

When asked 'Would you have any concerns about working in the industry?' the significant majority did not express any concerns, with a small number raising concerns about health/mental health, discrimination and location. When asked 'Are you facing any barriers or concerns which are discouraging you from learning at the moment?' the majority of women were not, with health, learning mode and limited courses being the main barriers provided.



The surveyed women were asked to rank a list of 15 support initiatives based on which they feel would be most beneficial. The results showed that the following initiatives were most popular:

- A short training programme/entry level course, providing CSCS card and Level 1 H&S
- 'Have a go' sessions, where individuals try different trades/roles over the course of a day
- Interview practice with employers
- Construction careers events
- Presentations /Q&A sessions from female construction workers
- H&S training sessions

As a result of insights from the survey NWCH partner contractors Equans, ISG and Morgan Sindall engaged with HMP Styal team and Novus the prison education provider to scope a support programme which included a range of the top scored items from the survey. These were delivered via 2 activities:

- 'Have a Go' event – for learners to try their hand at trades/skills and meet employers
- A one week full time 'Intro2C' programme – providing more in depth training and insight

HAVE A GO EVENT

The NWCH partners worked closely with New Future Network and Novus to organise the event, which took place in Oct 2022. The event ran all day and accommodated 2 groups of female prisoners. Equans, ISG and Morgan Sindall invited a number of subcontractor partners to support the event: Bluegyp Ltd, Cara Group, and JJ UK Ltd.

Learners were given an introduction, a safety briefing and PPE. Four activity stations were set up in the main sports hall, which learners rotated around to take part in each activity, including: spray painting, plastering, circuitry and bricklaying.

"I AM MORE AWARE OF THE VARIETY OF ROLES AVAILABLE, AND MORE CONFIDENT TO EXPLORE THESE AS CAREERS."

"IT HAS GIVEN ME FOOD FOR THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT I WANT TO DO WHEN I LEAVE PRISON."

"IT MADE ME MORE CERTAIN THAT FEMALES CAN TAKE UP JOBS IN CONSTRUCTION AFTER WATCHING EVERYBODY SUCCEED AT THEIR TASK TODAY."

"IT WAS CONFIDENCE BUILDING AND EMPOWERING."



IN2C - INTO CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

Following on from the success of the Have a Go event the working group continued to liaise with the prison partners to develop a one week full time 'In2C' programme. The scope of the programme was informed by the survey, feedback from the Have a Go and direct engagement with the prison and females. The programme included:

- Insight into industry and careers - including familiarisation with what a construction site is like, discussing fair employment, and hearing from other females who have entered the sector
- Level 1 Health & Safety course and certificate
- GQA course (CSCS equivalent), test, certificate and card
- CV development support and feedback, job application skills
- Mock interview and disclosure conversations, with various construction employers

The programme was delivered in November 2022 and 7 learners completed the programme, it was collaboratively delivered by ISG, Equans, Morgan Sindall and Procure Plus.

"BEFORE THIS WEEK'S COURSE I THOUGHT CONSTRUCTION WAS JUST FOR MEN. BUT AFTER THIS COURSE I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING IN THIS ENVIRONMENT."

"IT HAS GIVEN ME A PURPOSE I NEED TO LIVE FREE AND CLEAN."

"THE PROGRAMME WAS BENEFICIAL FOR ME BECAUSE I GAINED MY CSCS AND HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE AND SPEAK TO POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS."

"THE PROGRAMME GAVE ME A CONFIDENCE BOOST AFTER THE PRACTICE INTERVIEW AND MEETING ALL THE DIFFERENT PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE INDUSTRY."



Course feedback demonstrated that all learners significantly enhanced their skills and capabilities in the following areas:

- confidence engaging with employers
- self-belief in their ability to secure and keep employment
- knowledge of health and safety in construction
- confidence in interview / disclosure conversations
- awareness of different careers in construction
- insight on how to look for work and skills to develop a CV
- motivation to learn new things

FEEDBACK

"What a fantastic opportunity for the learners at HMP Styal to experience a potentially new pathway into employment. It was delivered in an engaging and informative manner with all the contractors showing respect and enthusiasm. This allowed the learners to relax and throw themselves into having a go at all the activities. The feedback from the learners was so positive and I really appreciate all the hard work and support that went into making this event such a success. Huge thanks to all the NWCH team that made this possible."

Julie Probert, Novus



"The prison is extremely grateful to NWCH and Procure Plus for providing this brilliant opportunity for prisoners at Styal. The Have-a-Go day and Construction Awareness course have really had a positive impact on all who attended and has opened several possibilities, specifically for female offenders with barriers to employment. Construction provision provided through this course has really diversified our Education, Training, and Employment offer"

Lauren Nolan, HMPPS

NEXT STEPS

Contractor partners and HMP Styal team have continued to work in partnership with Procure Plus, who have offered employability support for the females post release, and matched candidates to work placements and employment opportunities with construction employers.

Of the 7 prisoners who attended the 'In2C' programme the following outcomes have been achieved to date. NWCH maintain contact with HMP Styal and will continue tracking the journeys of the learners:

- **Prisoner 1** has completed a Traffic Marshalling course
- **Prisoner 2** started a ROTL 4 months after the programme, and is booked to complete a COTs (scaffolding) training course
- **Prisoner 3** has completed Peer Mentoring in employment hub sessions focussing on careers in construction, this prisoner has refocused towards a peer mentoring pathway. She is currently released and working part-time in Iceland and part-time volunteering with a company supporting females who have been recently released from prison
- **Prisoner 4** is currently accessing ROTLs, working in The Clink up until her release date. This prisoner is adamant she wants to go into construction on release and will be working with Procure Plus closer to release to source employment
- **Prisoner 5** has been unable to access ROTL as planned but is due to be released in August and is still focussed on working in construction. In the meantime, she is working with Recycling Lives in the workshop at HMP Styal and will be aiming to complete forklift truck training prior to release
- **Prisoner 6** had issues with accommodation on release and was unfortunately recalled before looking to source employment. This prisoner has a number of barriers to address before we can look at employment opportunities in the future
- **Prisoner 7** gained employment on ROTL with Fylde Cleaning Company, cleaning on a construction site. This prisoner suffered a traumatic experience when released which has unfortunately set her back and led to her being recalled into custody.

LESSONS LEARNED

Key lessons learned from delivering construction careers programmes for female prisoners:

- Work in partnership with New Futures Network and prison education provider to scope, prioritise and develop the course/initiatives
- Develop materials/activities which are varied, trauma informed and aimed at level 1 literacy and numeracy
- Do not baffle with jargon and assume limited prior knowledge about the industry
- Engage with learners' multiple times in advance of delivery, and provide information to ensure they are aware of what to expect
- Select and work with trusted and experienced delivery partners to compliment contractor delivery
- Keep group sizes small, and expect dropouts due to prison release and other limiting factors

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

