

The cost to the taxpayer of reoffending is estimated to be £9.5 to £13 billion annually, and around 50% of all crime is committed by people who have already been through the criminal justice system.

Projects such as Prodigal Arts that are able to make such a positive contribution to the lives of offenders, and significantly reduce the likelihood of reoffending, are of huge value to society – in human and financial terms.

The principal aim of Prodigal Arts is to help people in prison and post-release 'unlock' their creative potential, 'setting free' a positive sense of individual achievement and self-worth which contributes to reducing the likelihood of re-offending.



### Case Study - Andrew

"I met Ralph at HMP Leyhill in 2015, he took some of my artwork to use as Prodigal Arts was being launched. I wasn't involved in the art classes as I had a well-paid job and I couldn't attend the art sessions, I did manage to see Ralph most weeks to discuss new ideas.

I was a confident artist and I chose pencil drawing because it was more convenient and affordable in prison. I draw closely detailed pictures because I want something to look like it should. I would say I'm quite good at art and I have some good ideas for the images I draw.

Involvement with Prodigal Arts has increased my confidence and self-worth. I've had very positive feedback that gave me a new identity rather than just being a prisoner.

My art continues to grow in terms of skill and ambition. I want to explore new things at my own pace and tackle issues that matter – through visual representations.



I have learned to adapt my art to appeal to my viewers whilst retaining my skills and ideas. I can also produce artwork to suit particular requirements, e.g. Easter, Christmas etc...

Mental health issues can be the cause of loneliness so art helps me to manage that. Art allows me to learn about my subject so I can produce better work. I now think with purpose and meaning.

During the mentoring sessions I enjoyed discussing the initial progression of Prodigal Arts and watching it grow into a registered charity. I now enjoy thoughts of how Prodigal Arts will adapt to future events and how I can improve sales of my own work through the charity.

I feel enormously blessed because I know my artwork hangs on walls in people's houses and they see their own story in what I draw.

Prodigal Arts gives prisoners a connection to the outside world, a private piece of self-worth. On release, it can serve as a reminder that you are valued and you still have an outlet for your creations.

I want to continue with Prodigal Arts and I always will, I'd like to see the charity expand into different areas to benefit a wider audience and to help prisoners in more prisons.

Prodigal Arts gave me hope during difficult parts of my sentence and continues to keep my artistic potential alive back in the community. It helps me with my confidence and gives me structure. I learn many things through art and I'm so pleased I've been with Prodigal Arts since before it came into being."