

## Making Time – project context

**Tees Valley Arts is working with Holme House and Kirklevington Grange prisons, to offer prisoners creative activities, to help them develop new skills, personal confidence and positive ways of passing the time**

### **TVA:**

The art of changing lives - TVA is a participatory arts organisation based in Middlesbrough, working across the Tees Valley and beyond; the organisation champions participation in high quality creative activities as a tool for improving the quality of life and learning for individuals and communities, especially those facing life's challenges.

### **Holme House Prison:**

Holme House is a Category B prison for men of 18 years and over. It is a 'closed' site, meaning that there are high levels of security controls both at the entrance and within the setting. HH holds over a thousand prisoners, serving varied sentence terms.

### **Kirklevington Grange Prison:**

Kirklevington Grange is a Category D open prison for men. The prisoners are coming towards the end of their custodial sentences and are preparing for life outside, so many are supported to volunteer or engage in paid work outside the setting. The men have some freedom of choice over their activities within the 'prison day'.

### **Making Time project context:**

In the Prime Minister's February 2016 outline plan for prison reform, he highlighted a range of issues holding back prisoners from rehabilitation, and a clear need for change within the service. These issues include high levels of drug-taking, suicide and assaults, including assault to prison staff.

Although prisons have worked hard, with funding and staff available, to rehabilitate prisoners, there is a limit to what can be provided. Access to education is often hampered by prisoners' negative feelings and memories of the school system, and there are few outlets for emotion when prisoners are alone.

Holme House and Kirklevington Grange prisons are seeking to address these issues and have sought and secured funding to work with some voluntary sector agencies to strengthen and enrich what can be offered to prisoners. TVA is one of those agencies - TVA recognises the link between low achievement and offending, and the benefits of education to the prison population, as well as the use of the arts to improve health and well-being outcomes, specifically mentioned in the Dame Sally Coates' 2016 paper. Our work concentrates on the arts' efficacy at positively changing lives, working with artists trained to support those in society who are hardest to reach.

Through **Making Time**, TVA will provide creative workshops, training, support, events and installations which support the aims of wider prison reform.

TVA and the artists recruited for this project will provide weekly workshop sessions within HM Prison Holme House and HM Prison Kirklevington Grange from January 2017 to August 2017 (please see individual artist briefs for all details of dates and times, fees and conditions). These will need to be innovative, welcoming and totally inclusive, so that no pre-existing skills or previous experience are required for prisoners to attend. We will offer practical and creative skills, learning opportunities and ultimately leadership opportunities, giving attendees creative and emotional outlets, away from drugs and crime, to positively deal with the negative feelings which lead to poor mental health, self-harming and sometimes suicide. We want **Making Time** participants to enjoy taking part, to gain new skills, confidence and self-esteem, and to find positive ways of passing the time.

**Making Time** artists will be supported and managed by the Making Time Project Manager who will liaise directly with the two settings and will attend all sessions; she will be a key holder at the settings, which will allow her to facilitate access etc. All artists will need to undergo prison vetting prior to any confirmation of contract, and must be prepared to comply with all prison safeguarding and security requirements (which will

include 'counting in' and 'counting out' of materials and tools), as well as the usual TVA requirements of provision of Public Liability Insurance and risk assessments and so on.

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