for the first time I felt I was worth something because here were these strangers telling me they thought I was good.'*

After Vince left prison he started working with Only Connect on a regular basis, both performing and running workshops, as well as speaking to schoolchildren about the dangers of getting involved in crime. After five years with Only Connect Vince has just qualified as a personal trainer, is studying for a sports degree and has just got married. *'I am lucky to be alive. It wasn't just the performing at Only Connect which gave me confidence but the level of support I received as well. I was listened to and for the first time someone asked me what I wanted and what I needed.'*

The confidence Vince has gained through performing and his new career has had a huge impact on his family as well. *'The biggest boost for me was when my son gave a speech at his school about his 'role model' and he chose me. It just shows that you can change things around if you are given a chance.'*

Unitas is a national charity that uses creative activities to help disadvantaged young people get back into education, employment or training. Its Summer Arts Colleges are intensive education projects for

young people at high risk of offending. The courses aim to reduce offending, to increase educational attainment and facilitate transition into mainstream education, employment and training, and to improve literacy and numeracy skills.

ⁱ National Audit Office, 2010, *Managing offenders on short custodial sentences*
* Not her real name