

Relationships between the voluntary sector and the state in criminal justice in the UK and New Zealand

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History of involvement

- | New Zealand | England and Wales |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prison gate brigades • Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society (PARS) (1877) • Probation volunteers. Licensed in 1913 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1874 – Bedford Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society • Police Court Missionaries |

Current Involvement

- Provide a range of services for offenders, ex-offenders and their families. Reintegration services eg PARS and PART
- Advocacy and campaigning
- UK - small and local
- NZ – religious groups or *Iwi*
- Said to be innovative, cost-effective and bring 'added value'



Opening up the criminal justice market

- | New Zealand | England and Wales |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neo-liberal reforms of 1980s and 1990s • Breakdown of previously comfortable relationships • Development of contract culture • Target to reduce re-offending by 25% by 2017 • 'Out of Gate' programme (2013) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Offender Management Service (NOMS) – work with offenders opened up to competitive tendering • Commissioning of reintegration/probation services • Private-third sector partnerships to win prison contracts • Social Impact Bonds/Payments by results (PBR) |

Research Questions

- What is the strategic position of the voluntary sector in criminal justice?
- Does working in criminal justice affect the charitable objectives and independence of voluntary sector organisations?
- Do voluntary sector organisations feel able to critique government policy without any consequent penalties and what makes this ability more or less likely?

UK research

- 12 semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, conducted as part of two year research project, based at Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC)
- Stakeholders taken from voluntary sector umbrella groups, prominent organisations and criminal justice agencies

Contract culture and the ability to critique

- Dangers of contract culture and 'goal distortion' (Kendall and Knapp 1996)
- Half of interviewees suggested no negative impact – independence promoted by Government, through the 'Compact'
- *Providing services through government contracts has not actually prohibited us from having a voice... we still have the status of the charity... We haven't in my view lost the ability to campaign, to get out there and say 'we don't agree' (Voluntary sector stakeholder)*



* <http://istore.com/2012/06/09/10-words-of-phrases-derived-from-falconry/>

- Half suggested government funding affects autonomy and voice:
- *There is hardly any organization with substantial reserves... so sector organisations are immensely dependent on contract delivery for their cash flow and their survival which makes it very difficult to fund campaigning, to be very critical. (Voluntary sector stakeholder)*

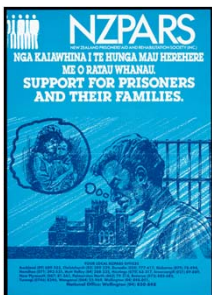
Independence and charitable objectives

- *It's absolutely important that VSOs remain independent and that independence is understood and valued, and those things can get murky when you get into bed with the state inevitably... I think it's possible for certain organizations to become very large very bureaucratic very removed from the front line and actually are they then very different and do they add additional value to what the state's providing? (Criminal justice stakeholder)*

Delegation of Punishment

- *What's the independence? The independence is to be able to meet your charitable objectives and to further your mission. [...] These debates about are we involved in punishment [...] we're not, but we are involved in services in the community, where youngsters are on curfews, they're on tags [...] you just have to make judgements as to whether you're going to be a part of that and continually reflect on your own position and your own charity. I know that what we're doing is so much a part of our history [...] so that link with the Criminal Justice System has always been there. (Voluntary sector stakeholder)*

The case of NZPARS



<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/ephemera/26137/nzpars-poster>

- Amalgamation of PARs in 1959 as condition of funding
- Main responsibility for prisoner reintegration
- In 1995, role redefined by funding contracts
- Move to more centralised systems
- Concerns over autonomy of local organisations
- Auckland PARS questioned financial viability of NZPARS

The case of NZPARS

- CE complains to Community and Voluntary Services Minister about bullying by Corrections officials
- Minister orders financial review
- NZPARS declared insolvent and loses \$2.5million govt contract
- Local PARS funded for a further 6 months

Preliminary findings - NZ

- Memoranda of Understanding
- New emphasis on reducing re-offending and reintegration
- Influence of prison privatisation
- Residual cultural differences



http://management&volunteers.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/jr124_forgoodforprofit.jpg

Conclusions

- A vulnerable sector
- Increasing opportunities for VS involvement in criminal justice in both countries
- Potential to transform relationships with the state
- Influence of the private sector
- 'Bid candy'?