

**Open Prisons, Prison Staff and Prison Work:
Exploring the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison and the
cultural adaptation to a different kind of prison work**

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Abstract

This thesis took an ethnographic approach to exploring the male open prison in the UK. It provides a rich picture of the distinct physical and social milieu of these establishments and how staff adapt to and navigate the challenges of prison work from the perspective of prison staff. This thesis argues that the distinct social and physical milieu of the open prison has implications for the work undertaken there and on the staff that perform this. Yet this distinctiveness and, therefore, its impact is not widely acknowledged in either academic literature or penal policy in the UK. Processes of adaptation to this distinct environment vary for staff; whilst an entirely new occupational culture is not presented, values and norms are adopted in different ways. Officers adopt different approaches within the cultural orientations presented to address the 'spoiled identity' created by the distinct physical and social milieu including storytelling and a focus on the real difference the work they undertake can make to prisoners and the wider community. Finally, this thesis argues that elements of the way in which power and authority are deployed to maintain order in the open setting are in some ways distinct, but also share some similarities with closed settings despite its distinct nature. These similarities with traditional forms of control can and do create conflict that staff find different ways to manage. The wider implications of the distinct social and physical milieu on the aims of resettlement and reintegration, and the different approaches to prison work in the open setting are considered across the UK penal system more broadly.

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Abbreviations

'Books' – Prisoner Licence

Cat D – Category D or open prison

C and R – Control and Restraint

CM – Custody Manager

HMPS – Her Majesty's Prison Service

HMPPS – Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service

IEP – Incentives and Earned Privileges

IPP – Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection

'Lifers' – Refer to prisoners serving life sentences

'Mainstream prison' – Refers to more traditional, closed prison settings

'Nicking' – Placing prisoner on report

NOMS - National Offender Management Service

'The Number One' – How staff often refer to the governing governor

OASys – Offender Assessment System

OMU – Offender Management Unit

OS – Offender Supervisor

OSG – Operational Support Grade

PO – Prison Officer

POA – Prison Officers Association

RDR – Resettlement Day Release

RES Officers – Staff working on the residential wings

ROR – Resettlement Overnight Release

ROTL – Release on Temporary Licence

SO – Senior Officer

STC – Secure Training Centres

TC – Therapeutic Communities

WOS – Working Out Scheme

YOI – Young Offenders Institute

Contents

Chapter One: Rationale For Undertaking An Ethnographic Study Of The Open Prison And The Work Of Staff Within Them	10
1.1 Introduction	10
1.2 Contributions To Prison Scholarship	12
1.3 Research Questions And Key Definitions.....	14
1.4 Open Prisons And Their Staff?	18
1.5 Taking An Ethnographic Approach To Prison Research	19
1.6 Structure Of The Thesis	21
1.7 Chapter Summary	26
Part One	27
Chapter Two: Politics, Place And Purpose Of The Open Prison System	28
2.1 Introduction	28
2.2 The Emergence Of Open Prisons.....	29
2.3 Contextualizing The Open Prison Today	44
2.4 Exploring The Distinctness Of The Open Prison	49
2.5 Prison Without Walls – Other Distinct Penal Environments	60
2.6 Chapter Summary	64
Chapter Three: Working In An Open Prison And Adapting To Distinct Penal Settings	66
3.1 Introduction	66
3.2 The Prison Officer’s Role	67
3.3 Prison Officer Culture.....	72
3.4 Adapting To Distinct Penal Settings	81
3.5 Chapter Summary	90
Chapter Four: Power, Authority, And Control In The Prison Setting	94
4.1 Introduction	94
4.2 Changes To Penal Power	97
4.2.1 Prisoner Responsibilisation And The Pains Of Freedom	100
4.3 Controlling Time And Space In The Open Prison	103
4.3.1 The Daily Regime And Locked Doors.....	105
4.3.2 Rewards And Punishments As Methods Of Control.....	107
4.3.3 Surveillance, Searching And Coercive Power.....	110
4.4 The Deployment Of Authority And Control Via Staff-Prisoner Relationships	111
4.5 Distinct Settings And ‘Spoiled Identities’	117
4.6 Chapter Summary	118
Chapter Five: Taking An Ethnography Approach – Reflections Of A ‘Green’ Prison Researcher	121

5.1	Introduction	121
5.2	An Ethnographic Research Design.....	122
5.3	Ethical Considerations.....	136
5.4	Undertaking Research In A Prison Setting	140
5.5	Getting In - Gaining Access To The Prison.....	145
5.6	Getting On In The Prison Setting.....	150
5.7	Getting Out - Withdrawing From The Field.....	155
5.8	Chapter Summary	157
Part Two		160
Chapter Six: The Distinct Social And Physical Environment Of The Open Prison		161
6.1	Introduction	161
6.2	A Journey Through The Open Prison	163
6.3	The Distinct Aims Of An Open Prison: ‘Cat D is a different type of prison...We are about preparing our men for release’	173
6.4	Prison Officer Work In The Open Prison.....	182
6.5	Chapter Summary	204
Chapter Seven: Prison Officer Culture And Adapting To The Open Prison Setting.....		206
7.1	Introduction	206
7.2	Prisoner-focused vs. Prison-focused Staff	208
7.3	Preparedness And Experience	217
7.4	Relationships In The Open Setting	222
7.5	Role Conflict And Prisoner Responsibility: security and containment vs. resettlement and reintegration.....	232
7.6	Staff-Management Relationships – managing conflicting approaches.....	241
7.7	The Impact Of The Distinct Environment On Occupational Identity - Not a ‘real jail’	244
7.8	A ‘Spoiled Identity’ And The Re-legitimising Of The Prison Officer Role.....	248
7.9	Chapter Summary	254
Chapter Eight: Practicing Power, Control And Freedom In The Open Prison Setting		257
8.1	Introduction	257
8.2	Deployment Penal Power In The Open Prison	259
8.3	Maintaining Control Over Leaving The Prison Boundary.....	272
8.4	Maintaining Control Over How Prisoners Use Space Within The Prison Boundary ...	277
8.5	Practicing Power and Control - The Use Of Rewards and Punishment	292
8.6	The Impact Of Shared Space	298
8.7	Chapter Summary	305

Chapter Nine: Acknowledging The Distinctiveness Of The Open Prison	307
9.1 Introduction	307
9.2 The Open Prison: A Physically And Socially Distinct Milieu	309
9.3 Staff Adaptation To The Open Prison And Managing ‘Spoiled Identities’	318
9.4 Deploying Power And Authority In The Open Prison	322
9.5 Broader Implications For Penal Policy	326
9.6 Research Limitations	331
9.7 Conclusion	333
References	335
Appendix A – Participant materials	362

Chapter One: Rationale For Undertaking An Ethnographic Study Of The Open Prison And The Work Of Staff Within Them

1.1 Introduction

Prisons are both remarkable and ordinary institutions; remarkable because they are places where numerous strangers live and work together with little control over their lives, yet ordinary because many day-to-day, mundane tasks in life occur in some form in the prison setting (Crawley, 2004). Unsurprising, then, that they are places subject to a high level of academic interest. Open prisons in the UK and the work that occurs inside them, however, have rarely been explored in the same depth as other prison establishments either in academic literature (Menis, 2020) or penal policy. Therefore, there is very little penal scholarship knowledge related to open prisons or the staff within them, two areas that this thesis addresses.

This research focuses on a very specific type of prison establishment, the open or Category D prison, and a very specific category of the prison population, prison staff. It takes an exploratory approach to prison staff's perceptions of the open prison including the distinctness of the institution and approaches to prison work within them. To explore these concepts and to build a rich picture of the open prison and the staff within, an ethnographic approach was taken.

Ethnographies are a key tool for exploring understudied areas of interest and usually take place on a small scale to allow for the in-depth level of study that is required when taking this approach (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). As this research took place at one male open prison site in England over a period of 13 months, exploring the little studied area of open prisons and their staff, it clearly fits these criteria.

This thesis, then, focuses on establishing the open prison as a distinct penal establishment, exploring the distinct aims and approaches to prison work, the presence and influence of prison officer culture, the need for, and processes of, adaptation to the open setting and the distinct and sometimes less distinct, ways in which power and authority are deployed to maintain control. I explore the open prison and its distinct role and nature from the perception of prison staff, rather than prisoners. Whilst recent years has seen an increased focus on academic exploration of the role and work of prison officers, (see Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004; Bennett et al. 2008), rather than the prisoner experience of the prison setting, there is still much to be discovered about prison staff, a key area to which my thesis contributes. Ugelvik (2014:5) notes how the need for one group, prison officers, to maintain control over another group, prisoners, in a way not seen in wider society, prisons can be described as “a social space...where dividing lines between groups are very clear.” I, therefore, made the choice to focus, in detail, on only one of these groups, prison officers. The emphasis of this research, therefore, is on the way officers, rather than prisoners, experience and navigate prison work in the open prison setting. Whilst, inevitably prisoners were observed, due to their frequent interaction with prison officers, unlike the officers whom I studied, prisoners had no voice to interpret or contextualise my findings. This thesis, then, does not make claims about how prisoners view or experience the distinct open prison setting, albeit what we know from literature in terms of prisoner experience of distinct penal settings is briefly acknowledged, especially in terms of staff-prisoner relationships and the deployment of power and authority.

In this chapter, firstly a summary of the key areas of prison scholarship to which my thesis contributes is provided. Then, my research questions outlining three distinct, yet interrelated areas of enquiry are presented. Key definitions that are vital to the understanding and interpretation of my data, such as distinctness and culture are set out. Then, detail around the

methodological and theoretical reasoning behind taking an ethnographic approach is noted. The chapter is rounded out with confirming the need for additional research into open prisons and their staff before providing an outline of the structure of this thesis. This chapter, then, provides the rationale for undertaking an ethnographic study of the open prison and the staff within them.

1.2 Contributions To Prison Scholarship

This thesis makes an original and significant contribution to existing scholarship through its focus on the open prison environment and staff experiences of working within it, and also contributes more broadly to prison scholarship as an area of growing interest. Firstly, my thesis contributes additional knowledge in relation to what is known about the history of open prisons. My analysis in chapter 2, of the perpetual challenges of early release and suitable establishments to prepare prisoners for release, something open prisons attempt to address, can be traced back in history, far preceding the birth of modern imprisonment. Data from my ethnographic fieldwork allows this thesis to demonstrate how the physical environment of the open prison is a distinct one (see chapter six), acknowledging why and how staff adapt to this distinct setting in different ways, a process influenced by occupational culture (see chapter seven). It allows for the identification of the existence of a distinct social milieu and distinctive aims, such as de-institutionalisation, as perceived by staff, which further forms part of its original contribution to knowledge. It establishes distinct elements in the way power and authority are deployed in the open setting, (both within and outside of the prison boundary), yet also identifies elements of similarities with approaches to maintaining order with more traditional prison settings (see chapter eight).

This thesis argues that the distinct elements of the social and physical milieu of the open prison, combined with the firm rooting of these distinct establishments within the more traditional penal

continuum, contribute to the notion of a 'spoiled' occupational and, to a lesser extent, organisational identity. I ascertain how the officers manage their 'spoiled' identities and the interplay this has with their cultural orientation, which, as in other more traditional prison establishments, ranges from staff who are more discipline focused to those who are more welfare orientated. Cultural influences help officers manage this identity and re-legitimise their role. Two broad-brush officer orientations are identified: prison-focused and prisoner-focused, and both play a role in how officers adapt to the open environment (see chapter seven). The identification of the existence of the two broad cultural orientations present at the current research site and the role these play in approach to prison work, staff-prisoner relationships, the deployment of authority and control and the process of adapting to a distinct penal setting, are all areas in which this thesis contributes to knowledge.

This thesis draws on three key areas of prison scholarship to frame this research. Firstly, to examine my findings in relation to the distinct physical and social milieu that I argue the open prison represents, I use literature to situate the open prison as part of the wider penal system. Chapter two explores the existing literature on open prisons, other distinct penal establishments and history of the open prison, including the role and aims situated in an ever-evolving political landscape. The specific aims of resettlement, reintegration and de-institutionalisation and how these aims and the distinct environment impact approaches to prison work is identified and discussed. Next, literature exploring the role and work of the prison officer, prison officer culture and the process of adaptation to distinct penal settings is set out in chapter three. This frames my findings on the distinct social milieu, the interplay with cultural norms and the process of adaptation to a distinct penal setting which officers must manage. I argue that the distinctness of open prisons has not been acknowledged or fully explored in the academic literature, with elements of the open setting being more distinct than previously recognised. The role of the open

prison and, therefore, prison officers in de-institutionalisation in particular, is a little explored aspect of prison work.

Finally, literature on the deployment of power and authority, including the use of 'soft power' techniques (Crewe, 2011) and other approaches seen in more traditional prison settings and the use of such approaches to maintain order and control within and outside of the open boundary is explored. This thesis argues that whilst elements of the use of power and authority are distinct to the open setting, there are aspects of the way in which these are used to maintain order that share similarities with the closed prison despite its distinct nature (see chapter eight). I note how softer approaches to power have been present in the approach to work in open and other distinct penal settings over a far longer period in history. I also highlight how officers have to navigate the development of power and authority outside the prison boundary with a frequency that is not seen in more traditional penal establishments. Again, an officer's cultural orientation influences the way officers approach and recognise their power and authority in the open setting. Whilst the distinct social milieu creates elements of the open environment to which staff must adapt, the traditional forms of penal control that remain can, and do, conflict with this. Along with contributing to a greater understanding of the open prisons in the UK, this thesis also reflects on the implications of these findings for the place of the open prison in the wider UK prison system (see chapter nine).

1.3 Research Questions And Key Definitions

This section sets out the key areas of enquiry that this thesis explores along with a discussion on the definitions of key terms vital to the research questions and subsequent analysis. Taking an ethnographic approach to this research means that prior to entering the field, specific research

questions were not defined but rather emerged throughout the fieldwork. Yet, there were several initial areas of interest that informed the early stages of my fieldwork. The influence of culture was an overarching area of interest throughout the research and so the frame of prison officer culture was important. As the research developed three key areas of enquiry emerged from the data. These are:

- How does the open prison represent a physically and socially distinct prison environment for staff? In what ways does this impact the work undertaken in such settings?
- How do staff adapt to the distinct setting in which they work? To what extent does this involve taking different approaches to prison work? What role does occupational culture play in this adaptation process? What are the impacts on a prison officer's occupational identity?
- How do methods of control, such as time and space, influence the environment of the open prison? What role do they play in the deployment of power and authority and the maintaining of order and control? How do staff perceive this compared with more mainstream prison settings?

These areas of enquiry structure the thesis with each of the three data chapters in turn focusing on addressing them, based on the rich detail gathered throughout thirteen months of fieldwork. There are, however, two key terms which became central to both the research questions and data analysis that require definition at this point. These are 'occupational culture' and 'distinctiveness'.

1.3.1 Defining Occupational Culture And Distinctiveness

Occupational culture is not easy to define, meaning different things in differing contexts (Crawley, 2004; Westmarland, 2008). To further complicate culture, it is possible for organisations to have over-arching values around fundamental issues but also allow for the flexibility of subcultures (Kanter, 1984), particularly within strong uniform cultures such as those within the prison service (Sinclair, 2008). Whilst culture can be difficult to define, it is important to be clear about how the term is used and understood in the research process (Crawley and Crawley, 2008). Crawley and Crawley (2008: 137), in work on the prison service, define culture as “the common shared beliefs, values and characteristic patterns of behaviour that exist within an organisation”. Holdaway (1983:134), commenting on a police setting, defines occupational culture in a more pragmatic way, seeing it as “the officer’s construction on what constitutes (and should constitute) police work, i.e., what they think they should be doing and how they think they should be doing it”. Scott (2012:18) makes similar observations to Holdaway, but notes that in a prison setting, culture influences ‘the way we do things around here’ which impacts on what officers view to be suitable prison work or not. Whilst these definitions differ slightly, one with a broader focus, they are underpinned by the same key notion that people’s thoughts, understandings, and actions are intertwined with the notion of culture. Put in more simple terms, culture is reflected in organisational beliefs, language, norms, traditions, and values (Stohr et al. 2012) and the individuals within that organisation, and their beliefs, attitudes and perceptions, in part drive that occupational culture.

For the purposes of this research, I focus on culture in terms of staff understandings and values in relation to their perceptions of what their role is, how their work should be undertaken, and what role the open prison should play. This approach is like that taken by Holdaway (1983) and Scott (2012). Through this my research identifies prison officer sub-cultures present at the research

site, introducing two new cultural orientations based on how different officers approach their work and adapt this within the open environment. How these subcultures differ from one another, but also from previously established cultural typologies, is explored, as well as how they impact upon the way officers undertake their work. Several studies argue that culture influences how officers approach work and react to various situations (Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Stohr et al. 2012). Whilst I find that officers working in open prisons share many cultural characteristics with those in closed institutions, areas of difference are also evident, especially in their adaptation to their distinct working environment, and this reflects a key original contribution of this work for understanding prison officer culture in the open setting.

Literature acknowledges the often physically distinct nature of the open prison (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Matthews 1999) but this thesis engages in detail with a distinctness that goes beyond this. It is, therefore, important to establish what is meant by 'distinctness' within this research. Distinctness here is grounded in the data, defined by the perceptions of staff. Early in the research, distinctness in both the physical and social milieu of the open prison for staff was linked to differences seen when they contextualised this through comparisons with closed prison settings. As this thesis demonstrates, it is the close connection that the open prison shares with mainstream prison settings that frames their distinctness for staff, also creating conflicts that impact prison work and officers' cultural identities in such settings. Other distinct penal settings, such as therapeutic communities (TCs), have been recognised and compared to mainstream prison settings (Crawley, 2004; Day et al. 2012). Yet, as I establish in this thesis, open prisons also represent their own distinct environment from the perception of staff, creating challenges for both the identity of the open prison as a penal institution as well as the way staff view work within it, and making them an area of interest in terms of standalone distinct penal establishments.

1.4 Open Prisons And Their Staff?

Prisons and imprisonment are much studied in academic literature with considerable debate on their aims (Scott, 2007; Davies et al. 2010; O'Donnell, 2016), use and effectiveness (Pollock et al. 2012). Whilst the importance of staff in the prison setting is widely acknowledged, much more literature explores prisoners and the effects of imprisonment (Crewe et al. 2008), while little work examines prison officers directly (Crawley, 2004). In recent years, however, the importance of prison officers and their impact within the prison has meant this is an area of growing academic interest (Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Crewe et al. 2008; Liebling et al. 2011). Despite this, officers still perceive themselves to be a neglected and underappreciated population (Bennett et al. 2008). The work of officers in open conditions, however, has been neglected in academic literature, with many findings related to culture and prison work often established in closed settings (Crawley, 2004; Arnold, 2007; Liebling et al. 2011). I establish, in part one of this thesis, open prisons and their staff in the UK are not entirely absent from the literature; various studies have involved researchers encountering them, often alongside other types of prison establishment. Yet the outputs of such research are often skewed towards concerns associated with mainstream prison settings or prisoner experience (McDermott and King, 1988; McDermott and King, 1989; Wood et al. 2001; Birmingham 2003; Leese et al. 2006; Brooker et al. 2010; Coid et al. 2009; Kosky and Hoyle, 2011; Statham et al. 2021). Prison staff and the distinctness of the open prison are rarely mentioned. This represents a significant gap in the literature to which this thesis contributes through its focus on prison staff in a distinct penal environment, including their understanding of the aims of imprisonment, type of work that is undertaken there, the adaption required and the influence of occupational culture on this.

Despite this neglect, I contend that research on open prisons is of academic and public importance, especially in the light of the growing numbers of long sentence and life sentence

prisoners, many of whom often end up in open prison conditions. Without the correct support, these prisoners often struggle to adapt to life outside of a prison setting (Kazemain and Travis, 2015; Jarman, 2020), and in part two my thesis demonstrates the important role of open prisons as well as the work that goes on within them, to support prisoners to de-institutionalise and resettle successfully into the community. The Prison Reform Trust (2021) note that life sentences have quadrupled over the last decade, with the average tariff length also increasing, so understanding the role of the open prison is becoming increasingly important. Furthermore, despite some of the uncomfortable and challenging notions that minimum security prisons present to the wider community, there are various benefits to housing prisoners in open conditions, both in terms of cost and successful resettlement. If the aims of open prisons, the reintegration of offenders and the reduction of reoffending, are successful, the wider social and financial implications to society are perhaps beyond measure. As with any prison, staff play a vital role in influencing and achieving these goals. Yet, Shamma (2015) highlights that changing the aims of imprisonment and how they function is not enough; wider attitudes towards prison, crime and punishment need to change for open prisons to work. Further research into the role of the open prison and prison staff in open conditions is, therefore, important and something to which this thesis can contribute. It should be noted, however, that as mentioned earlier, this research took an in-depth, ethnographic approach at one male open prison in England.

1.5 Taking An Ethnographic Approach To Prison Research

Ethnography is a popular method of criminological research and has produced influential contributions to understanding crime and deviance (Noakes and Wincup, 2009). This research took an ethnographic approach to explore the little understood social milieu of the open prison and the culture of staff within the setting. Ethnography involves studying individuals in a natural or specific setting over a prolonged period utilising a variety of methods including, for example,

observations and in-depth interviews (Brewer, 2000; Silverman, 2000; Robson, 2002), making it a useful tool for studying and understanding culture (Silverman 2000; Gray, 2009), a key element in my research. Using ethnographic methods to study culture has a clear value when there is little prior knowledge (Robson, 2002), as is the case with staff in open prisons. Utilising observations and in-depth interviews allowed me to access rich detail on the distinctness of the open prison as well as explore and build an understanding of the culture of staff and their perceptions. Further discussions on the ethnographic research design can be found in chapter five.

Not only does taking an ethnographic approach allow for data to be gathered in an appropriate way to address the key areas of enquiry, it also fits with my own theoretical stance on how knowledge is created. As a researcher, I take a constructivist view which conceives of multiple realities rather than one single one (Ponterotto, 1997) where an individual's experiences are key to constructing these realities. Using ethnographic methods therefore enabled me to undertake research based on a constructivist understanding of the social world common studies of culture, making it an appropriate methodology for this research. With so little known about how staff in the open prison work, the way they perceive this work and the role of the open prison, coupled with a belief that culture is constructed in terms of what staff perceive their role to be and how their work should be approached, the decision to undertake an exploratory approach to research in these areas was logical.

Whilst exploring various theoretical approaches, I identified with many of them, yet no one seemed to frame the research problem in a way that allowed me to be faithful to a singular prescriptive approach. Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed the importance of catching naturally occurring human action in the natural setting and explaining events in the context in which they occur, yet also note that it is important for the researcher to minimise influence on the activities

of the people being studied. In a prison setting this is difficult to do. Building rapport and being 'one of the team' (*field diary, 15/7/18*) was an important aspect of this research, which is discussed in more detail in chapter five. Rosen (1991) identified the issue with prescribing a naturalism approach to ethnography as the need to become fully involved with the culture to allow you to understand the context. Being immersed in the staff culture of the prison was a key part of this research process, yet I could never become a full participant in this current context. For further discussions of researcher positionality see. If ethnographers enter the field with a pre-defined approach they may not identify the specific cultural context (Eriksson and Koualainen, 2015), or what Geertz (1973) describes as 'local interpretations'. Being 'theory free' then, to some extent, allows for greater freedom of discovery. This research took an ethnographic approach to build a rich picture of the little studied distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison, proving a level of detail and exploration of the male open prison in England in a way not seen before in contemporary penal scholarship.

1.6 Structure Of The Thesis

This thesis consists of two parts. The first contains three chapters setting the scene for the subsequent analysis and discussion in part two. Part one explores the history of open prisons and their place within the wider penal system. Then it delves into existing scholarship on prison staff and the sociology of the prison, with a particular focus on occupational culture, the need to adapt to different kinds of prison work and the deployment of power and authority in distinct prison settings, before outlining the methods used in the research. Part one of this thesis, then, provides the theoretical scaffolding, exploring literature that contributes to the discussion in part two which explores the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison, as highlighted by my research.

Part two, also consisting of three chapters, presents the data and findings. First the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison is introduced, then the process of staff adaptation to this and the interplay with organisational culture. Finally, the deployment of power and authority in the open prison and the relationship with how order and control are maintained is established. The final chapter rounds the discussion off by drawing together my key findings, as well as providing an exploration of the implications of the findings for broader penal policy.

Chapter two introduces the open prison, its development, and roles both historically and modern day. The distinctive elements of the open prison, which are central to the argument of this thesis, are introduced here, along with an exploration of existing literature exploring open prison staff. The chapter gives an overview of the historical development of open prisons which focuses on the enduring challenge of preparing prisoners for release and the emergence of specific institutions, such as open prisons, to address this. This in itself provides an original contribution to knowledge, since the history of open prisons, as well as their contemporary operation, has been neglected in research. The chapter then contextualises the open prison today, situating the open prison within the broader penal continuum as well as providing an overview of the staffing structure and roles and the current political context in which they operate. Elements of the distinctiveness, including the semi-penal nature of open settings, the aims of resettlement and reintegration, use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), and the ways in which open prison populations are distinct are then highlighted. The limited research on open prison staff and what this can tell us about their role and experiences is also considered. Finally, what can be learnt from other distinct penal environment both in the UK and further afield is summarised.

Chapter three provides a review of literature related to what is known about prison work and the need for prison staff to adapt to distinct prison settings. The need to, and processes of, adaption

is a key area to which my thesis contributes original knowledge, deepening the understanding of this process in an open setting. The role of the prison officer more broadly is explored, identifying its complex and sometimes conflicting nature. The need to adapt to different types of prison setting, for both staff and prisoners, is considered and pertinent literature around staff-prisoner relationships is of key importance here. The process of adaptation and the impact that working in a distinct setting can have, and the contribution to role conflict for officers is established. Finally, prison officer culture is explored in terms of how it is formed, what it can influence or be influenced by, as well as key cultural characteristics and prison officer typologies identified in previous research.

Chapter four outlines key concepts relating to the deployment of power and authority in a prison setting including, the applications of more traditional forms to maintain order and control across different prison settings. The softening of penal power and the role of soft power approaches, the use of time and space, rewards, and punishment to maintain order are considered. The notion of maintaining control in a setting with very few physical boundaries and controls is considered, and its conspicuous absence from the prison literature established. Some consideration is given to how prisoner's may experience the deployment of power and authority, framed around increased levels of prisoner responsibility and the challenges associated with this. Yet, the core focus of this thesis, therefore, this chapter, is how officers use the approaches discussed in differing ways and the interplay with their occupational culture. The chapter is rounded out with a discussion that explores how all the distinct elements of the physical and social milieu of the open prison contribute to the notion of an 'spoiled identity' that requires management.

Chapter five outlines the methodology employed to undertake this research. It opens with a discussion of ethnographic methods, reviewing key elements of an ethnographic approach such

as the use of observations, field notes and interviews, as well as how I positioned myself as a researcher. A detailed description of my fieldwork is provided, framed by the different phases of research, alongside discussion of the way in which data, both from interviews and observations, was analysed. This demonstrates how the themes discussed in later chapters emerged. The second half of the chapter considers the emotional challenges of prison research. Prisons are acknowledged to be emotionally challenging places (Liebling, 2004) yet there are few discussions that can help prepare a novice researcher to deal with these aspects (Sloan and Wright, 2015). Consequently, I explore my own emotional and ethical challenges when undertaking ethnographic research in an open prison.

Chapter six is the first of three data chapters. It sets out the distinctness of the physical and social milieu of the research site, which is central to the arguments in this thesis. It utilises data from both observations and interviews with prison staff to focus on the physical environment and how this compares to staff experiences of the closed prison environment; a comparison often made by staff when discussing their work. The different staff roles in an open setting are discussed and the importance of a focus on resettlement and reintegration. Different ways of approaching prison work, evident in concepts such as a 'community jail' or the prison acting as a 'testing ground' for prisoners prior to release, are considered. The value of differing approaches for staff in an open setting is noted, as well as the importance of the type of prisoner sent to open prisons, a reoccurring theme for staff. Finally, the reliance on forms of dynamic security is considered and the impact of central penal policy on open prisons.

Chapter seven explores how officers adapt to this distinctness in different ways, focused on how this process is influenced by staff culture. Different cultural orientations of prison officers, developed from the data, which relies on two broad types: *prisoner-focused* and *prison-focused*

staff are outlined. These cultural orientations used at various points throughout my analysis to explore the different ways in which officers adapt to the open setting, these are not fixed typologies or dispositions but rather outline the way officers approach their work in this distinct penal setting. The time it takes officers to adapt, along with the importance of staff-prisoner relationships, and the potential conflicts among staff and between staff and management about how work should be done are discussed. I argue how the distinct nature of the work and environment of open prisons, can lead to a sense of 'spoiled identity' which is managed by staff in different ways. Staff also express ideas of a spoiled organisational identity, with the open setting often referred to as not being a 'real jail'. Finally, the chapter considers the various ways staff re-legitimise their role and the work they undertake to address this 'spoiled identity'.

Chapter eight explores how power and authority are practically deployed in the open setting and the implications of an officers cultural orientation of this. The importance of both distinct and less distinct approaches to deploying authority and maintaining control are discussed. This chapter then, highlights both distinct and less distinct elements of the open prison, since order and control remain strong priorities even though different strategies are used to achieve them. This chapter explores how staff perceive benefits to affording prisoners greater freedom over time and space, but also the ways this can create conflict and add to potential vulnerabilities felt by staff. The impact of sharing work and social space with prisoners, in particular, is explored. The role of time and space in order and control is examined through staff's engagement in searching, security and surveillance work, and the ways in which time and space are used as rewards and punishments to maintain compliance. Through this, the chapter demonstrates some unexplored areas in which there is greater closeness between the open prison and more traditional penal environments.

The final chapter draws together the key findings of this research and considers their implications for wider penal policy. It situates my arguments about the distinct physical and social milieu of open prisons, and the impact this has on staff occupational culture, in the context of wider prison literature. It considers the role of the open prison in relation to resettlement and reintegration, but also the previously unexplored role that staff associate with open prison work in terms of de-institutionalising prisoners. This chapter then moves on to discuss the broader ramifications of my findings for penal policy more generally. This chapter finishes with an acknowledgement of the limitations of this research and areas that require further exploration.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has set out how this thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge, whilst also exploring the rationale for undertaking research with prison officers in an open setting. The key research questions, which emerged from a process of refinement during fieldwork, were clearly set out and these broadly align with the three data chapters that structure the main body of the thesis. A brief mention was given to the ethnographic approach adopted, which was appropriate for the intentions of the research due to its exploratory nature, but also provided suitable methods for considering the constructed nature of meaning and culture. Greater detail on the research design and process can be found in chapter four. This chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis which should help to navigate the discussions that follow. Some consideration was given here to what is currently known about staff in open prisons in the UK, but more detail on this is presented in the following chapter, where a clear gap in the literature is identified to which this research contributes. The next chapter also presents important contextualising detail, exploring how the open prison fits within the broader penal system, setting out some of its distinctive elements, and offering an original account of the neglected historical development of open prisons which helps to illuminate the challenges such establishments continue to face.

Part One

Chapter Two: Politics, Place And Purpose Of The Open Prison System

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of the thesis, setting out the areas of enquiry my research addresses, as well as the rationale for undertaking this. This chapter builds on this to show how my study addresses a gap in existing knowledge. Here, I frame the data and discussion presented in chapter six, which provides a rich picture of the distinct nature and aims of the modern open prison, through a consideration of how open prisons fit within the broader penal system in England and Wales both currently and historically. Understanding the relationship between open prisons and the wider penal estate has relevance for understanding how they are viewed, as well as the work and role staff undertake there, their need to adapt to do this and the impact of broad penal policy on the open prison, all of which are ideas developed in subsequent data chapters. It is here that I begin to examine the distinct nature of open prisons, introducing literature on other distinctive penal institutions which is useful for understanding this. Discussions of what have been referred to as 'semi-penal' institutions form part of this (Weiner, 1990). I also provide an exploration of the close ties between open prisons and the wider penal estate, evident through staffing and policies as well as regime, which also have consequences for understanding the distinctiveness of the open environment and the limits to this. Despite this, my overall argument is that open prisons represent a distinct penal setting, both physically and socially, and in chapter nine I discuss the importance of acknowledging the open prison as a distinct penal setting in its own right, as well as the implications of this for penal policy more generally. This chapter, then, explores the context that frames the open prison's distinctiveness, both historically and in contemporary society, with subsequent data chapters exploring these characteristics as they were observed at the research site.

I first present a historical account of the development of open prisons to outline the long-standing challenges of preparing prisoners for early release and changing ideas about the nature of penal institutions from which long-sentenced prisoners should be released. This historical exploration identifies how open prisons came into being, examining the interplay between penal policy and the role and aims of open prisons over time. Some key challenges evident historically have persisted, despite the very different political context in which imprisonment now exists, meaning open prisons continue to face the task of balancing their 'semi-penal' (Wiener, 1990) nature. Next, to contextualise the distinct elements of open prisons and how they fit within the wider penal system, I consider security categories, staffing structure and inspections within the prison system more generally. I then move on to explore the small amount of academic literature linked to open prisons which, whilst limited in nature, provides some insight into the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison and its impact on staff. It is this on which my research builds. Building on all these elements, in the final section I consider aspects which contribute to the distinctiveness of open prisons, including the aims of reintegration and resettlement and the regular use of Release on Temporary License (ROTL).

2.2 The Emergence Of Open Prisons

To understand contemporary open prisons and the work of staff within them, it is important to acknowledge the historical context in which such institutions developed. Over time the competing aims of imprisonment have influenced not only what work is undertaken in penal settings, but also the type of penal establishments that developed. The purpose and aims of imprisonment have been debated for over 200 years (Flynn, 1998) and understanding these, including the role of open prisons, relates to the 'birth of the prison' in its modern form (Nilsson, 2003:4). The origins of this are debated, with some acknowledging workhouses and bridewells, built from the 1600s, as the first form of recognisably modern penal institutions (Mannheim,

1939; Sellin, 1944). Others argue it was the latter part of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries when modern imprisonment was born (Ignatieff, 1978; O'Brian; 1982; Bailey, 1987; Foucault, 1995). Regardless, it is undeniable that the use of imprisonment as a primary form of punishment expanded across the Western world in the nineteenth century, a growth which continued into the twentieth century (Nilsson, 2003). As part of this expansion, more open forms of penal institutions emerged in a number of countries across the world.

The emergence of modern prisons is much discussed (Matthews, 2009; Jewkes 2012; Johnston, 2016), but the focus is often the nineteenth century, rendering open institutions, which are traditionally seen as a twentieth century development, relatively unexplored. As such the exploration of the history of the open prison that I present here provides a novel contribution to knowledge on open prisons. Brodie et al. (2002: 174) identify the first open prison in the world as Wizwil in Switzerland, which opened in 1891. Yet, early experiments with women's reformatories (Rafter, 1985) and parole in the USA (Witmer, 1927) are often seen as creating important precursors to the open prison. The initial concept of open establishments in England and Wales, however, is traditionally associated with the treatment of young offenders within the Borstal system (Heilman, 1978; McConville, 1995). Yet I argue that important precursors to open prisons were evident in other institutions set up to support the reintegration of prisoners into the community and these pre-date the establishment of open Borstals. I argue that, the clearest way to explore the history leading to the establishment of modern open prisons, is to consider two persistent, highly politicised themes which have posed significant challenges for penal policy makers throughout time. The solution to both eventually came to be associated with the establishment of modern open institutions. These themes relate to the early release and conditional licensing of prisoners, and the need to prepare inmates for reintegration into the community after lengthy prison sentences; issues that remain at the core of the modern open prison system today.

2.2.1 Early Release And The Emergence Of Semi-Penal Institutions

Distinct penal institutions first developed to address the issues of early release on licence of prisoners serving long sentences and are associated with the demise of transportation in the 1860s (Hughes, 2003). Historically conditional early release had various purposes, including maintaining family ties and securing employment, activities which remain two key motivations for contemporary ROTL, which is an important tool for modern open prisons (Cooper, 2014; HMPPS, 2019). Examples of such a system was first available to convicts transported to Australia, who were able to apply for tickets of release partway through their sentence (Hughes, 2003). Early release became an 'integral part of transportation' (McConville, 1981:386), but tickets were conditional and could be revoked for breaches of restrictions, just as they can today. This demonstrates an early form of control using rewards, a foundation upon which the modern Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme is based, and which I show is important to maintaining order in open settings (see chapter eight).

Tickets of leave initially involved the conditional release of prisoners transported to Australia but, as such sentences declined until their abolition in 1868 (Soothill, 2007), a system of penal servitude emerged in its place (Cox, 2021). The Penal Servitude Act of 1857 paved the way for longer periods of incarceration, ranging from three years to life, shifting prisons from places of short-term confinement to the core and most severe penalty, aside from death (Soothill, 2007). This contrasted to the short spells of weeks or months of hard labour that petty offenders received (McConville, 1995), thus creating the issue of how to prepare for release those who had been imprisoned for long periods of time. As with transportees, prisoners serving sentences of penal servitude could earn the opportunity for early release on licence, during which they were under supervision, with breaches of licence conditions resulting in recall to prison (Turner and Johnstone, 2015). Recalls are a powerful tool that remains a key part of the modern prison

system, especially for those on life licence, many of whom are released from open prisons. The recall of prisoners who breached licence conditions went some way to addressing the conflict between rehabilitation and public safety that early release generated (Whitin, 1912). Legislative changes in the late-nineteenth century formalised common licence conditions and the process of recall to prison for those who breached them (Prevention of Crime Acts, 1871, 1878; Penal Servitude Act, 1891), elements reflected in current ROTL policy. The foundation of this policy, therefore, is clearly situated in history and before the birth of modern open prisons.

The development of semi-penal institutions to support reintegration, which share some similarities with modern open prisons, was one way to address the issue of preparing prisoners for release. As such, whilst open prisons are usually considered to have emerged in the twentieth century (Heilmann, 1978), their origins can be traced back earlier, with older semi-penal institutions setting the scene for the development of the contemporary open prison. It was Ireland which paved the way for distinct semi-penal institutions to solve the problem of preparation for release from long sentences. Between 1856 and 1885 an intermediate prison at Lusk, provided a preparatory stage for male prisoners nearing release which focused on training and education (Hobhouse and Brockway, 1922; Smith, 1980). This focus, and the use of a separate penal institution to enable it, is reflected in the work of contemporary open prisons.

Another commonality between Ireland's intermediate prisons and contemporary open settings is the notion of 'semi-freedom', or a less secure form of confinement in terms of both regime and physical security (Cross, 1984). Yet such institutions, especially for male prisoners, waned in popularity and usage, often becoming offshoots of ordinary prison settings rather than separate establishments. Uncertainty about the necessity for separate, less secure prisons was reflected by the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons in 1884. Their report generally supported the idea of an

intermediate stage to support prisoners' progression towards release, but considered distinct institutions, such as the one at Lusk, a 'difficult question' (Cross, 1884:39), ultimately rejecting them in favour of creating intermediate conditions within ordinary convict prisons.¹

Despite this rejection of intermediate institutions for men, the Commission considered a similar system for female offenders successful, recommending its continuation (Cross, 1884: 43). These institutions, known as Refuges, operated differently, being run by the Church and, therefore, more clearly separated from the rest of the prison system. They took women convicts towards the end of their sentences and trained them for employment in domestic service (Smith, 1990), making use of 'a less punitive regime' (Davie, 2010:41). Whilst no system of intermediate prisons for male inmates emerged here, a Refuge, like those in Ireland, operated at Fulham for a brief period (Zedner, 1991). From 1855 female prisoners considered of suitable character could be transferred to the Refuge towards the end of their sentence (Turner, 2016). Such ideas remain fundamental to the aims of contemporary open prisons, making these a clear step in the emergence of what we now call open prisons. The experiment with Fulham's 'intermediary' refuge was short-lived, however, ending in the 1860s when it reverted to a normal convict regime (Davie, 2010: 51). These early experiments, then, reveal uncertainty about which kinds of prisoner such intermediate institutions should be provided for, reflecting questions about suitability and the importance of sending the 'right' kind of prisoner to open conditions, which remains a strong consideration today.

Whilst these intermediate institutions within the prison service existed only briefly, a variety of other non-custodial institutions for women, such as homes and reformatories, were longer lived. These enabled women to be released through conditional discharge (Turner and Johnstone, 2015)

¹ Convict prisons held those on penal servitude sentences

and formed part of a range of residential institutions which straddled the boundaries between formal and informal control; something Wiener (1990: 130) refers to as 'semi-penal'. Whilst more evidently forerunners of hostels and approved premises for offenders *post*-release, such institutions, like the open prison, aimed to provide structures and processes to assist the transition from custody to community, bridging the gap between confinement and liberty. Indeed Maier (2020: 381) argues that half-way houses, such as these, can usefully be studied and conceived of as 'a form of open prison' by criminologists.²

Underpinning experiments with distinct penal institutions were shifting ideas about what was necessary to reform offenders and rehabilitation remains a core theme in contemporary discussion of open prisons. In the 1890s in England pressure from the public, who were becoming sceptical about the aims and success of imprisonment (Brown, 2011), led to the Gladstone Report (1895), which refocused policy on ideas of treatment and reformation within prison settings (Scott, 2007). Central to reformation following this were notions of individual treatment, progressive stages of discipline, indeterminate sentences and the supervision of parole (Brodie et al., 2002: 164), elements which were important to the emergence of open prisons. Despite the progressive nature of earlier intermediate prisons, in terms of better treatment and resettlement, the Gladstone Committee was divided about the role of semi-penal institutions and whether this model should be adopted in England and Wales (Gladstone, 1895: 43). Yet it considered the homes operating for women towards the end of their sentences a 'considerable success', and recommended 'somewhat similar institutions' for men (Gladstone, 1895: 43). The Gladstone Report was considered a turning point in attitudes towards imprisonment, giving greater prominence to more reformatory aims (Garland, 1985), yet many policies were slow to be

² See Allspach (2010) for discussion on the use of halfway houses and Gill (2013) for discussions on electronic monitoring as forms of extended carceral space.

implemented (Bailey, 1997) or were not applied at all (Brown, 2011). Whilst uncertain about intermediate prisons, the Report recommended an experimental trial of them on land attached to a small local prison, although this does not appear to have happened.

Yet, the Gladstone Report did pave the way for greater diversification of mainstream penal establishments and, ultimately, this was to include open prisons (see Bailey, 1997, Brodie et al., 2002). Central to this was the recommendation of a penal reformatory for young offenders, which would later become the system of Borstal training. These new institutions not only separated them from the influences of adult criminals, but also operated specially adapted regimes representing 'a halfway house between a reformatory school and a prison' (Brodie et al., 2002: 165). It was within the Borstal system that the first penal establishments described as 'open' developed.

2.2.2 The Emergence Of Open Borstals And The Right Kind Of Prisoner

Borstal detention was a specific sentence established in 1908 for certain offenders aged between 16 and 21 (Prevention of Crime Act, 1908). Offenders were held for between two and three years in specific penal institutions which were initially closed and mostly located in converted prison premises (Elkin and Kittermaster, 1950). In 1930, though, came the 'great innovation' of Lowdham Grange, the first purpose-built open Borstal (Elkin and Kittermaster, 1950: 6-7), and perhaps the most widely studied precursor to open prisons. Recommended in 1927, the initial motivation for this initiative was practical, stemming from the need to reduce over-crowding in existing closed Borstals (Departmental Committee, 1927: 106-07), a move sanctioned by Government in 1929 (Prison Commission, 1930: 19). The adoption of an 'open' regime within the new Borstal, however, resulted during implementation, rather than from direct central policy.

Securing a location for Lowdham Grange was difficult as no suitable premises could be found, largely because of a lack of 'open space' for 'open-air activities' (Prison Commission, 1930: 19). This is the only sense in which the new Borstal was considered an 'open' institution in discussions of its establishment (Prison Commission, 1930: 19-20). Just a year later, however, a new role was developing for Lowdham, with the Prison Commissioners favouring greater classification of Borstal inmates. It was considered necessary to separate those with hardened criminal habits from those with little previous criminality. Special cases – 'the best among the young offenders' – should go to Lowdham, with a view to early release should they prove satisfactory there (Prison Commission, 1931: 32-33). This is the beginning of the institution taking on a separate role particularly associated with preparation for release, and so more akin to our contemporary understanding of an open prison, as well as being situated in more open surroundings. Lowdham Grange, then, has subsequently become categorised as the first open Borstal (Cape 1941; Elkin, 1950), but what was initially meant by this is not necessarily the same as its current understanding.

Within these developments, however, is also the notion of, the importance of selecting the right kind of inmate. Selecting the right kind of inmate has been a persistent problem, with the success of distinct penal institutions, including open prisons, often seen as dependent on selecting the 'right' kind of prisoner (Leitch, 1957). This was first reflected by the founders of the Irish intermediate system at Lusk and represents a recurring theme, also evident in my research findings. Selecting the right kind of prisoners for open conditions now stems from the assignment of security categories as prisoners move through the system, with only those deemed suitable afforded Category D status. Jones and Cornes (1977) noted that, in the 1970s, prisoners were selected to minimise risk of containment concerns, yet how such selections should be made has remained the subject of debate, no doubt influenced by the need to balance the conflicting aims

of imprisonment. No clear consensus, then, has emerged about how to select suitable individuals for open conditions. Currently the emphasis is on the prisoner to demonstrate they present little risk of absconding and that open conditions are deemed suitable (Ministry of Justice, 2020).

Discretion and judgement of prison staff plays a key role in such decisions, and the influence staff possess over this is linked to key aspects of officer control and authority in a prison setting.

Whilst considerable expansion of open institutions occurred immediately following the Second World War (Fox, 1952), great care had been taken in the selection of men. Consequently 'only a very small proportion of the prison population' were held in such conditions (Home Office, 1959: 22). The historical outline offered here, demonstrates the persistent nature of the challenges associated with how to release prisoners who have served long prison sentences. The need for a distinct environment with different aims and ways of working was experimented with as a possible solution for these from the nineteenth century, but uncertainty about key elements of this halted many early initiatives. These included questions about the need for wholly separate institutions and how to select the right type of prisoner for such establishments. No clear consensus emerged despite the establishment of several open prisons in the twentieth century, and the legacy of these historical uncertainties continues to have relevance for staff working in open prisons, as my research shows.

2.2.3 The Growth And Stagnation Of Open Prisons

Quite soon after the emergence of open Borstals, similar institutions for adult prisoners began to develop. Yet, the key elements which contribute to open prisons emerged slowly from the nineteenth century onwards. In 1936, just six years after Lowdham Grange was established, the experimental New Hall Camp opened for adult men (Leitch, 1951: 25). The setting up of the first officially recognised open prison in the UK, designed as a distinct institution to support prisons to

reintegrate into the community, was described as a 'notable advance in penal practice' (Leitch, 1951:25). Technically part of Wakefield closed prison, New Hall Camp was physically separate, and is usually seen as representing the first open prison for adult men, although it was not initially designated as such (Heilmann, 1978). When Leyhill opened in 1946, for example, it was referred to as 'the new open prison' (Prison Commissioners, 1946: 28). The concept of open prisons for adult men was seen as experimental, with such institutions perceived as distinct from more traditional penal establishments, not only due to the absence of locks and bars, but also the focus on mutual respect and cooperation as a form of discipline (Leitch, 1951). Other similar institutions followed, and these open prisons brought flexibility to the penal system in the UK, allowing prisons that housed adults to primarily focus on serving a function other than punishment (Dunbar and Fairweather, 2000); an indication of the distinct role these establishments adopted.

The formal establishment and growth of open prisons, however, occurred in the twentieth century and was in line with other reforms, beginning with the Gladstone Report, that reflected the view that prisons should be places of training and rehabilitation (Scott, 2007). This was an era when prison was seen as punishment, not as a place for further punishment, with a greater focus on a rehabilitative approach to imprisonment (Johnston, 2016), which contradicted the Victorian emphasis on deterrence (McConville, 1995). For Jones and Cornes (1977), open prisons represented movement away from the idea of prisons being 'total institutions', as described by Goffman (1961). Thus, by the 1970s, elements of the distinct physical and social milieu that open prison represent, aspects which are key to the arguments of this thesis, were firmly established.

The key academic research on open prisons was conducted by Jones and Cornes in 1977 but penal policy has changed significantly in the intervening decades. The Borstal model, within which open institutions first emerged, began to slowly decline in popularity from 1945 and, whilst many

governors and senior prison officials supported the ethos of Borstals, they were abolished in 1982 (McConville, 1995). This demise coincided with a shift in political rhetoric towards being 'tough on crime' and an explosion in the use of imprisonment as a form of punishment (Morris, 1995). Open prisons, however, remained, despite this shifting ethos, although they did not grow in number and continue to make up only a small part of the prison estate. Whilst conceived in a time of penal reform aimed at achieving rehabilitation through training, they came to operate in a context of harsher sentences, with prisons refocused on being places for further punishment (Morris, 1995). Semi-penal institutions, including open prisons, have also historically had to provide these elements whilst also satisfying social and political demands that the punishment element of imprisonment is fulfilled, providing yet an additional challenge, which has increased with changes to penal policy in recent decades. This political context created various challenges for the prison system, with open prisons being no exception. Our knowledge of open prisons is in need of updating, then, to see how they have been impacted by, or insulated from, these changes. It is this purpose that my research addresses and the next section offers an outline of the changing political context of punishment since the 1970s.

2.2.4 The Political Context Of Open Prisons

The challenging contexts in which punishment operates discussed in the preceding sections continued and here I consider the changing political landscape in which open prisons have operated over the last 60 years. Despite the fluctuating prominence of the key aims of reform and resettlement, open prisons have, to a large extent, continued to operate despite an increasingly security conscious and risk focused political landscape. A series of high-profile escapes in the 1960s raised the prominence of prison security in public debates, marking a shift from the previous focus on reform. This, combined with concern about the conditions experienced by prisoners serving long sentences, prompted two separate reports. Mountbatten (1966) was

charged with inquiring into prison escapes and security, while Radzinowicz (1969) considered the regime for long-term prisoners in high security settings. Both reports had long-term implications, moving the focus of penal policy towards security and risk rather than rehabilitation needs, and assigning open prisons for men the status of Category D in a broader system of security classification.

The Mountbatten Report (1966) recommended a variety of stricter security measures, including a gradation of establishments through the four categories (A, B, C and D) for adult men which remain broadly the same today. Open prisons continue to operate within this as Category D prisons, the lowest of the four categories. Whilst this did not represent a significant change in the way open prisons functioned – they retained a focus on rehabilitation despite the shift towards security as a priority – it did impact on the process prisoners had to go through to reach an open prison. Mountbatten (1966) considered successful work was undertaken at open prisons, with little change needed, but he advocated prisoners working through the newly defined category system to reach such establishments. This line of thinking remains relevant today and links to the notion of selecting the right kind of prisoner for such settings. Mountbatten supported retaining institutions with decreased physical security, then, recommending that more prisoners could be housed there and additional facilities should be built. His view of the prison system was built on the premise that those serving a life sentence must be afforded hope and so, if rehabilitation could be demonstrated, they would return to society (Home Office, 1966). Open prisons played a key role in this, with Mountbatten (1966: 59) noting that ‘every effort should be made to prepare prisoners gradually for release, by transferring them between categories, and into a hostel, towards the end of their sentence’. Despite this, by the end of the 1970s, when Jones and Cornes (1977) conducted their research, open prisons were under-utilised and had not expanded (May, 1979), with little attention given to them in governmental policy (Menis, 2020).

Contradictory views about the future of open prisons continued into the 1990s. The Learmont Inquiry of 1995 re-considered the question of security categorisation, recommending new classifications which, whilst retaining open prisons, afforded these a smaller role within the estate. The Woolf Report (1991), in contrast, advocated greater use of open prisons, although emphasising prisoners must be moved there at the right part of their sentence (Woolf, 1991: 24). Woolf also argued that home leave should not be confined to long-term prisoners, with greater use made of the opportunity for prisoners to spend time with their families (Woolf, 1991:33). The same year, however, the review *Custody, Care and Justice* (Home Office, 1991) criticised open prisons as they were not located in urban communities and so placed prisoners away from their home area.

After the 1990s, a policy silence around open prisons was evident. There is no mention of them, for example, in the Prison and Probation Ombudsman Report *Towards Resettlement (2015)*; a surprising omission given their role and purpose. The period 2015 to 2020 saw a key change in political tone concerning wider prison policy, with resettlement remaining a priority, albeit little action was taken to push this aim to the fore. Around this time a subtle shift in language is evident through a focus on resettlement not rehabilitation. The *Transforming Rehabilitation (2014)* programme included a list of institutions to be considered as resettlement prisons. These included a number of open prisons, but most resettlement work was to be undertaken in other kinds of establishment and open prisons were not distinguished from them as part of this (Ministry of Justice, 2014). Recent penal reforms, then, have mainly considered the closed estate and changes needed to make this fit for purpose. The Prison Reform White Paper (2016), highlighted the importance of resettlement work, including the use of ROTL, which was acknowledged as a vital tool for resettlement, but prisons needed to make such systems more tightly controlled to ensure public confidence (Home Office, 2016:39). Yet open prisons, the establishments in which ROTL is predominantly used, remained conspicuously absent once again.

The White Paper also highlighted a mismatch between the provision of places and the volume of prisoners in each security category, estimating there were around 14,400 fewer training and resettlement places than needed (Home Office, 2016:60), which indicates an expansion of open prison places is supported by current demand. Menis (2020) also found demand for open prison places far outstrips capacity in the female prison estate.

Whilst these comments on ROTL and the size of the prison estate are not directly linked to open prisons in policy discussions, they are two key areas in which any change will have a large impact on those institutions. The White Paper contended the focus moving forward should be to 'better prepare prisoners for release by improving resettlement provision' (The Prison Reform White Paper, 2016:60), something open prisons can play a key role in. It is striking that, despite this focus on resettlement in recent policy discussions, a key part of the work of open prisons, little mention was made of them, except for increasing access to open institutions for women. Details on how such improvements could be made, however, were lacking (Prison Reform Trust, 2016), and the omission of open prisons from any such agenda misses a key institution for resettlement.

Between 2016 and 2019 there remained some commitment from the government to reduce not only the prison population, but also the size of the prison estate (Garside, 2020). There was little indication, however, of how this would, or could, be achieved, or how such a reduction would impact upon how prisoners progress through security categories into open prisons. Since then, any reduction in the prison population has seemed unlikely with current forecasts projecting growth by a quarter by 2026 (Ministry of Justice, 2021). The selection of Boris Johnson as Prime Minister in July 2019 saw a key shift in focus from managing down the prison population to planning long term prison capacity expansion (Garside, 2020). In August 2020 Robert Buckland announced that by the mid-2020s prison expansion will allow for an increased capacity of 13,600

inmates (Garside et al., 2020), but recent projections are greater than this (Ministry of Justice, 2021). Proposed expansions do not involve the training and resettlement places mentioned earlier, rather the expansion and construction of more traditional, and larger, prison establishments (Garside et al. 2020).

In recent years open prisons and their role in resettling long sentence prisoners has been neglected, as they have through much of the history of modern penal reform. Addressing the reoffending crisis created by short sentences has often taken precedence. Penal policy and prison reform are often driven by crises (Cavadino and Dignan, 2007), such as increases in violence, escapes or concern over prison conditions. Performance measures have become increasingly important to the assessment of prisons in recent decades and these are dominated by measures which focus on violence and escapes. These are more applicable to the closed setting, since open prisons experience low rates of violence coupled with low rates of recidivism, and so are metrically successful. KPIs, then, draw attention towards other areas of the penal estate, thus contributing to the invisibility of open prison performance. Neglect of open prisons in penal policy is, thus, likely to continue until more prominent issues in the wider penal estate are addressed. Despite this, the broader tone of penal reform undoubtedly has an impact on the work prison officers do and the support and funding different types of penal institutions, such as open prisons receive. Whilst there are important elements of continuity in penal policy relating to the release of long-sentence prisoners over time, as this chapter has demonstrated, the prevailing social and political context around the use and perception of imprisonment has shifted. Having situated the development of the open prison in a historical context the next section moves of to explore how the open prison fits into the current prison system.

2.3 Contextualizing The Open Prison Today

The prison estate is separated into three main types of establishment: those that hold adult male prisoners, adult female prisoners, or young persons aged between 15 and 20 (Beard, 2019). As mentioned earlier, since the Mountbatten Report (1966), the adult male prison system has worked on a continuum with four security categories from A (the highest level) through to D. Open prisons are Category D prisons, while categories A, B and C are all closed institutions. Open prisons were not always standalone establishments. HMP Hewell, for example, held Category B, C and D prisoners in different areas, although the Category D facilities were shut down in 2019 after conditions were deemed unacceptable during an inspection (Ministry of Justice, 2019). Category D facilities at other multi-category sites, such as HMP Lindholme, have suffered a similar fate (Ministry of Justice, 2014). The current research site is located close to closed prisons yet operates as an independent prison rather than as a wing on a multi-category site.

Open prisons form a small but important part of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). Prisons are categorised based on their principal function and, whilst they may contain units that serve different types of prisoner, the prison will only be categorised as one type overall (Beard, 2019). There are 117 prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (YOI) that currently make up the prison estate in England and Wales, with 89 holding adult male prisoners. Ten of these are Category D establishments.³ Most prisons are managed and staffed by HMPPS, however, thirteen institutions in England and Wales are managed by private companies. None of these are open prisons (Commons Briefing Paper, 2019). The site at which this research took place is a Category D prison, housing adult male prisoners and it is staffed and managed by HMPPS.

³ There is also an immigration removal centre and three Secure Training Centres that are part of the prison estate. There are also additional immigration removal centres outside the control of HMPPS (Commons Briefing Paper, 2019).

Open prisons have always been smaller in comparison to other security categories (Heilmann, 1978), and currently the largest one holds up to 564 prisoners (HMPPS, 2020). Open prisons across England and Wales have an operational capacity of 4,176, equating to just over 5% of the total operational capacity in England and Wales (HMPPS, 2020). To enter an open prison, inmates must be assigned Category D status and assignment is based on three things: risk of escape, the risk to the public if escape were to occur, and the perceived threat to the control and stability of the prison (Prison Guide, 2020). Prisoners rarely enter an open prison immediately after sentencing but rather progress through the system, although the rate at which prisoners advance varies. Prisoners who start in Category A prisons will often spend the final years of their sentence in an open prison. Comparatively few prisoners from the whole prison population pass through open prisons, with places largely reserved for prisoners serving sentences of five years or more. As of December 2020, 4.8% of the total prison population in England and Wales were held in open prisons (HMPPS, 2020). Selectivity with regards to the open prison population, and the perceived importance of this to their success, has not only been evident historically, as mentioned earlier, but is also present in my research findings.

Open prisons are staffed in a similar way to the closed estate. The prison service is a hierarchical organisation with a clear rank structure amongst uniformed staff. Bolger and Bennett (2005) note that there are three broad areas of staff: operational, non-operational and specialist. This structure is no different in the open prison, although as prisons vary in size, consequently there are different levels of staff. Broadly the governance structure, however, remains the same⁴ and

⁴ Those in support grades and prison officer grades wear prison uniform and are classed as operational staff (Grades 2-5). Those staff grade 7 and above are classed as operational manager grades and are focused on management of the prison rather than undertaking operational duties; as such they are not uniformed staff (Prison Service Pay and Reward Body, 2018)

this hierarchy is outlined below in Figure 1:

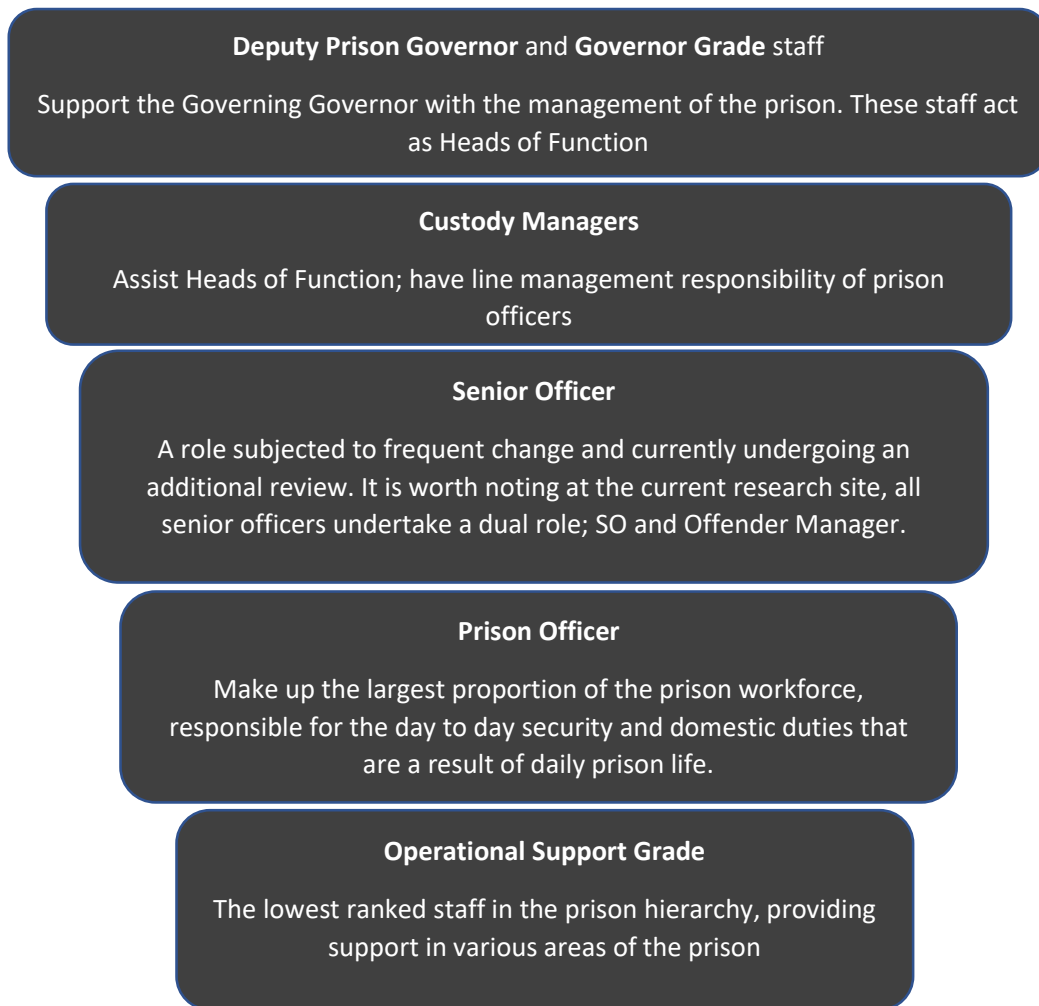


Figure 1: Prison staffing structure

Alongside uniformed officers and management, there are many other staff that play a prominent role in the day-to-day functioning of the prison. HMPS (2019) describe a variety of roles available within the prison service including healthcare, chaplaincy, catering, managerial, psychologist, support, and administration, each operating alongside officers and management. Other agencies on site including probation, education providers, healthcare providers and voluntary services are also frequently located at both open and closed establishments. Staff at the current research site emphasised the importance of the variety of roles played by those who were not prison officers.

Discussions with officers and governors, for example, revealed how many felt that the prison *'could not run without the support of staff from other organisations'* (field diary, 26/03/18). The focus of this research, however, whilst recognising the important work of other staff, was limited to uniformed/operational staff, including operational management. Not only was this due to practicalities of gaining permissions to speak with individuals employed by multiple organisations, but operational prison staff also have a strong occupational culture and view themselves as a neglected group (Bennett et al. 2008). It was, therefore, feared that drawing in other staffing elements or prisoners would potentially detract from rapport building with this specific group. See chapter four for further discussion of how I overcame the challenges of rapport building with this tight knit group.

Whilst work in open prisons can be distinguished from that undertaken in their more traditional counterparts (MOJ, 2019), the staff who support prisoners there are not. Prison officers working in open prisons receive the same training, yet they are tasked with undertaking, as the MOJ (2019) acknowledge, distinct types of work. Chapter six explores further how the role of an officer differs in the open setting and how staff consider the right kind of person is needed to work there. At the research site many staff had experiences working in closed prison establishments and considered they needed to adapt to new ways of working on transfer, which is the subject of detailed analysis in chapter seven. Not only is staffing and structure the same across open and closed prisons, processes of governance and inspection are also identical.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) are the body that holds prison management accountable for meeting standards by hosting inspections and scoring prisons based on performance indicators. All prison establishments are inspected under this framework, with four tests for a healthy establishment: Safety, Respect, Purposeful Activity and Rehabilitation and

Release Planning (HMIP Inspection Framework, 2019). Whilst the inspection framework is fixed, there are different expectations for different establishments, but these are distinguished by the kinds of prisoner they hold (i.e., men, women, children), rather than their security category (HMIP, 2019). As such, open prisons holding adult men, as my research site does, are required to meet the same expectations across the four key tests as closed institutions, thus presenting challenges because of the distinct focus and role of the open prison. Performance targets are often unsuitable for work carried out in the public sector (Beattie and Cockcroft, 2006) and performance culture is at odds with the social aspects needed to make a prison run successfully (Liebling, 2000). These issues are increased, however, in open prisons. Performance targets, much like the aims of imprisonment, often conflict, taking power to make decisions away from staff, and much of officers' work cannot be measured using performance targets (Liebling, 2004). Chapter six explores how policy, which is closely linked to performance, can create specific issues for work in the open prison, whilst chapter eight demonstrates how the application of policy, and its enforcement, can create additional conflict. As a publicly funded body, there is a high level of political accountability for prisons, meaning balancing performance targets with delivering an operational service will continue to be a challenge faced by the prison service (Beattie and Cockcroft, 2006).

Whilst this section has situated the open prison in the broader penal estate, demonstrating how its distinct nature is institutionally unrecognised within the wider prison system, the next section moves on to explore the small body of academic literature discussing the distinct nature of open prisons, their staff and their work. Given the limited literature on this, accounts of other distinct penal settings are also discussed to further contextualise the challenges faced in open prisons.

2.4 Exploring The Distinctness Of The Open Prison

The open prison environment is often recognised as distinct from more traditional penal establishments, especially in terms of regimes and physical security, but the nature and impact of this is under-researched. Whilst there has been some scholarly attention paid to open prisons, this is very much focused on prisoner experiences, something this thesis does not address, or the role of open prisons and issues that such institutions may face or create (Statham et al. 2021; Shammass 2014; Lauritsen 2012 and Johnson 1990). The way open prisons are distinct for staff, therefore, is often assumed rather than researched, and this represents a gap in knowledge which this thesis begins to address. This section explores elements of distinctiveness that go beyond commonly acknowledged physical differences, through exploration of literature on semi-penal institutions. It also touches on distinctive aims and the wider use of ROTL in open settings, as well as the distinct prison population present there.

As established earlier in this chapter, Wiener (1990) considers 'semi-penal' establishments were born out of the need for a different type of penal institution to address the challenging issues associated with resettling prisoners into the community. Semi-penal institutions, including open prisons, were, and remain, physically different from a mainstream prison. Open prisons were originally designed to provide a less institutionalized environment for prisoners to reside in (Jones and Cornes, 1977). A Category D prison, where security is at its lowest, is notably physically distinct from closed prisons, tending not to display many traditional security features, such as high walls, strong doors (Matthews, 1999), or perimeter fencing (Coyle, 2005); overtly at least. Consequently, open prisons, and other similar institutions across Europe, are often referred to as 'prisons without walls' (Shammass, 2015), or have been likened to farms in appearance (Morris, 1995). Chapter six provides, via the means of 'thick description' (Gertez, 1973), a journey around the research site, focusing not only on its physical distinctness but also the differing social environment and aims of the open prison. The environment in which prison staff work has been

recognized as having an impact on the work that is done and how this is approached (Crawley, 2004), therefore acknowledging that a distinct environment is important for understanding the way in which officers approach work.

2.4.1 Distinct Aims: Resettlement And Reintegration

Not only must the physical distinctness of the open prison be acknowledged, but also the increased emphasis on the aims of resettlement and reintegration. Whilst penal aims are broadly shared across prison settings (Coyle, 2005), the emphasis placed on resettlement and reintegration contributes to the distinctness of the open prison, this is recognised, to some degree, in policy discussions. Whilst the exact aims of imprisonment remain open to debate, they have been broadly categorised into the following: punishment, deterrence, reform, rehabilitation, and public protection (Joyce, 2006; Coyle, 2005; Taylor, 2011). The role and focus of open prisons are firmly situated in the reform and rehabilitation arena. As stated by the government, the primary function of the open prison is to reintegrate and resettle prisoners back into society after spending an extended period in prison (Home Office, 2012; Cavendish, 2015). As such, the focus is less on physical security through the containment and strict control of movement often seen in closed establishments, and more on reintegration and resettlement to prepare offenders to re-enter the community. Such an approach is achieved by allowing prisoners greater levels of freedom and responsibility (Menis, 2020), something Crewe (2011) discusses in terms of increased prisoner 'responsibilisation'. This thesis argues that the level of prisoner responsibility is, from the perception of staff at least, at its greatest in the open setting, which has consequences for the way power and control are deployed, issues discussed in more depth in chapters four and eight. It is important to note, though, that the terms resettlement and reintegration, which are commonly used when discussing the work of open prisons, and which feature in my research, are not explicitly mentioned in the five broad aims of imprisonment. This

indicates the way open prisons diverge from the mainstream setting, but also the possible confusion between the terms rehabilitation and resettlement that occurs.

Open prisons are often referred to as resettlement prisons and yet, as with rehabilitation, the term resettlement is difficult to define, and its meaning is often unclear (Hedderman, 2007).

Open prisons are often distinguished by their liberal regimes and focus on rehabilitation (Maier, 2020), yet this is rehabilitation that focus on supporting prisoners in a variety of ways, often focused on employment, education and resettlement into the community. Such an approach was described by Garland (1985) as a welfare-based approach to rehabilitation, rather than a traditionally narrow psychological understanding of rehabilitation that focuses on treatment of an individual to address offending behaviour (McNeill, 2012), which is now more prevalent in penal policy. This approach leads Shammass (2015) to describe open prisons as 'socialization machines', or places in which prisoners learn how to become members of the community outside prison once again. I argue that resettlement, as seen by staff in the open prison, is closely related to the welfare approach to rehabilitation noted by Garland (1985). It is these differing meanings, which have shifted overtime, that has led to confusion around the terms and different understandings of rehabilitation.

The successful resettlement of prisoners into the community and the apparent rehabilitation of individuals who are released from open establishments rarely makes headlines, and so work in open prisons has historically been overlooked (Pennington, 2015). Ryan (2003) notes that whilst policies reflect rehabilitative aims, there is increasing evidence that prison more broadly is ineffective at reducing reoffending (Pollock et al. 2012), with little success in delivering programmes that balance the desired need for punishment against the supportive environment needed for rehabilitation (Davis et al. 2010). Coyle (2005) considers that wider social issues

outside the prison will not be solved by changing the individual within the prison setting and there are numerous wider social issues that need to be addressed to reduce crime and reoffending within society (Shammas, 2015). My research identifies that staff in the open prison recognise this. Yet rehabilitation programmes across more traditional prison settings continue to focus on reducing the risk of reoffending by managing individual risk factors (Spivakovsky, 2008). Open prisons play a key role in the focus on welfare-based rehabilitation and reform as a central aim of imprisonment (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Menis, 2020). Work undertaken to support individuals to reintegrate into the community plays a key part in this, yet, again, when exploring literature the aims of imprisonment, little attention has been paid to the clearly distinct aims of the open prison.

The prison service sees resettlement as supporting prisoners both pre- and post-release to enable them to prepare for life after imprisonment (Ministry of Justice, 2011) yet, whilst resettlement denotes a return to life within wider society, it is not clear what that looks like at an individual level (Moore, 2012). Cullen and Gendreau (2001) note that all prisoners will generally need time to adapt to the outside world. As Pollock et al. (2012:64) state, 'good intentions are not enough to change criminal behaviour', there needs to be a wider breadth of support to help individuals change their lives. This thesis explores how officers see part of their role as supporting prisoners to adapt to the outside, whilst continuing to serve their prison sentence. The term resettlement, then, does not reflect the complex and varied factors influencing this process, and Moore (2012) argues there needs to be a focus on unique, individual circumstances. Prisoners often need the chance to acclimatise to the world outside the prison and demonstrate their reduced levels of risk, and day release is commonly used in open prisons to provide this opportunity (MOJ, 2019). This is, however, an opportunity denied to so many across the prison estate (Liebling et al. 2019),

which makes the lack of research into open prisons, that play a key role in this process, somewhat at odds with the apparent value attached to resettlement.

Jones and Cornes (1977) noted that open prisons differed fundamentally in their aims and functionality, but also that aspirations to achieve the desired liberal setting often fell short, in part because of confusion about how to prioritise such aims alongside maintaining a secure and disciplined prison. Despite resettlement and reintegration being stated as primary aims, these are only one element of the broader purposes of imprisonment and, at times, these can conflict, as my research also shows. I argue as well, however, that staff perceive the open prison as playing additional roles, which are not officially recognised in the same way, such as de-institutionalising prisoners and supporting them socially and developmentally. In chapter six I demonstrate that, before the work of resettlement and reintegration can be done, the harm caused by closed conditions must be undone, which is something staff explicitly recognise and discuss in terms of the 'de-institutionalising of prisoners'. Such a role, however, is not officially acknowledged in the remit of the open prison. The existence of open prisons demonstrates a level of acknowledgement that some prisoners need greater levels of support to reintegrate, indicating implicitly, therefore, a certain level of acceptance of the damaging nature of closed prisons and the negative impacts of institutionalisation. Such aspects of prison work should be more explicitly considered, though, in research and policy.

2.4.2 The Importance Of ROTL To Resettlement

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) is a key tool for assisting with the resettlement and reintegration of prisoners back into the community, it plays a key role in the distinct work of the open prison. One of the key things that distinguishes open prisons from their closed counterparts is the large number of prisoners released into the community daily, to later return to the prison at

night (MOJ, 2019)⁵. ROTL is one of the most important tools in the open prison setting to help achieve their stated aims, providing a chance for prisoners to leave the prison boundary and, with appropriate permission, enter the community to undertake work and other reintegrative activities (Potter and Gundersen, 2015). This allows prisoners time to rebuild ties, undertake activities to support resettlement (Potter, 2015) and take on paid employment, often in the area into which they plan to resettle. This is of great importance when considering the aims of an open prison, which are focused on resettlement (Jones and Cornes, 1977). Prisoners allowed ROTL before being released generally have lower reoffending rates, indicating this has wider benefits (Hillier and Mews, 2018). In the open setting, prisoners can earn the right to be released, initially for a few hours during the day to work or visit family and building up to spending four consecutive nights away from the prison. This research demonstrates, though, that ROTL, whilst serving the resettlement function officially associated with it, is also a key part of maintaining order in an open prison setting, an argument I make in chapter eight, but also a key part of the open prisons distinctness.

Preparing prisoners for life outside the prison requires inmates to take on greater levels of responsibility and this is something which has been researched. Ugelvik (2011), for example, argues that responsabilisation can act as a prison governance strategy. ROTL is the prime example of increased prisoner responsibility in the open setting and, whilst Crewe (2011:519) identifies the 'transfer of responsibility' from officer coercion to greater levels of responsibility for prisoners happening across the prison system, not just in open prisons, this thesis shows that, from the perspective of staff, this transfer is far greater in open settings. A focus on resettlement and reintegration, as well as increased levels of freedom and responsibility afforded to prisoners,

⁵ ROTL can be granted to prisoners under other specific circumstances if a prisoner has been assessed as suitable and the prison had the capabilities to offer restricted ROTL, yet use of ROTL outside of a Category D setting is rare (Prison Reform Trust, 2021)

means staff in open prisons often have to approach prison work differently. The altered roles that officers are required to undertake in distinct settings, of which the open prison is one, can lead to a different way of thinking and acting (Nylander et al. 2008) which contrasts with the work undertaken in more traditional prisons. Jones and Cornes (1977) were the first to highlight the distinctiveness of the open prison in terms of working practices and the need for staff to undertake their role in a different way. They also highlighted that staff need a differing set of skills to work in the open environment, something that has also been explored in terms of other distinct penal environments, such as Secure Training Centres (STCs and Therapeutic Communities (TCs) (Hagel et al. 2000; Day et al. 2012). Chapter six engages with the different approaches to prison work necessitated by this, while chapter seven explores how officers adapt to this.

2.4.3 Open Prison Populations

As established earlier, comparatively few prisoners pass through open prisons, and those who do are carefully selected with security in mind (Jones and Cornes, 1977). Whilst it is acknowledged by the prison service, and within wider academic literature, that open prisons are used to prepare prisoners for life outside the prison, this is a specific aim for a particular group of individuals, and selection of the right kind of prisoner to enter open conditions is important (Leitch, 1951; Jones and Cornes, 1977). Those who are away from the community for long periods, serving five years or more in prison, are considered to need the greatest levels of support in terms of resettlement (Pennington and Crewe, 2015) and open prison populations are, therefore, often made up of long-sentence prisoners. There is a different approach to resettling short sentence prisoners after release, the scope of which falls outside this thesis, but it is important to recognise this area has also presented many challenges. For further discussion of this see Lewis et al. (2003, 2007) and Moore (2012).

The open prison population in the UK, then, often consists of lifers or long sentence prisoners (Jarman, 2020) and the current research site reflects this. It has been argued that careful selection of inmates made open prisons doomed to succeed, in terms of low recidivism at least, from their inception (Leitch, 1951). Selectivity has long been associated with the success of open forms of imprisonment in the UK, as discussed earlier in the chapter. Interestingly, however, this concern with the right kind of prisoner entering open conditions is less evident throughout history in Scandinavia. In the early Finnish prison system, for example, those who were sent to labour colonies were varied in nature, yet no limits were placed on their freedom except for work discipline (Lahti, 1977). Unlike in England and Wales, many inmates in open prisons in Norway and Sweden are short-term prisoners, some of whom even maintain their employment whilst in the prison setting (Pratt, 2008). This different approach to short-sentence prisoners demonstrates that more open prison regimes can be utilised successfully for both short and long sentence prisoners.

The impact of having the 'right' kind of prisoner and how this contributes to compliance and success is a theme explored in this thesis. Those who have been in prison for longer periods, whilst often ill-equipped to deal with life outside the prison (Kazemain and Travis, 2015), are also commonly easier to deal with inside, as they have become used to the prison environment (Herbert, 2019), thus contributing to a more ordered environment. Jones and Cornes (1977) highlighted how those transferred to open prisons already knew how the system worked, enabling them to get on with little trouble. This careful selection of the population that resides within the open setting further contributes to its distinctiveness. Whilst the prisoner population in open prisons is somewhat distinct, the staff, however, in terms of this training and selection are not.

Open prisons and their staff in the UK have rarely been studied in academic literature. The earliest, and perhaps most comprehensive, text on open prisons in England was by Jones and Cornes (1977), who took a detailed look at these in comparison to closed conditions. A variety of data collection methods were employed including questionnaires, prison officer diaries and secondary data collation. Yet even this seminal text, much of which this thesis endeavours to update, was undertaken as part of wider research which included closed prison establishments. Jones and Cornes (1977) argued that long-term open prisons allow for a different focus on the aims of resettlement, meaning staff must find new ways of working and often require different skills to work in such settings. The research, however, was conducted when the face of the prison system was somewhat different from that of today. It was before the advent of managerialism, for example, which had a large impact on the prison system and the way it was run (Bennett et al. 2008). Yet, the work of Jones and Cornes (1977), as shown throughout this thesis, provided insights that remain, to a certain extent, relevant to open prisons today.

More recently, further studies of interest that looked at staff in the open prison setting have been conducted, firstly by Moore and Hamilton (2016) and then by Danks and Bradley (2018). Moore and Hamilton's (2016) work, produced in the context of the 'Transforming Rehabilitation' agenda, involved interviews with both staff and prisoners in a men's open prison to gain a greater understanding of their perceptions towards resettlement provision. Staff were found to have different opinions as to what successful resettlement looked like, yet this often centred around a perceived reduction in future offending. Staff saw resettlement as something that was undertaken by staff in the resettlement unit, rather than the broad work of officers working in the open environment. Staff did not receive specialist training to work in such units, with most knowing little about resettlement pathways. The importance of work via the use of day release, was, however acknowledged, yet this was more about demonstrating self-discipline and the

development of a work ethic, rather than wider social and behavioural developments. There was often a lack of connection between different departments which left many officers, including those in resettlement, working in a siloed way with a lack of 'joined up doing' (Moore and Hamilton 2016:124). The finding around silo mentalities and a lack of focus on resettlement support as a whole, beyond employment, are two areas relevant for this thesis, which expands on this work by exploring not only the role of all officers in supporting prisoners to resettle into the community, but also the wider social and emotional support officers see as key to their role in an open setting. Moore and Hamilton (2016) explored the open prison with a specific focus on rehabilitation rather than staff's views on the differing approaches to prison work more generally and the overall open prison environment.

The study by Danks and Bradley (2018), which utilised interviews and focus groups concentrated on male open prisons, also looked at a very specific subject area, this time staff and prisoners' perceptions of mental health provision. They found when talking to officers about the open prison and work undertaken there that staff often compared their work in the closed setting to the open setting without prompting. Experiences in closed environments, then, acted to frame their discussions. This perception of distinction between the open and closed setting among officers informs the direction of my research in terms of the focus on distinctiveness presented in this thesis. Despite the focus on mental health provision in the study, staff also articulated their views on how staff saw prisoners behaving in a more compliant way in the open setting due to it being the last step before release. Danks and Bradley (2018) also noted that the open environment they studied was conducive to developing more personal interactions between prisoners and staff. Yet references to this are fleeting, and the views of prisoners and prison staff are not considered separately. This thesis builds on the idea of the open prison representing the

last leg of a prisoner's journey and the different nature of staff-prisoner relationships by exploring the implications of this from the perspective of staff in greater detail.

Menis (2020) undertook both field observations and interviews with staff at a women's open prison, a study conducted in the context of exploring the history of women's imprisonment and an associated discourse on reformation. Menis (2020) highlighted how the open prison played an important role in helping prisoners regain social skills that may have been lost via the process of imprisonment, which Menis (2020:146) describes as the 'abatement' of institutionalisation. This thesis explores both the role of the open prison environment, and the staff within it, in supporting the process of de-institutionalisation. Menis (2020) states how the open prison environment is more relaxed, which enables different types of work to be carried out and different types of staff-prisoner relationships to develop, ideas which are also explored in this thesis. Yet despite these differences, reformation remains a 'myth' (Menis, 2020:8) and Menis (2020) concludes that the women's open prison she studied remains very much a prison and an institution, albeit different to more traditional prison environments. Despite this research being conducted in a women's open prison, with a focus very much on reformatory discourse, the findings are of interest to my own findings in the male open prison estate. It is clear then, that the selection and training of staff in the open setting is not distinct, yet the nature of the work they undertake often is. Whilst my thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge by exploring open prisons and the staff within them, the ethnographic approach which considers the interaction between the place and the people with the open setting adds an additional layer of originality when compared to the, mainly interview based, approach to the limited existing open prison research.

As I have just set out, there are many ways the distinctiveness of open prisons is recognised to varying degrees in discussions of them. There are also elements of the open prison environment, however, which are less distinct, a more neglected concept this thesis also explores (see chapter eight). Whilst the primary aims are resettlement and reintegration, this does not mean security is irrelevant, and the balance between this and resettlement aims is something officers can find challenging in prison work more generally (Crawley, 2004), which is also demonstrated in this thesis. Jones and Cornes (1977) identified that, despite differences in functionality, the regimes implemented were less distinct from closed prisons than one might expect (Jones and Cornes, 1977), this was particularly notable when comparing short-term open prisons with closed conditions. Long-term open prisons, in contrast, were more successful in establishing and maintaining a more liberal regime. Modern open prisons, my research suggests, are more akin to the long-term open prisons explored by Jones and Cornes (1977). My research also shows that elements of more traditional prison regimes and security measures are present in the open setting (see chapter eight), but there is a different emphasis placed upon them and their implementation can create conflict in differing ways. One of the key challenges that open prisons have faced over time is making the regime and environment different enough from more mainstream prison environments to allow their aims to be achieved (Jones and Cornes, 1977). This is also a challenge that has been faced by other non-typical penal environments, such as TCs and STCs (Hagel et al. 2000; Stevens 2016). Consequently, literature on such institutions is explored further here.

2.5 Prison Without Walls – Other Distinct Penal Environments

Despite limited research on open prisons in England and Wales, other areas of Europe have demonstrated much greater interest in so-called ‘prisons without walls’ (Shammas, 2015:3). The largest body of literature links to the concept of ‘penal exceptionalism’ associated initially with

the Nordic cluster and, in more recent years, also other European countries. The term penal exceptionalism was born out of a broad approach to imprisonment in the Nordic cluster rooted in the culture of equity (Pratt, 2008). In this a welfare approach is not only applied to public services, such as health care and education, but also criminal justice and imprisonment, although there is debate about whether prisons should be described as welfare institutions in themselves, or as penal establishments with close links to welfare provision (Ugelvik, 2016). Whilst prisons in the Nordic cluster are not without problems, for example Mathieson (2012) and Smith (2012) argue that this notion of exceptionalism has been over emphasised, key similarities in their operation and goals with open prisons in the UK ensure they remain a useful learning tool for the current research. Yet, the cultural context in which prisons operate in the UK remains vastly different, and any possible learning from the different approach in the Nordic cluster should consider this.

The success of Nordic prisons is partly attributed to a smaller prison population held within smaller prisons (often 100 inmates or fewer), more liberal regimes in which prisoners retain many rights, more comprehensive training for prison officers, and, finally, the context and culture in which these prisons operate (Pratt, 2008; Ugelvik, 2016). Whilst open prisons in the UK exist within a broadly punitive penal environment, prisons in the Nordic cluster operate within a more welfare-focused climate (Ugelvik, 2016) focused on creating an environment of normalisation (Pratt, 2008). It is this broader social and political context of the wider prison system which allows for the increased use of open establishments (Pratt, 2008; Ugelvik, 2016). In this thesis I argue that the open prison, and the environment that staff try to create within them, shares this aim of creating a more normalised environment reflective of the community. This contrasts with other types of penal settings in the UK. Doing this allows an increased focus on the work of resettlement and reintegration, which is not possible in other types of penal establishment. This contributes to the distinctiveness of open prisons, but also generates tensions for staff.

Whilst prisons in the Nordic cluster are often held up as a model to aspire to, there is debate about the true nature of penal exceptionalism in the Nordic cluster. Ugelvik (2016), for example, considers that the success of rehabilitation could be down to the inclusive welfare society into which prisoners are released, rather than the work undertaken in the prison setting. The barriers and discrimination prisoners face upon release are well documented and can pose persistent problems for prisoners in England and Wales (Moran, 2012, Keene et al, 2018). Prisons in the Nordic cluster are committed to only depriving an individual of their liberty. Prisoners retain the right to vote, for example, and have access to the same levels of education and welfare as people outside the prison boundary (Ugelvik, 2014; Pratt, 2008). My thesis demonstrates that, whilst open prisons in the UK aspire to achieve similar aims to prisons in the Nordic cluster, they remain firmly a penal establishment associated with the overall penal process with high levels of control. This has implications for staff working there, contributing to the spoiled identity they perceive which I discuss in chapter six. Despite the progress that such models of imprisonment have seen, therefore, detaining people in more relaxed establishments has not become the norm in the UK.

Open prisons are not the only penal environment in the UK that can be considered distinct. Other examples of this, such as TCs and STCs, which also contain key differences from open prisons, have been subject to greater levels of academic interest (Rapoport, 1960; Wright, 1993; Ross et al. 2008; Day et al, 2012; Hagel et al, 2000 Ware et al. 2010). The distinctness of TCs, at least, is an outlier that has been accommodated on the penal spectrum for more than 50 years (Stevens, 2016). Some, but not all, of these can be thought of as 'semi-penal' in nature, a concept taken from Wiener (1990). They also share some similarities with open prisons that can contribute to understandings of that environment and the challenges staff face within it. The setting in which an officer works can have a large impact on the work they undertake (Crawley, 2004). When staff have transferred into different settings there is often a period of adjustment required and, in chapter seven, I consider how staff adapt to the open setting and the influence of occupational

culture on this. The need to adapt to a different environment and different types of work has also been recognised in other distinct settings, though, such as TCs or STCs (Rapoport, 1960; Hagel et al. 2000). This adaptation and taking a different approach to prison work is something that is shared between open prisons and other distinct penal institutions.

It is not clear why open prisons are so frequently overlooked. Perhaps the close ties with the broader penal systems means the distinctiveness of the open setting, and the impact of this, is yet to be truly acknowledged or understood. STCs and TCs, whilst sharing the notion of being semi-penal institutions, are recognised as different in a way that open prisons are not. STCs for example, like open prisons, are part of the wider penal estate in terms of culture and ethos, often following recognisable regimes, sharing physical similarities such as locked doors and secure perimeters, and staffed with prison officers (Hagell 2000). Such institutions generate a wide amount of academic and media interest. STCs, however, house children and young persons, the imprisonment of whom is more controversial than is the case for adults. Like the open prison, however, TCs also share a relationship with the wider prison system, often being located within a closed prison, but contained within its own area. The juxtaposition between the TC and the mainstream prison, therefore, is clear to see, with two contrasting approaches to imprisonment and prison work co-occurring alongside one another. As discussed above, open prisons were also sometimes separate wings in closed prison establishments, however, this was gradually phased out, making open prisons separate from closed prisons and the staff that work within them in a way that TCs are not. Perhaps then it is this level of separation, the housing of adults rather than children, that has led to lack of exploration of the open prison as a distinct penal setting.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter does important work setting the scene, drawing out key themes that continue throughout. The historical emergence of open prisons is set out, situating them within the context of other semi-penal institutions which laid the foundations for the development of establishments formally acknowledged as 'open'. Semi-penal institutions emerged to address enduring issues associated with the early release of prisoners serving long-term sentences, many of which remain today. Key questions relating to this include what type of establishment long-sentence prisoners should be released from (and to), as well as how to select inmates for such establishments and test their suitability for release. Underpinning these is the need to balance resettlement against risk and public protection.

The shifting social and political context, which affects changing emphases within penal policy, has contributed to a sparse history in terms of state run semi-penal establishments, many of which are still viewed as experimental. This impacts upon how staff and the wider prison community views such institutions and feeds officers' perceptions of a spoiled institutional identity, which I discuss in chapter seven. Other countries, however, such as the Nordic countries, have achieved more success in establishing semi-penal or open institutions as one of the main forms of imprisonment. That development, though, was achieved within a different political and social welfare context from that in the UK. As well as providing important context for the analysis I develop in chapters six to eight, this chapter also underpins the discussion in chapter nine where I demonstrate how my research highlights the continuation of many historical challenges that releasing long-sentence prisoners create and how open prisons and the staff within them navigate these challenges in a contemporary context.

The notion of distinctness, and the enduring nature of challenges associated with the early release of long-sentence prisoners, are central to the research presented in this thesis. Chapter six explores the distinct nature of the open prison environment, including its physical and social milieu in more detail with specific reference to the research site. Chapter seven expands on this through a discussion of how staff working in the open setting adapt to the distinct nature of the environment, especially as they have often served in closed prisons. Finally, chapter eight considers issues of control, order and risk management in a prison environment that aims to test prisoners prior to release in a setting in which they are given more responsibility and freedom. Before going on to the analysis, however, in the following chapter I will explore broader prison literature that contributes to my study in terms of understanding the aims of imprisonment, the role of the prison officers and their work and the relationship with occupational culture and differing approaches to this. Much of this learning had thus far been from closed prison establishments.

Chapter Three: Working In An Open Prison And Adapting To Distinct Penal Settings

3.1 Introduction

As with other areas of open prison literature, little is known about the work and occupational culture of prison officers in an open prison setting. The previous chapter demonstrated literature specifically exploring open prisons including situating them in penal history, their role in the modern penal system and current open prison research, thus identifying gaps in knowledge to which this thesis responds. Here, I draw on and explore key findings from broader prison literature, establishing what is known about prison staff's occupational role and culture in a variety of penal settings, and consider the degree or not to which this may assist with understanding the need to, and processes of, adaptation to prison work in open conditions.

Central to this thesis is the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison. Despite this distinctness, and wider acknowledgement that culture and prison work can vary between prison settings (Crawley, 2004), the cultural adaptation of staff in the open setting remains largely unexplored. The challenges that working in the open prison can present to staff and the impact of occupational culture on adapting to prison work in a distinct setting, the current research site, are explored in chapter seven. This provides an important contribution to this gap in the literature, as I argue that the role and experiences of staff in the open prison cannot be assumed, based on previous literature due their distinctive nature. Consequently, literature on the impact of working in distinct penal settings is examined here, along with processes of adaptation to different penal environments to provide a framework for that later discussion. Prison officer culture is a central element in this thesis, as it is crucial to the way in which officers undertake their work and how they adapt to the open prison setting, and so I explore literature on this here as well, but again

prison scholarship in relation to officer culture in the open prison specifically is noticeably absent from existing literature.

Firstly, I examine what is known about the role and work of prison officers more broadly, as established in chapter two, HMPPS prison officers, regardless of where they work share the same job description. I then explore what is known about prison officer culture, including the impact of a setting on officer culture and vice versa. Much of this research, however, has occurred in more traditional prison settings. Occupational culture has been found to greatly influence the work of prison officers in closed settings, including impacting what officers view prison work to be (Morrison and Maycock, 2022). Prison officer typologies have been developed to help understand different cultural orientations that prison officers' adopt to approach their work. These are explored in order to frame the context around my arguments, presented in chapter seven, about the differing approaches staff in open settings take to manage the adaptation that is necessary to work in this distinct penal environment. Finally, how officers have adapted to working in other distinct penal settings and the relationship between this and an officer's occupational identity is discussed. Understanding wider scholarship around these topics assists with establishing and interpreting the distinct nature of the work of officers in an open prison, and the need to adapt this, which are central to the arguments in this thesis, whilst also highlighting the gaps in the literature around culture, adaptation and prison work in the open prison setting, to which this thesis contributes.

3.2 The Prison Officer's Role

As established in chapter two, prisoner populations in the open prison are somewhat distinct in their selection for the open prison, yet prison staff in terms of job descriptions, training and recruitment are not. Exploring literature on the role of the prison officer and what denotes prison

work across various prison settings helps frame the findings of the current research in the context of what is known about the role of prison officers more broadly. Until the 2000s little was known about the work of prison officers in any setting, in contrast to other criminal justice professionals, especially police officers (Liebling and Price, 2001). Academic interest has grown significantly since then and several important texts have emerged in the last twenty years (Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004; Scott, 2006; Crawley and Crawley 2008; Bennett et al. 2008; Liebling et al. 2010; Crewe et al. 2011; Tait, 2011; Lerman and Page, 2012; Arnold, 2016). Despite this growing interest few of these studies, apart from Crawley (2004), have taken an extensive ethnographic approach to the exploration of prison officers, their culture and their work. This is in contrast to work on police officer culture which, even in early studies, often adopted an ethnographic approach (Holdaway, 1983; Loftus, 2010; Westmarland, 2012, 2015), something that my research into prison officers did, further demonstrating its originality. The growing body of literature on prison staff in various penal settings is a positive development and contributes significantly to our understanding of prisons. In particular, it moves away from a heavily prisoner-focused approach in earlier work on the sociology of the prison. There are, however, elements of prison officers' work that still require closer examination, including their sense of purpose and coping mechanisms (Arnold, 2016) both of which are areas that this thesis addresses in the context of a distinct penal setting.

Ethnographies are a valuable tool for exploring culture, especially in a prison setting where observations of daily interactions allow exploration of staff-prisoner relationships, power relations and negotiation (Rowe, 2016). Approaches to understanding culture that rely on interviews or questionnaires do not allow us to gain an in-depth understanding of such complex concepts, nor do they enable observations focused around how and why officers undertake work or adapt their approach and employ coping mechanisms. The absence of ethnographic research

on staff working in open conditions is a clear gap, with no such study having been undertaken.

The distinct physical and social environment of open prisons makes it essential to understand officers' processes of adaptation and coping mechanisms in such settings. My research addresses such issues, taking an ethnographic approach to allow for in-depth insights into the complexity of culture and adaptation to be developed in ways that other studies of open prisons have not.

Whilst it cannot be assumed that occupational culture is the same in the distinctive environment of open prisons, research on other penal environments can help to contextualise my findings and provide a point of comparison for them. Additionally, while considering only the perceptions of staff in an open setting, many of my participants had also experienced closed prisons, which was often used as a reference point for their discussion of their current working environment, as also found by Danks and Bradley (2014).

One consistent trend, however, is the finding that the role of prison officers has changed considerably over the years, becoming broader and more complex (Lindberg, 2005). This complexity is not only reflected generally in terms of the work that is delivered but is also reflected in the need to manage relationships and occupational identities in distinct penal settings. This is an indication that similar processes may be necessary in the transition to work in open settings, but no studies have specifically explored this as my research does. Scott (2006:17) summarises this general trend, suggesting the modern-day role of prison officers has a 'relatively short history', emerging over the last 80 years, with officers no longer mere turn-keys, with a sole focus on security and discipline. Despite this, research also acknowledges that a large part of their role still revolves around security (Liebling and Price, 2001; Scott, 2006; Arnold 2016). The balance of security with other aspects of prison work is likely to differ in more liberal, less security focused regimes, however, such as those within the open setting. Almost all research identifies the role of a prison officer as varied, going far beyond locking and unlocking prisoners, organising

daily routines and dealing with security issues (Crawley, 2004). The diversity of prison work is recognised across all prison settings, often interpreted as falling on a spectrum between rehabilitation and punishment, care and control, or humane and punitive (Ricciardelli, 2014). One factor found to influence where work falls on this spectrum is the type of penal setting in which an officer operates (Crawley, 2004; Liebling 2004). The specific emphasis on particular penal aims, within open settings, discussed in the previous chapter may indicate open prisons would likely fall on the rehabilitation, care and humane end, although my research indicates the situation is more complex than this.

Officers have previously identified the varied nature of the tasks that they were required to undertake, seeing themselves as playing different roles, including: parent, mentor, counsellor, teacher, social worker, security and police officer (Crawley, 2004). Similarly, Liebling and Price (2001:43) identified at least twelve roles officers could perform just 'in one day'. One central element of an officer's role, though, identified across many studies, is providing support (Farkas, 1999; Liebling, 2004). This element of work has been seen by Liebling (2004) as particularly influential for the institution, being capable of helping to create a moral prison environment. How much officers get to engage in this aspect of their work in closed prison settings, however, has been found to vary (Liebling, 2004; Johnsen et al. 2011). Due to the distinct aims of the open prison and the role of officers in this setting, it is likely that the caring and support aspects of an officer role will come to the fore, yet without research evidence this cannot be assumed. We know that officers' responsibilities are wide, then, ranging from security, control and supervision to daily domestic duties and providing support to prisoners (Lindberg, 2005). Scott (2006) likens the domestic duties of a prison officer to that of a 'caretaker' but cautions this must be understood in the context of the punitive elements of an officer's role. Exploring and understanding this balance in a distinct penal setting such as the open prison further contributes

to the understanding of the influence of different settings on the work and role of a prison officer. Recognising the variety involved in work across prison settings is an important indication of the need to explore the nature of the role in specific and distinctive penal environments including the open prison.

Even though more is understood about the complex nature of work in prisons, Liebling and Price (2001) argue this complexity can make defining the role of the prison officer difficult. One way of responding to this has been the creation of typologies of prison officer culture. Yet, variety is evident both within and between establishments, making it important to explore the work in the open setting (Crawley, 2004; Liebling and Price, 2001; Liebling, 2011). Liebling and Price (2001) consider an officer's job description does acknowledge some of these complexities. HMPPS (2020) describe the work of a prison officer in a job advertisement as including acting as role models, educators, negotiators, and life changers. Yet staff receive little practical support in how to undertake their day-to-day tasks and achieve the different roles expected of them (Liebling and Price, 2001). This has been found to leave staff feeling ill-equipped to deal with certain tasks, with much of their learning done on the job rather than via training (Crawley, 2004). This suggests an element of adaptation is required when moving to different settings, something my thesis explores in the specific context of the open prison. Liebling and Price (2001), though, argue that, whilst practical support may be lacking, officers have a clear understanding of their role and what they would define as both a good prison officer and a good prison, in more traditional settings at least. Crawley (2004) qualifies this by highlighting that whilst officers' perceptions of how the role should be performed may be clear, they can also differ (Crawley, 2004). My research expands this, helping to further understand whether officers in an open setting share the same clear understanding of their role.

Despite this complexity and variety within the work of prison officers, in summary, the following skills and traits have been found by Crawley (2004) to be particularly valued by prison staff: confidence, powers of persuasion, assertiveness, fairness and calmness. Certain attributes as well are considered valuable such as liking people or having common sense and a sense of humour. Also beneficial are being a team player, good communicator, good listener, and mentally tough. Interestingly, despite these findings being built around the role of prison officers in closed settings, coercive tactics and physical strength feature little in this list. Indeed, Liebling et al. (2009:83) found that being a good officer was seen as involving avoiding using force but still 'getting things done'. Yet being prepared to deal with violence, via the use of Control and Restraint (C and R) is seen as a key element of officers training (Arnold, 2008) and something that is valued by officers. In open settings there are lower levels of violence and physical confrontation, suggesting such elements may be less valued. My findings, however, indicate a complex role for force and confrontation and the preparedness to use these within staff's occupational identities in the open setting, as explored in chapter seven. Whilst little is understood specifically about the nature and role of occupational culture in the open setting, the importance of understanding officer culture is widely recognised. Here then, I move on to explore what is known about occupational culture in both distinct and more traditional prison settings.

3.3 Prison Officer Culture

Previous research indicates that culture and its influence over staff varies across different institutions (Crawley, 2004; Liebling et al. 2009) and open prisons represent a particularly distinct environment. One element of this is that they have been found to have more relaxed regimes compared to other prison settings (Jones and Cornes, 1977), meaning differing cultural values may be more prevalent and certain cultural characteristics or orientations may make some staff better suited to work there than others, something which is evident in this thesis (see chapter

seven). Understanding what is known about prison officer culture in more traditional prison settings, as well as more distinct penal environments, acts as a point of comparison for the culture observed in the current research. Here I explore existing literature on prison officers across a variety of settings, including their views on the aims of imprisonment, and discussions of prison officer culture. Whilst differences are noted in research between different types of prison, the impact of occupational culture on how staff adapt to this, or how work is delivered and how staff legitimise their role is lacking. A key area of originality of my thesis is its contribution to understanding these things in the open setting.

A single definition for culture is something that eludes researchers across many settings. Occupational culture is not easy to define, meaning different things in differing contexts (Crawley, 2004; Westmarland, 2008), yet it is central to understanding change, or the impact of change, and aspects of prison officer behaviour (Liebling and Price, 2001). As stated in chapter one, for the purposes of this research, I focus on culture in terms of staff understandings and values in relation to their perceptions of what their role is, how their work should be undertaken, and what role the open prison should play. This approach is like that taken by Holdaway (1983) and Scott (2012). Through this my research identifies prison officer sub-cultures present at the research site, introducing two new cultural orientations based on how different officers approach their work and adapt this within the open environment. Exploring what is already known about officer culture in other penal settings acts as a frame of reference for the exploration of culture in the open prison setting. Several studies argue that culture influences how officers approach work and react to various situations (Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Stohr et al. 2012; Scott 2012); and this can be useful for understanding prison officer behaviour and how this influences the lives of both inmates and prison staff (Liebling and Price, 2011), making it an important aspect of study. Whilst I find that officers working in open prisons share many cultural characteristics

with those in closed institutions, areas of difference are also evident, especially in their adaptation to their distinct working environment and the management of a spoiled occupational identity; this reflects a key original contribution of this work.

Given what is known about the impact of the working environment on prison officer culture, it is important not to assume shared cultural characteristics among officers working in open prisons, making it important to conduct in-depth studies, such as this research, to uncover both similarities and differences. Chapter seven explores how particular cultural orientations observed at the research site develop, playing an important role in officers' adaptation to the open setting and their approach to work within it. With little exploration of how prison officer culture is shaped by the need to adapt to distinct penal environments and the consequent impact on an officer's approach, my research offers insights not only into prison work in the open setting, but also the role of culture in the adaptation of working styles. Here, I explore what is known about prison officers' view on the aims of imprisonment and their occupational culture more broadly.

3.3.1 Prison Officers' Views On The Aims Of Imprisonment

Given that the balance of aims differs between open and closed environments, officers' views of this are likely important to understanding work and culture in an open setting. Little is known, however, about prison officers' views on the purpose of imprisonment (Lerman and Page, 2012); although Crawley (2004) notes this is one of many aspects in which there is diversity. Liebling and Price (2001) argue it is important to understand how officers view the purpose of imprisonment because this can influence how they react to certain situations within the prison setting. Pollock et al. (2012), for example, argue that a commitment to achieving aims is pointless without staff who are committed to this, meaning this influences the degree to which institutions achieve the

functions ascribed to them. Given the different balance of aims in open prisons, understanding officers' cultural views of this in open settings, and how this influences their work, is important.

The work of prison officers has been found to be shaped by the prison context in which they work (Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Sim, 2008; Liebling et al. 2011). Lerman and Page (2015) recognise that an officer's view of the purpose of imprisonment can be influenced by changing penal policy and political climate, yet, even in times when penal policy becomes more punitive, officers continue to support rehabilitative approaches (Farkas, 1999). As demonstrated in chapter two, open prisons became established during a specific period of penal policy and have endured turbulent periods of change to this, yet their particular role has changed very little.

Resettlement as opposed to rehabilitation, a key aim of the open prison, has been less thoroughly explored in research, meaning little is understood about officers' views about this or their role in supporting prisoners to achieve it. My research demonstrates, however, that this is a key part of work in the open setting. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Moore and Hamilton (2016: 111) observed a 'silo mentality' towards the delivery of such services in an open prison, with a lack of staff understanding about resettlement pathways detracting from the support provided to achieve this. My research uncovers a more complex picture, confirming that ensuring staff buy into the ethos of the open prison is important to work there, yet it is also challenging for staff and requires cultural adaptation.

3.3.2 Cultural Typologies And Characteristics

This section primarily considers cultural typologies, orientations and characteristics previously observed in research on closed prison settings. First it is necessary to briefly mention findings on this in the work of Jones and Cornes (1977), who explored cultural typologies and social

characteristics of officers in the short-term and long-term open institutions. Their data was very much segmented based on the length of service, educational background and an officer's previous career and their research approach differs significantly from the ethnographic stance I take. Essentially, Jones and Cornes (1977) found no significant difference between the characteristics represented across different types of prison establishment. Yet, this research was undertaken during a different era of imprisonment, conducted soon after a challenging period of change for prison officers, as Thomas (1972) notes, at this time officers operated with a pragmatic approach to work rather than a focus of the differing aims of establishments. Many officers, often ex-service men were rejecting the reformative pressure that they were under (Thomas, 1972), whereas such aims are more widely accepted by officers now. The recruitment of prison officers at this time was more restrictive, with many officers being ex-service men, there was less likely to be clearer variations in cultures. The depth to which we now understand cultural differences did not exist in prison scholarship at this time, the work undertaken by Jones and Cornes (1977) relied on questionnaires focused on officers background, including age and length of service to identify prison officer typology, rather than in-depth qualitative work, such as that I undertook, which allows for a greater understanding of culture. This research, therefore, makes an important contribution to understanding the factors that contribute to culture in the open prison setting, which, as I have already outlined, is distinct from other penal environments in many of these respects. The more sophisticated understanding of cultural difference among prison officers and the role, in part, of environment on this, adds further weight to my argument that there is a need to be sceptical about Jones and Cornes (1977) now dated finding of cultural similarity across closed and open institutions.

Maguire et al. (2012) argue that the impact of staff culture in the prison setting cannot be underestimated. Although different prisons can have differing cultures, shared cultural norms

have been found to still influence values, beliefs, customs and, most importantly, working practices (Crawley, 2004). Culture can shape what happens in an environment (Stohr et al. 2012), but more than that, Crawley (2004) notes that culture influences what is done and how it is done in a prison setting. She highlights how officers draw on cultural norms to decide how they should behave, and it is the adherence, or not, to these cultural norms that influence how rules are enforced and implemented. Culture does not exist in a vacuum, though, and there are multiple internal and external factors that influence this (Westmarland, 2008), including individuals' attitudes and perceptions, managerial demands, the leader of the organisation, the environment in which the role is performed and the current social and political, as well as historical, context (Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Maguire et al. 2012; Stohr et al. 2012).

Cockcroft (2016) argues that culture is influenced by how the role performed is perceived by wider society, as well as the business models adopted internally within organisations, and, for these reasons, organisational cultures are rarely likely to be the same (Cockcroft, 2016), further emphasising the need to explore culture in the open setting in more detail. An individual's previous experience and pre-existing attitudes also play a role in shaping culture, alongside that of peer influence (Westmarland, 2008). The influence of wider perceptions, among both the public and other prison staff, was pertinent to the findings of my research and contributed to the sense of spoiled identity I discuss. Similarly, Danks and Bradley (2018) found staff often framed their experiences in more distinct penal settings in the context of their experience in more traditional ones, a process I identify as contributing to prison staff perception of distinctness of the open setting.

Whilst cultures have been found to vary between different prison environments, similarities have also been observed, prompting the development of officer typologies (Crawley, 2004), albeit this

work is almost exclusively based on officers in various closed prison settings. It is important, therefore, to understand the degree to which similarities are present in an open prison setting and the relevance of existing typologies for understanding occupational culture there. As the understanding of cultural typologies and orientations have developed, there have been two approaches that have emerged, those who focus on taking a broad-brush approach to typologies, and those who have developed more nuanced ones. The broader approach focuses on two categories that fall at either ends of a cultural continuum often represented, at either end, by a focus on being discipline orientated or, at the other end, rehabilitation orientated, an approach that is reflected in my own findings. More nuanced typologies explore the variations at each end of this continuum in more detail, but as I will demonstrate here, more nuanced typologies still fall within these broader categories.

Gilbert (1997) was one of the first to discuss prison officers in terms of broad-brush typologies, although this built on earlier work by Muir (1977), who made similar observations in policing research. Typologies often fall into two broad-brush categories: the 'people work' (Goffman, 1961) and the 'bureaucrat' (Merton, 1961), or the disciplinarian/custodian approach and the human service/rehabilitation orientation (Farkas, 2000). Goffman (1961) identified the 'people work' approach as being focused on building, maintaining and using the relationships that staff had with prisoners to deal with the different personalities and issues that presented themselves in the course of a prison officer's work. This approach was flexible, as staff would adapt formal rules and procedures to maintain order, as well as the relationships they had developed.

Although more nuanced typologies have also been developed, I argue that many of them still fall into these broad categories. The 'people work' approach (Goffman, 1961) encompasses other more specific typologies such as the 'weatherman' (Carter, 1994), the 'reciprocator' (Gilbert, 1997) and, to some extent, the 'professional' (Carter, 1994), the 'humanitarian' (Scott, 2012), or

the 'give and takers' (Crawley, 2004). To a smaller extent there is also an element of the 'care bears' that Crawley (2004) identifies. The overlap observed in these more nuanced typologies demonstrate the level of flexibility that is present when utilising broader cultural typologies or orientations, such as those identified in my research.

Merton (1961) suggested the 'bureaucrat' as an opposing typology to Gilbert's (1961) 'people worker', and this is the other end of the spectrum in terms of broad-brush typologies. The approach of the 'bureaucrat' is much more akin to that of the 'traditional' view of the role of the prison officer, with greater adherence to formal procedure and discipline. Elements of the 'bureaucrat' (Merton, 1961) approach can also be seen in other typologies, such as the 'black and whiter's' (Carter, 1994, Crawley, 2004), the 'enforcer' (Gilbert, 1997), the 'disciplinarian' (Scott, 2012) and, to some extent, the 'avoider' (Gilbert, 1997). The more liberal regimes and focus on supportive aspects of prison work within open prisons discussed earlier may make them likely to be staffed by officers who fall into the human service/rehabilitation or 'people worker' orientations. Yet this cannot be assumed, especially considering the development of these orientations has occurred in more traditional penal settings where discipline, security and containment are considered more prominent. Research in more traditional penal settings indicates that the relationship between officer culture and the type of penal setting is complex and my thesis helps to unpack some of this complexity in the open setting.

Of course, officers' behaviour and approach, in reality, often moves between different more nuanced typologies because a high deal of flexibility is required in the role of the prison officer (Carter, 2004). Additionally, prison officers have been found to vary their style to suit the environment (Carter, 2004). Many officers sit on the edge of more nuanced typologies (Tait, 2011), further adding weight to my approach of utilising a broad conception of prison officer

orientations. This is especially relevant when undertaking research in a setting, such as the open prison, where little is known about officer culture, yet an element of adaptation is likely required due to the distinct nature of the environment. Some scholars, who study group or occupational culture more broadly are critical of even broad typologies, noting that it is at the individual level that the studies of culture should be of interest (see Boholm, 1996) and that an individual's commitment to cultural norms can be overestimated (Bromley, 2003). Yet as our understanding of culture has developed, its potential impact on approaches to prison work, at least, cannot be ignored. Whilst more nuanced typologies are useful and informative in various ways, the clear overlaps between more nuanced typologies and broad dichotomies can be considered a limitation which raises questions about the need to compartmentalise to this degree. In the context of cultural adaptation to the open prison setting explored in this research, it was a broad distinction into two orientations that best fit the research findings.

Discretion is an influential aspect of prison work (Crawley, 2004; Cockcroft, 2016). The use of discretion has been found to influence the whole prison environment (Liebling and Price, 2001), however, and also how policy is translated into practice (Cockcroft, 2016). There are many differing interpretations about the use of discretion, not only between different prison settings, but also between individuals within the same prison setting (Liebling, 2011). Discretion, then, is highly influential in prisons, impacting the quality of life and the working environment, especially when it comes to the implementation of formal procedures (Liebling and Price, 2001) and the relationships that staff and prisoners develop (Liebling et al. 2011). Prison officers possess a large amount of discretion which can lead to similar situations being dealt with in different ways, which Liebling (2004) notes can lead to inconsistencies in the application of the regime and rule negatively affecting staff-prisoner relations. Drake (2008) argues officers must strike a balance between power and discretion in particular, although this presents challenges due to the human services nature of prison work. This is one area that may present additional challenges in more

liberal regimes, like those in open prisons. My research echoes findings on the importance of discretion in prison work. In line with Ricciardelli's (2014) findings, it demonstrates how an officer's cultural orientation towards their occupational responsibilities influences their decision making, but also shows that this process becomes more complex in the distinct environment of the open prison where staff discretion is even greater than in closed settings. It has been established that prisoners as well as prison officers are often required to go through a process of adaptation when transferring between penal settings, which can be affected by the nature of the different settings. Next, I move on to explore what is understood about the need to and processes of adaptation, specifically to distinct penal settings.

3.4 Adapting To Distinct Penal Settings

Research on prisoners and prison staff has identified the need for adaptation when moving between different penal environments, and my thesis expands on this by considering the process in open prisons, for staff. Literature relating to other distinct prison settings, including Therapeutic Communities (TCs) and Secure Training Centres (STCs), has relevance for my research, then, as well as prisoner experiences of adaptation on transfer between sites. Here I consider this and its relevance.

3.4.1 Prisoner Experience Of Adaptation

Prisoner experiences of an open environment has been researched, with literature identifying what has been termed 'culture shock' on transfer (Brereton, 2013). This concept, however, is almost entirely derived from prisoners' experiences (see Atkinson, 1981; Shammass, 2014; Warr, 2008), making its relevance for staff unclear. In chapter seven I discuss how staff also have to adapt to the different regime and environment in open prisons. It is important, however, to recognise the limited value of research on prisoners for understanding staff experiences, since

they occupy very different positions within the institution, a point I explore further in the next chapter which discusses deployment of power and control in the open setting. It is likely, however, that there is some synergy between the experiences of prisoners and staff, on a broad level at least, but also possible that the 'us and them' culture (Crawley, 2004) identifies may preclude some officers from acknowledging these similarities. It has, however, been noted that in more distinct penal settings, where close proximity between staff and prisoners is intensified, prison work often cuts across this cultural norm (Crawley and Crawley, 2008). Whilst Crawley made this observation in relation to TCs, my thesis contributes to the understanding of this in another distinct penal setting.

Experiences of adaptation to the prison environment for prisoners is also sometimes understood in terms of the process of 'relocation stress', associated particularly with older inmates (Crawley and Sparks, 2006; Sieber et al. 1993). To reduce this stress, elements of adaption are required. Movement to an open prison environment has been seen as being particularly consequential for prisoners because of the distinct nature of the regime. Shamma (2014) highlights how simple activities, such as going for a walk or spending time with family outside of a controlled prison setting, can cause a great deal of stress and anxiety for prisoners who have transferred to open conditions and time is often needed to adjust to more liberal regimes. My thesis expands this to explore how staff experience, interpret and adapt to the more liberal regime and find their role as prison officers in this distinct penal environment.

Warr (2008) describes how both prisoners and staff change over time, becoming hardened to the prison environment, and it is not until they are faced with different circumstances, such as open prison conditions, that this is recognised by oneself. He goes on to argue that both prisoners and prison staff become institutionalised, without real self-awareness of how they have changed, and

it is not until the 'shock' of entering open conditions, where circumstances are so vastly different, that they become aware of this. Participants in my research were conscious of these processes within prisoner experiences and consider helping prisoners to manage this transition as part of their working role. This notion is also applicable to staff experiences, to some degree, then, and is especially relevant for understanding the time that is needed for staff to adapt to a distinct setting such as the open prison. I demonstrate, however, that their specific experiences of adaptation are different to those of prisoners.

3.4.2 Staff Adaptation To Distinct Prison Settings

There is a small amount of research considering staff adaptation when transferring between penal environments, but this often focuses on other types of distinct penal settings. Jones and Cornes (1977) discussed the need for adaptation to open prison work, arguing that officers struggled to do this, with some asking to be transferred back to closed conditions after not being able to function within a more liberal regime. This research is dated, however, and provides little in-depth insight into the processes of adaptation that officers go through and how culture can help or hinder the process of adaptation, in part, because of its methodology as mentioned earlier. Consequentially, whilst it is known officers need to adapt, little is understood about the process of adaptation they go through or the impact this has on them. This represents one of the most significant contributions of the current research.

Crawley (2004) also identifies a need for adaptation because the setting in which an officer works has an impact on the role they undertake. She claimed this was particularly apparent when transferring between mainstream prisons and TCs and so it has relevance for movement to distinct penal environments. As I suggested in chapter two, learning from TCs and other distinct penal settings is useful when exploring the challenges staff face in open settings, due to the more

liberal nature of the regimes and differing approaches to prison work across these institutions. Hagel et al. (2000), too, noted how staff shared a similar experience when transferring to STCs, often feeling confused and unclear of the purpose of the setting and needing time to adapt. Given a similar focus on the reformatory nature of prison work in the open setting officers will likely need time to adapt but, it is important to understand distinctions between this and other distinctive prison environments. Research, then, into the role of officers in TCs and STCs may offer valuable insight into similar transitions to open prisons.

Literature on staff adaptation to other distinct penal environments also sheds some light on what aspects might require adaptation. Whilst the open prison and, for example, TCs are distinct, they share some similarities. A key difference between mainstream prison settings and, for example, a therapeutic one is the way authority and power are used and this is one area identified as requiring adaptation. Maintaining control is a key aspect of a prison officer's work, yet more control rests with prisoners in such settings, and this requires adaptation (Crawley, 2004). Genders and Players (1995) identify that control in therapeutic settings is dependent on how the role officers play is modified, allowing the traditional social divides between prisoners and officers to be broken down, a clear element of adaptation. By breaking down these divides, officers can play a different role from that in a more traditional prison setting (Genders and Players, 1995). Whilst the breaking down of social divides observed by Genders and Players (1995) may have some relevance for open settings, these remain distinct from TCs, with one very much focused on treatment and the other on resettlement. It cannot, therefore, be assumed that processes of adaptation will necessarily be the same. Staff working in treatment settings may have a role that is distinctly recognisable from the more traditional role of the prison officer, whereas due to the lack of recognition of the distinct nature of the open environment, the role of the officer in here is

also less clearly acknowledged as distinct. As this thesis establishes, however, officers clearly see work in the open setting as different from more traditional prison settings.

Staff in more relaxed penal environments have been found to take on 'gentler occupational identities' (Kolind et al 2014:312) because they are in the right environment to do so. Yet this finding was observed in prison officer work in Nordic prisons more broadly, where the overall approach to imprisonment takes a different approach from that seen in the UK. Despite the recognition that a more relaxed environment might allow staff to take on a gentler identity (Kolind et al. 2014), Liebling et al. (2012:60) found that officers thought it important to 'be themselves' as much as possible in any prison setting. This often led officers to gravitate towards specific sections of a prison that suited their working style and personality. This indicates that, whilst officers are not specifically trained for the open setting, only certain types of officers, those who take a more human services approach to their work are more likely to staff distinct settings such as the open prison. This research does not indicate that officers gravitate specifically towards the open prison in this way.

Research suggests that adopting different identities in prison work is not without issue or internal conflict, especially when seen in context of prison work in mainstream prison settings. Officers who place a greater emphasis on security and discipline struggle the most to adapt to more distinct roles. Walmsley (1989) identified that suspicion and conflict between officers could be caused by the role they selected, with those in mainstream settings harbouring resentment or negative opinions towards those who chose to work in specialist secure units or therapeutic settings. This is further supported by Crawley (2004:219), who identified how working in TCs or other similar communities can lead to challenges from mainstream prison staff, who viewed such work as not 'proper' prison work. Yet again, however, the view of officers working in mainstream

prisons towards those who choose to work in open settings is not established in existing literature. Nor do we understand how prison work in the open prison setting is viewed by the officers that staff these distinct establishments. As noted earlier, TCs are perhaps even more distinct when compared to mainstream prison settings due to their emphasis on treatment. Open and closed prisons, in theory at least, share some core aims and the open prison is recognised as situated on the same penal continuum as more traditional penal settings. Research is necessary to establish, therefore, how such work is regarded by prison officers.

Staff adaption to distinct penal environments has been found to take time and can generate challenges (Hagel et al. 2000; Crawley, 2004; Day et al. 2012). Whilst benefits to the role played in more relaxed prison environments are noted, working in such an environment can also create internal conflict for staff (Crawley, 2004). Nylander et al. (2011) found that, whilst the role of the officer more broadly was moving towards more specialised work focusing on treatment and rehabilitation, security remained a priority, creating a dilemma for an officer's occupational role. Whilst this has been observed in more traditional prison settings, this is likely to be especially relevant in a more liberal setting, such as the open prison, where physical security is at its lowest. The competing aims of punishment and reform create tensions within prison work generally (Carbonell, 2014), sometimes generating role conflict for staff (Crawley, 2004; Lindberg, 2005; Lloyd et al. 2017). This role conflict is not something that is unique to distinct prison settings but is present, to a greater or lesser extent, across many types of prison setting. Yet the extent of this conflict in the open setting is not yet understood, something my thesis aims to address. As well as a more relaxed environment and an emphasis on different aims, creating conflict for staff, the management of staff-prisoner relationships is also challenging in non-typical prison settings. The next section explores the distinct nature of these relationship, a further element of the distinct social milieu to which officers must adapt.

3.4.3 Adapting To Different Kinds Staff-Prisoner of Relationships

Whilst there is little information on the specific nature of relationships in the open setting, there is a greater breadth of knowledge from explorations in closed institutions (see Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004; Lindberg, 2005; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Crewe, 2011). As with other elements of this thesis, it is useful to establish what is known about staff-prisoner relationships as a point of comparison for the findings in this research. Chapter seven explores how staff view, approach and utilise relationships in the open setting and how adapting to these is influenced by occupational culture, or more specifically an officer's cultural orientation. Crewe (2011) argues that historically relationships between officers and prisoners generally within the prison system were poor, yet the softening of penal power in recent years has had a positive influence on this (Crewe, 2011). In the next chapter I explore Crewe's (2011) arguments about the deployment of soft power techniques and the importance of staff-prisoner relationships for maintaining order and control. Here, however, my focus is the importance of staff-prisoner relationships to prison work and the processes of adaptation staff have been found to need to adjust to the altered nature of these in distinct penal settings.

Research suggests that what is required and possible in terms of developing and maintaining relationships in prison varies substantially between different types of establishments (Sparkes et al. 1996; Liebling et al. 2011). Whilst findings on what makes relationships effective vary, a clear thread of agreement is that staff-prisoner relationships, and getting this right, is both complex and highly significant. For Liebling et al. (2011: 84) one of the key challenges of prison work is to ensure that relationships between staff and prisoners are 'right', yet it is not always clear what right relationships look like, and this is likely to vary in different places and from different perspectives. Traditional prison culture means that prisoners are often suspicious of inmates who are overly friendly with staff, and it is hard for the prisoners to judge the sincerity of relationships

because officers still have to do their job, which often involves submitting negative reports and 'nicking' prisoners even if there are good relationships (Crewe, 2011). Distinctions are made by staff to accommodate this conflict. Consequently, whilst the importance of relationships is widely acknowledged by officers, it is equally important that these relationships are 'right' rather than just 'good' (Liebling, 2004). Right relationships have clear boundaries and are respectful, yet allow the prison to continue to operate as a prison (Liebling, 2004). Similarly, Sparkes et al. (1996) noted that there were different ways in which relationships could go wrong, including being too flexible or too ridged, too close or too distant, meaning the appropriate balance can be hard to establish. Genders and Player (1995) argue that getting relationships 'right' in more distinct penal settings was more difficult than in other penal settings, however, when they were 'right' officers found their work both rewarding and fulfilling. This has some similarity with my findings in chapter seven about how officers' view the impact their work has carried implications for the re-legitimisation of their role when their occupational identity becomes conflicted or spoiled.

This variation between establishments further adds weight to the importance of understanding relationships in the open setting, an area to which my thesis contributes. Existing research indicates, then, it is likely that relationships between staff and prisoners, in the open setting, will differ to those, officers may have built in other prison settings and, therefore, a certain amount of adaptation to these may be required. We do have some insight into staff-prisoner relationships in open settings although it is dated. Jones and Cornes (1977) identified that relationships could be a source of conflict for staff, and this has also been found in other types of penal setting that are distinct from mainstream environments (Crawley, 2004). Given the effect of the softening of penal power which Crewe (2011) discusses on relationships in prisons, however, the nature of staff-prisoner relationships may well be significantly different to that found in the 1970s. Some research since then has explored staff-prisoner relationships in open prisons, finding them more

relaxed and open when compared to more traditional penal institutions (Menis, 2020; Mjoland et al. 2021; Marder and Lapauge, 2021). None of these studies, however, were primarily concerned with the officers experience of these relationships or the interplay of occupational culture on these in the way this thesis does. So, my research both expands existing knowledge and brings insights up-to-date.

Other more liberal regimes have also been found to produce distinctive relationships between staff and prisoners. One aspect these lead to is increased levels of time and space shared between staff and prisoners which has an impact on relationships that requires staff to adapt. In training prisons, which are similar to open prisons in that interactions between staff and prisoners are prolonged and regimes are more liberal, staff recognised that they could not ‘fob off’ prisoners in the same way as in other settings (McDermott and King, 1988:363). My research explores how this impacts the way relationships develop and are managed between staff and prisoners in such settings. The notion of not being able to get away from prisoners and the impact of this on relationships is an element with relevance for this research, as explored in chapter seven. There is a greater breadth of understanding of the differing nature of staff-prisoner relationships in specialist settings, such as therapeutic communities (Genders and Player, 1995; Crawley, 2004; Nylander et al. 2011) and other small specialist units (Martin, 1991; Needs, 1993; Bottomley, 1994; Clare et al. 2001), than for open prisons. Traditional officer culture focuses on maintaining an ‘us’ and ‘them’ boundary which can create barriers (Lindberg, 2005), but staff who engage in more specialist work find they cut across this cultural norm (Crawley and Crawley, 2008). Whilst this observation was made in relation to the therapeutic community, the distinct nature of the open prison lends itself to be identified as a specialist setting in which a different type of work is undertaken.

Increased sharing of space can mean that developing and managing relationships, especially balancing 'being friendly' versus 'being friends' (Crawley, 2004), can also present greater challenges in a more relaxed environment. Nylander et al. (2011) found in treatment prisons, another distinct penal environment, that there are rarely any 'backstage' areas in which staff can let off steam because of the close interaction between staff and prisoners, which again created greater emotional strain for officers. This was also evident in my findings, and I explore the importance of staff only spaces in an open setting, an aspect not fully understood in the existing literature. Research on distinct penal environments, then, indicates both the need for and challenges that staff may face when working in and adapting to the open prison setting. It cannot be assumed that processes will be identical, however, and my research assesses the degree to which such observations are relevant for staff working there.

3.5 Chapter Summary

The physically and socially distinct nature of open prisons, as set out in chapter two, makes it likely that staff working there will need to adapt their working practices and occupational culture plays a role in this, a finding my research confirms. Consequently, this chapter has focused on reviewing broader literature on the prison officer role, their occupational identities and culture as well as the need to adapt to distinct penal settings. Its aim was to justify my research approach and highlight its contribution to knowledge, as well as delivering key information that frames the findings delivered later in the thesis, particularly those in chapter seven, which explores, in depth, the cultural adaptation evident among staff working in open conditions. Whilst research on the open prison and its staff may be sparse, this chapter has demonstrated the broad range of penal literature to which this thesis has something to contribute. Despite our increasing knowledge of prison work and the occupational culture surrounding it, there remain unanswered questions and issues to explore.

The role of the prison officer is complex and this increases when considered across different prison settings. Research also identifies, however, the importance of the prison officer on the prison environment and their role in implementing change. A broad range of skills are valued within the occupational culture of prison work and there are conflicts within the role which require balancing. Some of the discussion here considered key knowledge about prison officer culture in general, which helps to provide a point of comparison for my findings. One contribution of my research is that it expands work on prison officer culture by considering the open setting and assessing the relevance of broader concepts and cultural typologies there. The development and impact of prison officer culture was, therefore, discussed, with particular focus on the different typologies that have been deployed to accommodate the individual variety inevitably evident in research on prison officers. Research demonstrates the flexibility of officer culture across different settings, but also identifies broader core cultural characteristics. These have often been understood as particular 'types' to make manageable understandings of how culture influences the way officers undertake their work and how they view the aims of imprisonment.

My thesis identifies its own approach to understand officer culture, which is designed to convey the two dominant cultural orientations that prison officers adopted in order to manage the process of adaptation to open conditions. Consequently, elements of other cultural typologies were explored which have contributed to my analysis, which is mostly developed in chapter seven. Two tendencies are evident within these typologies. The first I call the 'broad' approach where two opposing types are presented as the most meaningful way for understanding differences in culture. The second I refer to as 'nuanced' where a wide variety of types are put forward. With the focus of this research, in terms of culture, being aligned with Scott's definition (2012), this chapter has demonstrated that whilst considering the nuances of culture are of use, broader approaches to understanding culture in the open setting provide the most value at this

time, as I highlight with my discussion on officers' broader cultural orientations in chapter seven. I offered some assessment of the strengths and limitations of the two approaches, and indeed of the notion of typologies as a whole. I also established why the broad approach was adopted to understand my findings.

The final section considered research on undertaking work in distinct penal settings and the impacts this can have on prison officers, especially in terms of balancing conflicting aims and adapting approaches to work in such environments. This knowledge offers insights that assist to contextualise and understand the experience of officers in open settings with which I am concerned. Throughout the chapter, however, I make the case that the role and experience of staff in open prisons cannot be assumed based on research exploring other settings due to their distinctive nature. This forms one of the prominent justifications for the research in terms of its original contribution to knowledge. The few insights we have into open prisons, both in terms of staff and prisoners, was drawn on, but the discussion focused mainly on what is known about TCs and STCs, which have been acknowledged as distinct penal settings that have some similarities with open prisons. The chapter, therefore, further highlights the lack of knowledge specifically related to staff in open prisons. More relaxed or liberal regimes are recognised as presenting particular challenges for staff working in them which require adaptation. One key element among these relates to managing staff-prisoners relationships. The impact that more relaxed penal settings can have on the development, maintenance and purpose of staff-prisoner relationships and the need for officers to adapt is well established in other distinct penal environments, and I explore this for open prisons in chapter seven. Research on a range of distinct settings indicates that more relaxed settings lead officers to play a role that can only be successful if it is divergent from the more traditional approach and that adaptation is necessary to accommodate this, which takes time and can sometimes cause stress for staff. As will be seen in chapter seven, there are

elements of this which apply to the experience of adaptation to an open setting but there are also key areas of distinction as well as aspects which I explore in greater detail than this research on other settings has. While we know that adaptation is necessary when officers move to different penal settings, particularly those which are distinct such as TCs and STCs, most discussions of this recognise adaptation, mainly, in terms of challenges that this presents. There is less focus on how officers manage this process of adaptation or the role that their occupational culture plays in this. One original contribution of this research is that it explores how officers adapt and the influence of their occupational culture on this process.

The next chapter moves on to explore literature on the deployment of power and authority to assist with the maintenance of control and order in prisons. As with many other areas, there is little research that explores this directly in relation to open prisons, yet I explore findings from other settings, thus identifying gaps in the literature to which my thesis responds.

Chapter Four: Power, Authority, And Control In The Prison Setting

4.1 Introduction

The maintenance of order in a prison setting has been widely studied because of its central importance to the institution and the many obstacles to achieving and maintaining this (Sparks et al. 1999; Jewkes, 2016). The notion of maintaining order and the way power is deployed in prisons with very few physical security measures, such as the open prison, is, however, conspicuously absent from prison literature. This is one of the key elements of distinctiveness about open prisons, as set out in chapter two. The previous chapter explored literature on prison officer culture and the process of adaptation to distinct prison settings, framing the discussion of adaptation to open settings, subsequently explored in chapter seven and identifying gaps to which this thesis responds. This chapter turns to the use of power and authority to maintain control and order in a prison setting, another prominent element in my research findings explored in chapter eight. Again, as with many other aspects of the open prison, there is little direct work that frames this. Considering what is known about more traditional prison settings, along with other kinds of distinct establishments, provides a framework around which the analysis, particularly that presented in chapter eight, is situated. It is this which the current chapter sets out to do.

Current knowledge about the deployment of power and authority and the maintenance of control is almost exclusively focused on these issues *within* prison boundaries. This continues despite growing recognition that prison boundaries are more permeable than previously thought (Baer and Ravneberg, 2008; Turner, 2016). This suggestion is applicable across the penal spectrum (Turner, 2016) but, I argue, is particularly relevant for understanding order in open prisons. The neglect of this aspect of order maintenance, therefore, impedes full awareness of these processes in the open setting. Understanding of how power and authority are exercised

outside the prison boundary, where it exists, is usually linked to how prisoners experience other types of setting, such as halfway houses or in relation to electronic monitoring and licence conditions (Caputo 2004; Allspach, 2011; Gill, 2013; Wong et al. 2018; Maier, 2018; Cracknall, 2020). Little is known, therefore, of the role of prison officers in this. Consequently, the way elements of control spill outside the open prison boundary, thus extending the reach of prison work and the need for control on a daily basis, is yet to be acknowledged as a core part of prison officer work, in that setting at least. My thesis demonstrates that prison work routinely extends outside of the prison boundary in the open setting with consequences for how power and authority operate there. Liebling and Crewe (2012: 895) note that prisons are 'exemplary sites for the study of power'. I expand this, demonstrating how open prisons are no exception, but also identifying and exploring elements of distinctness in relation to this that are not yet fully understood.

Achieving order is an important goal for any prison and is considered one of the administration's most important tasks (Logan, 1993; Sparks et al. 1999). As my analysis in chapter eight demonstrates, distinct methods of achieving order and deployment of power and authority are evident in the open prison. This includes how soft power is deployed when physical security is lessened and prisoner responsibility increased. These different approaches, in combination with other elements of the distinct environment of the open prison, require elements of adaptation for both prison staff and prisoners. As identified in the previous chapter, little is known about staff adaptation to the open prison and prison work in these settings, and a key facet of this is a limited understanding of how staff deploy power and control. Findings suggest a complex picture. It remains the case, for example, that elements of traditional methods of control, such as the management of time and space, surveillance and physical security, which discussions highlight as central to control in other penal environments, continue to be so in the open setting. In some

respects, this lessens its distinctive nature, although staff recognition of this is often minimal. The requirement to regularly maintain order or deploy power outside the prison boundary, however, is a distinctive element of this in open settings. This represents a key area of knowledge to which my thesis contributes and so it is necessary to review existing literature on the topic in order to frame later discussion.

Despite the apparent freedoms afforded to prisoners in the open setting, mechanisms of control and discipline have been recognised as firmly situating the open prison as a penal establishment (Maier, 2020). Often studies of power in prisons are viewed and understood from a prisoner's perspective with a particular focus on prisoner experience. Whilst some of this literature, especially in relation to soft power and prisoner responsabilisation (Crewe, 2009, 2011), or the 'pains of imprisonment' (Sykes, 1958) and later the 'pains of freedom' (Shammas 2014), its relevance to this thesis is limited because I make no claims about how prisoners experience power and control in the open setting for reasons outlined in chapter one. As argued by Ugelvik (2014:5), "prison is a social space in which an attempt is made to create and maintain more comprehensive and ridged control over people than is normal in most other places, and where dividing lines between groups are very clear." This thesis focuses on the work of prison officers, the process of adaptations they experience and their perceptions of the distinctness of their working environment. The focus, therefore, remains on the way officers, rather than prisoners, experience and navigate prison work in the open prison setting.

To explore literature on power and order in penal environments consideration is first given to the notion of a shift towards soft power and prisoner responsabilisation (Crewe, 2009, 2011).

Although often discussed in the context of prisoner experiences, such ideas will here, be explored with a focus on the views of staff deploying power and authority in such ways. Then, this chapter

explores the various ways in which time and space have been recognised as common methods of control in prison settings generally. I will highlight the way these can be viewed as distinct in the open setting, meaning assumptions from literature on other prison environments may not provide a full appreciation of the situation there. The different nature of staff-prisoner relationships in distinct penal environments was presented in the previous chapter, but they are also afforded a prominent role in the deployment of power, authority and control in the prison setting. Consequently, they are considered in that respect here. Again, whilst much of this research is linked to more traditional prison settings, the small number of studies on the role of staff-prisoner relationships in the deployment of power are also considered. Finally, I discuss how the elements of distinctiveness that make up the physical and social milieu of the open prison, and an officers need to adapt to this, can contribute to the notion of spoiled occupational identities and the requirement to manage these. This has been recognised in relation to other distinct penal environments but is, as yet an unexplored concept in relation to staff in open prisons specifically.

4.2 Changes To Penal Power

Research on power and control in prisons has moved away from a focus on physical security towards considerations of soft power and the pains of freedom (Crewe, 2009, 2011; Shamma, 2014, 2015; Maitra, 2019). Such a shift has the potential to be relevant for understanding open prisons where physical security has always been less prominent to control. Indeed, some research has specifically focused on these settings (Shamma, 2015). The primary concern within this work, however, has remained the experience of prisoners, following on from the approach adopted by the classic work on the pains of imprisonment developed by Sykes (1958) in the 1950s. This limits its capacity to assist in understanding staff and the maintenance of order in open environments. I

will here review this literature to consider its relevance and limitations for framing the arguments I make in this thesis.

Crewe (2009, 2011) identifies a softening of penal power, involving the move towards neo-paternalistic control rather than physical force, which he argues has been seen across the whole prison system. This has been particularly influential in understandings of control and authority in prisons in the contemporary era. Sykes (1958:64) described how 'severe bodily suffering', at the time his research was conducted, was not a central part of imprisonment with pains having shifted towards more psychological ones. Whilst it could be argued that it was at this point, the shift towards a softer penal power was observed, Crewe (2011:510) notes how a review of accounts of imprisonment in the following decades demonstrates how Sykes had been 'unduly optimistic' in his belief of the shift away from physical forms of control. Crewe (2011:514) notes how this shift had not been complete, and that penal power, and its 'unpredictable nature' still causes uncertainty and insecurities for prisoners. Whilst the way in which prisoners experience the of softening penal power is an important part of prisoner scholarship, here I focus, where possible on how officers may experience and deploy soft power in the context of the open prison setting.

Soft power has been described as reducing the collective power of officers and representing an increased reliance on negotiated relationships and the 'power of the pen' (Crewe, 2009: 115). Thus, further reducing physical levels of control, relying more on psychological approaches and emphasizing the need for prisoner self-governance (Crewe, 2011). As such there are overlaps between this and work on prisoner responsabilisation and the pains of freedom. The more relaxed regime present in open prisons perhaps lends itself to the argument that the notion of 'soft power', as identified by Crewe (2011), is most evident in such settings. In chapter eight I clearly

demonstrate that the concept of soft power is reflected in the type of work that officers undertake, as well as how they deploy their power and authority in the open setting to maintain control. There are problems, however, with applying Crewe's approach to open settings without modification. In more secure prison settings, which make up the majority of Crewe's research sites, officers have elements of physical security and higher levels of staff to fall back on in a way that the open prison does not. As the history of open prisons and other semi-penal institutions set out in chapter 2 demonstrates, a different, or what I refer to as a softer, approach to maintaining power, authority and control in the absence of high staffing levels and physical boundaries in the open setting was utilised by staff prior to the neo-liberal shift seen in other more traditional penal settings. Jones and Cornes (1977), for example, noted how staff took a softer and more relaxed approach in longer-term open prisons in the 1970s. In line with this, I argue that such an approach to power and control in the open setting pre-dates the advent of soft power as described by Crewe (2011) in its application to more traditional penal settings. The shift to softer forms of power, therefore, is likely to have been less significant for open prisons.

A broader adoption of the use of soft power in prisons, which Crewe argues has taken place, could, therefore, lessen the distinctiveness of open environments, making staff adaptation to the use of power in these less necessary. My research, however, finds that staff perceived the operation of power and control in open settings to be markedly different to closed environments and do feel the need to adapt their ways of working to reflect this. The softening of power Crewe (2011) describes more widely, therefore, seems to still remain minimal in relation to the role of soft power in open prisons. Furthermore, the situation in relation to maintaining control in these environments is further complicated by the need to exert control outside the prison boundary on a regular basis, something which is largely unrecognised in the sociology of penal control, and which becomes more prominent when adopting a staff focused perspective. Discussions of the

softening of penal power, I argue, would benefit from greater assessment of the degree to which this is evident in different kinds of institutions. It is also largely internally focused, with little consideration to the application of this outside the prison boundary. Given that this element of prison work is prominent in the open prison, as I demonstrate in chapter eight, existing research on soft power is limited in terms of its ability to help understand this distinctive environment.

4.2.1 Prisoner Responsibilisation And The Pains Of Freedom

Alongside and overlapping with a consideration of soft power in prisons has been a concern to understand the implications of prisoner responsibility on the maintenance of order and control in prisons. Soft power itself has been seen as generating new pains of imprisonment for prisoners (Crewe, 2007, 2009) and work by Shamma (2015) has considered this in the open setting specifically through his concept of the pains of freedom. The open prison is a setting in which traditional forms of officer power and control is perceived to be at its lowest. This is not only reflected in the greater reliance on soft power techniques, but also the increased levels of responsibility which prisoners possess both within and outside the prison boundary. In open institutions prisoners are afforded greater responsibility, freedom and privileges.

Responsibilisation, then, it could be argued, is at its peak in such settings, meaning the challenges of balancing mechanisms of control with allowing increased freedom to prisoners presents a significant challenge. Research has, indeed, offered some support for this suggestion. Shamma (2015:3) notes how “open prisons are uniquely situated to disciplining and controlling prison populations, crucially, by giving inmates something to lose and threatening to take it away ... this is a fundamental disciplinary innovation of the open prison.” Whilst my thesis does not explore how prisoners experience the open prison setting, which is Shamma’s primary concern, staff perceptions of what influences control over prisoner populations are often related to this idea.

The open prison environment can cause confusion for prisoners as it encourages autonomy, but levels of imposed control remain high (Marder and Lapauge, 2021). Whilst the literature on responsabilisation, the pains of freedom and self-governance (Crewe, 2011; Shamma, 2014) primarily focuses on prisoner experience, it does provide interesting context for thinking about the deployment of control techniques which are important in an open prison, such as roll call, drugs and alcohol testing, curfews and report writing (Maier, 2020). These are all examples of softer penal power or, as Crewe (2009) describes it, power at a distance in action. Since these reflect key approaches to power, control and the deployment of authority in the open setting it is important to consider the literature relating to them. Despite its primary focus on prisoners, rather than staff, since my thesis engages with the staff views on these techniques and their perceptions of the levels of authority and control such approaches afford officers in the open setting.

Research on lifers and long-sentence prisoners has also touched on issues relevant for understanding power and authority in open prisons. Jarman (2020) notes that these prisoners, who make up much of the population in an open establishment, exist in a situation where release is based on satisfactory performance. They must demonstrate change and comply with rehabilitative aims and requirements, making the role of staff to ensure that such changes have been observed and noted. This enables officer discretion to play a large role in such situations. In any prison – open or closed – prisoners' lives are conducted visibly, meaning friendships and relationships form under the 'gaze' of both other prisoners and staff (Rowe, 2016:335). This makes it hard for prisoners to deal with normal domestic conflicts that may arise from living in close contact with a large number of people, and prisoners reaction to being watched can result in disciplinary action (Rowe, 2016). Whilst this is true in any prison setting, the consequences of disciplinary action for prisoners in the latter stages of their sentence in an open prison can be the

difference between being released into the community or being returned to closed conditions. This adds an extra dimension to the power of staff which has been little considered in work on occupational culture and the sociology of penal control. Understanding how prison officers deploy their power and authority in relation to this within the open setting, which my thesis does, is of importance, then, to understand the relationship of staff to longer-sentence prisoners and their release. Behavioural expectations on prisoners are recognised as being high in the open setting (Danks and Bradley, 2018), and I demonstrate how this is related to staff perceptions that prisoners should earn the privileges open prison affords, and not just the institutional setup of open prisons.

There is recognition that being transferred to an open prison setting is often seen as a reward and privilege in itself (Matthews, 1999), despite the fact that for many prisoners dealing with this environment can be fraught with difficulty. Shammass (2014) argues that the greater levels of freedom, movement and responsibility afforded to prisoners in the open setting can lead to feelings of confusion about their role, living in two contrasting worlds, the boundlessness of which can be fraught with anxiety. Similarly, Neumann (2012:148) notes how prisoners in more relaxed settings must 'build inner bars' to cope and Crawley and Sparks (2006) identified that, for some prisoner's, prison life is easier to manage when contact to the outside world is cut. This research indicates the level of adaption required by prisoners to the open environment which is related to the concept of culture shock discussed in the previous chapter. Differences in the operation of power, authority and control underpin many of these challenges but, we know little of how staff perceive or adapt to this, or the ways in which their work involves assisting prisoners to adapt to these changes.

One important area my thesis considers is the way officers see the connection with the outside world, a key element of the open prison, and how this requires them to work with prisoners to support what they consider to be the process of de-institutionalisation. The lessening of traditional penal power is an important element in how the open prison prompts such a process. Research on lifers has considered this to some degree, although again the focus is prisoner experiences. Kazemain and Travis (2015) observe that lifers are often ill-equipped to deal with life outside the prison setting (Kazemain and Travis, 2015), making their release into the community challenging. The open prison, as we saw from its history, is designed in part to support prisoners to resettle into the community after an extended period in prison and involves frequent release into the community in a way that prisoners may not have experienced for many years. I argue that supporting prisoners with this is a key element of prison officer work in the open setting. My thesis, however, engages with the ideas of resettlement, re-integration and de-institutionalisation of prisoners but focuses on the role of staff in this within the distinctive open prison environment. This has not explicitly been discussed as an aspect of day-to-day prison work and represents an original contribution of my thesis which, may have relevance, for work undertaken in other settings as well.

4.3 Controlling Time And Space In The Open Prison

The use of time and space, the enforcement and distribution of rewards and punishments (Jackson et al. 2010), and staff-prisoner relationships (Liebling, 2004, Sparks et al. 1996), all involve elements of a softer approach to penal power and are three key elements of maintaining order in any prison setting recognised through the literature, I now consider each of these in turn. They have been found to be used in various ways within prisons to help maintain order but, most prominently, through the establishment of a daily regime to control prisoner movements and as a form of reward and punishment (Matthews, 1999; Sparks et al. 1999; Martine and Michelson,

2009). Time is the core structure around which prison life is built (Moran, 2012) and, like space, is closely linked to control since it is a tool through which order is realised (Matthews, 1999). Moran (2012) argues, therefore, that these two concepts are tightly bound and should be studied together. My research supports this as the interplay between both time and space remains important in an open setting. I expand on Moran's work, however, by demonstrating how the work of prison officers in terms of control over space and time, the management of risk and the deployment of authority extends beyond the prison boundary in ways that it does not in other penal establishments.

Prison is a time-centred mode of punishment since most people will eventually be released (Martin and Michelson, 2009). Time is more uncertain, though, for prisoners on indeterminate or life sentences, many of whom reside in the open prison. Whilst the importance of time in a prison setting has not been ignored in the literature (Matthews, 1999; Moran, 2012) the focus again tends to be on how prisoners experience time, the coping mechanisms they employ whilst 'serving time', or how time is used as a method of control (Rawlinson, 2019; Matthews, 1999; Wahidin, 2006; Liebling, 2004). Little attention has been paid to the way time and space are used, from the perspective of staff, to deploy authority and control, especially in the open setting. How this may differ from closed establishments or impact on how officers approach prison work there, then, remains unknown.

In their work on open prisons Jones and Cornes (1977) acknowledged the importance of time, recognising officers are afforded greater amounts of this to undertake different types of work in the open prison setting which contributes to the maintenance of order, a finding I confirm is still relevant. More recently Shammass (2015) and Danks and Bradley (2018) have also highlighted how staff see time as an enabling factor in the open setting, assisting them to engage with supportive

and caring aspects of their role in ways they cannot in traditional penal settings, further contributing to a more ordered environment. Others touch on the importance of time in other ways more generally in prisons, seeing it as valuable for building trust in relationships (Liebling, 2004) and getting work done (Crawley, 2004). Due to the limited specific focus on the open setting in existing research, as with the previous two chapters, here I draw on wider prison literature that explores methods of control over time and space in a prison setting, drawing out the points most relevant to the open prison.

4.3.1 The Daily Regime And Locked Doors

One of the central features of prison life is the routine around which the day is built (Matthews, 1999). This acts as a form of discipline, helping the prison to function and bringing non-conformers into line (Wahidin, 2006). The use of a daily regime as a form of control is common across all prison settings, including open prisons, useful for ensuring prisoners are in the correct place at the correct time and allowing prison officers to identify and note non-compliance. Identifying non-compliance – or someone who is out of place – is an important part of how officers control time and space to undertake their role. During these times prison officers can look at spaces that should not be occupied by prisoners which helps them identify risk (Van Hoven and Sibley, 2008). Control is partly about making sure prisoners are in the right space at the right time (Ugelvik, 2014), then, and, as we shall see in chapter eight, the regime continues to function in this way in open settings, albeit more subtly. Sleeping, eating and waking are all controlled by time in prisons (Wahidin, 2006), with regimes having been considered to maintain power and nullify resistance (Ugelvik, 2014). These more direct forms of control are, however, at odds with the more relaxed nature of the open prison environment. Culture can influence the level of importance that officers place on perceived control over prisoner movements, and chapter eight demonstrates how this is no different in the open setting.

A prison regime is just one approach to security, but it works alongside other aspects, such as locked doors and relationships (Ugelvik, 2014). Prison is a form of physical separation designed to punish prisoners, it tightly controls a prisoner's interaction with society by keeping them in a designated space (Martin and Michaelson, 2009). Prisons are often characterised by high walls and locked doors, designed to hold individuals against their will through hard boundaries (Matthews, 1999). Yet open prisons lack these physical characteristics, with boundaries being considerably more permeable (Matthews, 1999; Jones and Cornes, 1977) as prisoners and staff often cross the boundary between the prison and the wider community (Turner, 2015). As seen in chapter two, the role of the open prison often involves prisoners leaving the prison boundary to spend time outside of the prison environment via the use of ROTL. If prisoners cross these softer boundaries in an unauthorised way, however, or at the wrong time, the consequences can have long-term negative impacts for the rest of their sentence. This frequent and extensive use of ROTL sets the open prison apart from other establishments (MOJ, 2019), but also means that control over prisoners and their routines extends outside of the prison boundary on a regular basis. This extension outside of the boundary at a frequency not seen in other penal settings has significant implications for how officers maintain control when working in open settings and this has been neglected in existing literature.

Labour and spending time in a purposeful way are both recognised as tools to maintain control in a variety of prison environments (Guilband, 2010; Libelling, 2004) but in more traditional prison settings this mostly occurs inside the prison boundary. The use of ROTL allows the open prison to take this outside of the prison boundary, thus further extending its power and reach but also the trust and responsibility given to prisoners in a way not seen in other settings. Electronic monitoring (Gill, 2013) and halfway house accommodation (Allspach, 2010) have been recognised as extensions of carceral space which create penal-like spaces in the community, yet these are

not staffed by prison officers and are not viewed, by staff at least, as penal establishments in the same way as an open prison. They do involve control over prisoners' movements outside the prison via the use of licence conditions and spot checks, although the frequency of these and staff's views of them as forms of control are poorly understood. This thesis demonstrates how officers see part of their work as managing risk outside of the prison boundary which requires adapted working practices. Officers and prisoners' lives can often cross out in the community, thus extending the need for officers to do prison work outside the prison boundary and tightly control the times at which prisoners cross this boundary. I argue that this reflects an extension of power and control and the deployment of authority outside of the prison boundary, an element of officers work that has not be formally recognised, but which my thesis explores. As well as control over movement, in the case of the open prison both within and outside of the prison boundary, the use of rewards and punishments are a key element of maintaining control.

4.3.2 Rewards And Punishments As Methods Of Control

Historically, when looking at issues relating to control in a justice setting, much focus has been on rewards and sanctions (Reisig and Mesko, 2009). As identified so far in this chapter, penal power relies on several mechanisms including the use of rewards and punishment via the granting or removal of privileges (Scott, 2006). Staff have been found to be conscious that time is something they can use as both a reward and punishment and of their role in controlling how prisoners use their time and access space to help ensure compliance (Wahidin, 2006; Mathews, 1999).

Traditionally punishments in the prison setting have been linked to the removal of space or time privileges (Sparks et al. 1996), making their use as a form of reward or punishment in a prison setting a long-standing element of maintaining control and order. While the 'carrot and stick' approach has frequently been called into question (Reisig and Mesko, 2009), it still plays a part in the modern UK prison system in the form of the Incentive Earned Privileges (IEPs) (Drake, 2008).

The IEP scheme was designed to help create a more disciplined environment and aid the maintenance of control by incentivising prisoners to engage in responsible behaviour (Bottoms, 2003). Crewe (2011:519) describes it as a form of 'psychological power' which has replaced more physical forms of punishment, although elements of its ethos can be traced back to the marks scheme introduced in the nineteenth century (Maconochie, 1859).

Recent amendment to the Incentives Policy Framework (MOJ, 2019) recognises that both time and space are powerful tools when trying to achieve compliance. This policy also applies in open prisons, but there are important differences to the way that time and space operate as a form of control there as well. Staff in my research perceived that many of the rewards afforded to prisoners in the open prison setting were earned overtime. Rawlinson (2019) argues that time in shared spaces and family visits should be used as a reward to achieve compliance across all types of prison, but the extent which this is possible is far greater in the open prison as it allows increased time for prisoners out of their cell or with their families, both in the prison environment and within the community. This can be for extended periods of time via the use of ROTL. The ultimate way that time and space relate to punishment in the open prison is the return to closed conditions as a result of non-compliance, something discussed in detail in chapter eight as it represents a key form of control. The value prisoners place on time, and the possible loss of time in the form of punishment, has been recognised as acting as a motivator for compliance (Matthews, 1999). So, whilst the absence of lock doors or perimeter fences may be noted by prison staff in open settings, they also recognised that they maintain the authority to return prisoners to a more secure setting at any point.

Whilst it is recognised that rewards and punishments, such as the IEP scheme, are not the only way to maintain order, they certainly assist this. Prisoners can resent such schemes, however, although the formalisation of the process is considered to have led to a fairer approach to the application of rewards and punishments (Jewkes et al. 2016). Khan (2016) argues that the effectiveness of the IEP scheme is reliant on the perceived fairness and legitimacy of the scheme by prisoners, as well as the way it is implemented by staff. Consequently, whilst the rewards and punishment approach can contribute to order and control in prisons, to be effective it needs to be used in a way that prisoners deem fair and legitimate (Khan, 2016). The expanded capacity for time and space to be used as rewards or punishment in open prisons has the potential, therefore, to impact on perceptions of fairness and legitimacy in open settings, but little is known of how staff manage this increased capacity over such forms of control. My thesis contributes to a greater understanding of how staff use such rewards to maintain control in open settings and, particularly, how cultural orientations influence the level of authority staff perceive they maintain over the distribution of these rewards when other forms of control are weakened.

Whilst scholars such as Sykes (1995) focused on the limited influence of reward and punishment schemes, stating that other methods were more influential, more recent research (Liebling et al. 1997) found that incentives, like early release or additional money to spend on personal items, contribute to motivating prisoners to behave in a more compliant way. The role of these in the open setting, including in relation to time outside the prison boundary, is greater than in other prisons, making this an area it is important to research. Rewards and punishments, however, have been found to work best in conjunction with other tactics (Drake, 2008; Liebling et al., 2011). Other tactics for maintaining control, such as the use of physical coercion, surveillance, searching and mandatory testing, are also important to staff in all prison settings, and these continue to

play a role in open prisons as well. I will, therefore, now consider existing literature relating to these.

4.3.3 Surveillance, Searching And Coercive Power

The use of coercive power and physical tactics are possible for staff, but they have been found to often be avoided across a variety of prison settings to encourage a legitimate and fair environment and foster positive staff-prisoner relationships (Sparkes and Bottoms 1995; Liebling, 2004). Coercive power, then, is one tool that can be used to maintain control, yet, as Liebling (2004) notes, threats of punishment can be more effective than using them. Whilst some establishments rely more on coercive methods of control than others (Jewkes, 2016), violence or physical coercion can often lead to more violence not less (Sykes, 1958). Many officers, therefore, across all types of settings, reject the frequent use of coercive methods to maintain control (Sparks and Bottoms, 1995; Scott, 2006), a finding supported by my thesis, for the open setting at least. As discussed in chapter 2, violence and physical coercion are at their lowest levels in open prisons, but they are not without relevance to the maintenance of control there, particularly in relation to their role as an implied threat if necessary. Despite the alternative tactics available for maintaining order and control, staff-prisoner relationships are acknowledged as playing a central role in achieving and maintaining a well-ordered prison. The extent to which coercive tactics, or the threat of them, are employed in the open setting, how such approaches impact on the more liberal regime operating there, the increased levels of prisoner responsibility and the greater use of non-coercive forms of control have not been fully explored. These, however, represent an important area of knowledge which may have relevance for understanding control in other penal settings as well and something to which my thesis contributes.

Other tactics to ensure prisoners comply with prison rules include surveillance, searching and mandatory drug testing are utilised in prison settings. Again, they all have relevance for open settings, despite the distinctive regimes which operate there. Whilst it may seem from the outside, that prisoners in open prisons are relatively unrestricted in terms of surveillance and monitoring, then, curfews, drug testing and searching are all still applied to prisoners there (Shammas, 2014). Surveillance has long been associated with discipline in prisons and is a key way in which power is exercised (Foucault, 1977). Rituals related to security through surveillance, such as searching and drug testing, have been found to be counterproductive, though, when it comes to staff building trusting relationships with prisoners (Lindberg, 2005). With the increased importance placed on positive staff-prisoner relationships in the open setting, some suggest these negative effects may be felt more keenly there if such techniques are overused (Shammas 2014; Lindberg, 2005). This is a question with which my thesis engages in chapter eight.

4.4 The Deployment Of Authority And Control Via Staff-Prisoner Relationships

The previous section touches on the need to balance more coercive or invasive forms of control with the need for positive staff-prisoner relationships, which are also important for maintaining order (Sparkes et al, 1996; Liebling and Price, 2001; Liebling, 2011). The nature and tone of these relationships can have far reaching consequences within prisons, meaning their importance should not be underestimated (Liebling et al. 2009; Liebling 2011; Lloyd et al., 2017).

Relationships are important for a variety of practical and normative reasons, as both staff and prisoners have a certain amount of reliance on one another (Liebling and Price, 2001). Good relationships have been found to be key to maintaining low levels of violence and high levels of cooperation (Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004). Crewe (2005) argues that relationships have changed in recent decades as there is no longer an unbreachable barrier between staff and prisoners, yet challenges in managing and maintaining these relationships remain. My thesis

engages with the importance, role and perceptions of staff-prisoner relationships in the open prison setting.

A stable and ordered prison life, then, depends to a large extent on getting staff-prisoner relationships right (Drake, 2008; Liebling et al. 2009) but, as highlighted in the previous chapter, relationships in the open setting are seen by staff as distinct in various ways, and this requires adaptation on the part of staff. One contribution of my thesis is to explore the nature of staff-prisoner relationships in open settings in terms of not only staff adaptation to accommodate differences in these, but also in terms of their role in maintaining order and control. Most prison officers recognise that order and control are more likely to be successfully achieved through positive staff-prisoner relationships than coercive methods (Crawley, 2004). As Crewe (2011:455) acknowledges, “it is widely agreed, in both official and academic discourse, that at the heart of any prison is the relationship between staff and prisoners.” It has been established that relationships in prison have evolved in recent years and, in the main, have become more positive for both staff and prisoners, and much of this improvement is linked to the shift towards soft power (Crewe, 2011). Yet, despite this, a recent inspection by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture or Inhumane Treatment found UK prisons to be violent and unsafe (ECPT, 2020), indicating that relationships may be deteriorating, albeit there was no evidence of this being related to the open setting specifically. Liebling (2000) indicates that the managerial, political and performance contexts in which prisons are run are very much at odds with the much-needed social aspects of relationships which, in fact, make prisons run successfully. This is a tension that all prison staff have to manage and, given that the wider political and policy context that open prisons operate in is the same as for other penal establishments, as discussed in chapter 2, the way staff respond to this in an environment where relationships are perceived to operate differently, is an important area of distinction requiring exploration.

Personal authority is deployed via relationships and is seen as key to maintaining control and order in the modern prison setting (Liebling and Price, 2001; Scott, 2006). As mentioned earlier, this needs to be perceived to be deployed in a fair and legitimate way and relationships are a key part of this. Legitimacy is often achieved in part via procedural fairness, or procedural justice, as prisoners who are treated in a procedurally just way are more likely to conform to norms and values that are consistent with the concept of legitimacy, i.e., an officer's authority (Reisig and Mesko, 2009; Jackson et al. 2010; Beijersbergen et al. 2015). Perceptions of what is procedurally just can vary depending on a person's own ethical frame of reference (Tyler, 1988) but the ways in which officers interact with prisoners daily contribute to this (Reisig and Mesko, 2009). Staff play a large part in the perception of fairness and legitimacy of a prison regime and their use of discretion is important to this (Jewkes et al., 2016). During a study conducted at Whitemoor prison, for example, Liebling et al. (2011) found that officers often relied on their good relationships with prisoners to maintain order and safety within the prison. Whilst relationships between staff and prisoners undoubtedly influence perceptions of legitimacy and procedural fairness, getting these right does not automatically mean that regimes are deemed to be fair and just by prisoners. Sparks and Bottoms (1995) found that at Albany prison the regime was considered unfair and unjust, but relationships between staff and prisoners were deemed quite good. These positive relationships allowed officers to retain a certain amount of legitimacy in difficult circumstances. This demonstrates that there are a variety of complex factors at play when trying to achieve procedural fairness and legitimacy and relationships contribute to this. As I have previously argued, open prisons have a long history of distinctive staff-prisoner relationships, meaning the interconnection of relationships, order maintenance and perceptions of fairness may operate differently there, although we know little of the extent to which this is the case in practice.

Liebling (2011) argues that prison work is about how authority and power are used and deployed through human relationships and Scott (2006) identifies that officers often under-enforce rules to help maintain an orderly life on a day-to-day basis. Finding a balance between enforcing the rules and maintaining a peaceful environment is described by Liebling and Price (2001) as the art of 'peace-keeping', which relies on officers building appropriate and positive relationships with prisoners so they can exercise a level of legitimate personal authority to maintain order. Yet Scott (2006) contests this, arguing that most officers are not engaging in peace-keeping, instead trying to ensure that prisoners know their place whilst getting through the day without incident. In the small, more relaxed prison environments of the open prison, staff have more time to build relationships with individual prisoners and this increases the perceived level of fairness from the prisoner's perspective, which in turn creates a more positive environment and adds to levels of compliance (Pilling, 1992; Bottoms, 1999). Achieving legitimacy and procedural fairness in a setting of forced containment is a complex task, however, and cannot rest solely on the actions of prison staff or the regimes implemented. It also requires the cooperation and goodwill of the prisoners themselves (Liebling et al. 2009). Several studies have found that occupational culture, including an officer's beliefs in relation to the wider picture of imprisonment and the prison environment, influences how relationships develop between staff and prisoners and how authority is deployed to maintain control within these (Farkas, 1999; Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004). Differences in the approaches staff took to establishing authority and maintaining control in an open setting were evident in my data, and a key contribution of my thesis is to expand on these findings about culture, authority and relationships by demonstrating how an officer's cultural orientation affects the extent to which they under or over enforce rules in the distinct environment of the open prison, as I discuss in chapter 8.

The motivations for developing good staff-prisoner relationships have been found to vary and can include encouraging good behaviour, but also aspects such as enabling dynamic security (Sparkes and Bottoms, 1995; Crewe, 2011). This is a tool that staff use to help maintain a smooth-running prison and it is considered to help address issues before they occur, and it was mentioned frequently by my participants during research. The flow of information between staff and prisoners is seen by staff to contribute to maintaining a safe and secure environment and this is especially so in a setting with few physical boundaries, such as the open prison. Dynamic security relies on relationships and is most effective when staff interact with prisoners and know them on an individual basis, increasing their awareness of what is going on in the prison (Coyle et al. 2016). The discussion of the varied nature of the prison officer role in the previous chapter highlighted how officers are in the difficult position of having to enforce discipline, whilst also supporting prisoners through their sentences (Farkas, 1999). This leads Lloyd et al. (2017) to describe the role of the officer as a conflicted one, because of the difficulties of balancing rehabilitation and control whilst maintaining positive relationships. Crewe (2009) considers the move towards a 'softer' approach has made rules less clear, making it harder to identify where relationship boundaries lie, which increases the conflicted nature of an officer's role. Such blurred boundaries can have negative consequences, being considered to have contributed to the escapes from HMP Whitemoor in 1994 (Home Office, 1995) for example. Liebling et al. (2011) note, therefore, that maintaining relationship boundaries for the purpose of control and security, remains important to staff, a finding which my thesis supports in a less physically secure setting where absconding is not uncommon.

Whilst relationships between staff and prisoners may have improved, the balance of power remains significantly uneven, and how officers handle this power imbalance influences relationships (Liebling, 2000). Good relationships facilitate better control and cooperation in all

prison settings (Sparkes et al. 1996; Drake, 2013), yet there is no clear guidance for staff on how to achieve this (Crawley, 2004). To be effective relationships need to be genuine not forced (Crewe, 2001), but staff can struggle to achieve this, feeling that by developing such relationships the balance of power shifts in favour of prisoners (Crawley, 2004). Whilst it may be assumed that the shift of power towards prisoners will be greatest in the open prison due to the more liberal regime, research evidence reveals a more complex picture. Crawley (2004:109) noted that officers in dispersal and high security prisons also feel 'the balance is very much in favour of the prisoner', indicating that factors other than liberal regimes, freedom of movement and increased prisoner responsibility play a role in perceptions of this. I argue that the balance of power towards staff is far greater in open settings than is recognised due to the level of control staff maintain over the release of those serving life sentences. This is unrecognised in academic discussions of imprisonment and staff, too, often failed to recognise this level of their power and authority in my research. The lack of acknowledgment by staff, in this thesis, of such levels of power and authority that remain in the open setting give some indication to staff attitudinal views on the deployment of power techniques in open prison settings in the absence of more traditional forms of control.

It is clear, then, there is considerable variation in the levels of order achieved within prisons and the methods by which this done. Whilst some establishments rely more on control and coercion, others employ a democratic approach but a combination of such approaches is usually used to find the right balance (Jewkes et al. 2016). Many elements emphasised within the sociology of order maintenance and power within prisons are relevant to some degree in understanding open prisons. The distinctive features of the open setting, however, affect the ways that these manifest themselves and also the balance between different elements. It is not the case, however, that there is a straightforward decline in the power and authority of prison staff as the levels of

physical or coercive control diminish. Staff need to adapt their working practices to accommodate the different ways in which control is maintained in open prisons, but this also has implications for their occupational values and identity which my thesis also considers. A core element of an officer's role is security, (Nylander et al. 2011), and they are taught to value this over other aims, such as rehabilitation, during their initial training. This often stays with them throughout their career (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008). The aim of rehabilitation or resettlement is privileged over security in open settings, as I have discussed, and staff in my research felt developing good relationships there came at the expense of security. Given the prominence of security within the occupational culture of prison officers, this represents a challenge to a core part of prison work and staff identity, but the consequences of this, for those working in open prisons and how they adapt the conflicted nature of their role to reflect this is unknown. One element that became important to understanding this during my research was the notion of a spoiled occupational identity, something which has been considered in relation to other distinct penal environments, but not the open prison. I will explore this in the following section.

4.5 Distinct Settings And 'Spoiled Identities'

The need to adapt to the distinct environment of the open prison, which manifests itself in multiple ways, as established in these introductory chapters, presents challenges and conflict for staff in ways that are, themselves, distinct. One final area to which my thesis contributes is the management of occupational identities in the face of these, specifically in the open setting. This has been considered to some degree in the context of other distinctive penal environments, with Crawley (2004:221) identifying a concept she terms 'spoiled identity'. In therapeutic penal settings, she argues, officers need to manage the conflicted or 'spoiled' identity which emerges due to the work being undertaken not recognised as 'proper prison work' (Crawley, 2004:219).

Managing this helps to re-legitimise their role and this is achieved by focusing on the value of their work (Crawley and Crawley, 2008).

Jones and Cornes (1977) highlighted the distinct way in which officers approach their work in an open prison, with more recent research noting the relaxed nature of relationships between staff and prisoners in the open setting (Menis, 2020; Mjoland et al. 2021; Marder and Lapauge, 2021). No academic research, however, has explicitly explored the notion of a 'spoiled identity' and its relevance for staff in open prisons. My research expands on Crawley's by adapting this notion to the experience of staff in open prisons, focusing on the way spoiled occupation identities are managed there. I demonstrate that the concept of a spoiled identity extends to perceptions of the prison itself, but also explore how officers legitimise their role in differing ways, depending on the cultural orientation they adopt to the adaptation that is necessary to accommodate working in an open setting. Considering this process in this way represents a further element of originality to the current research.

4.6 Chapter Summary

Across these introductory chapters I have demonstrated the distinct nature of the open prison, identifying areas to which officers working in such settings must adapt, yet demonstrate officers receive little training in how to undertake their job and discharge their duties differently in various settings (Arnold, 2016). Prominent distinctive features of the open prison, which my review of the literature identify include: the lack of physical security; the greater freedom of movement of prisoners both within and outside of the prison boundary; a more prominent emphasis on aims such as resettlement and reintegration; the nature of staff-prisoner relationships; increased levels of prisoner responsibility; and a greater reliance on softer forms of

power and control in distinct settings. Throughout these initial chapters, I have detected gaps in the literature which limit our ability to understand these processes of adaptation.

This chapter specifically focused on the deployment of power and authority in the open prison setting, considering the roles of soft and coercive power, the varied use of time and space as rewards and punishments, forms of surveillance, and the role of staff prisoner-relationships in maintaining order. Whilst much of this literature has emanated from research on more traditional penal settings, elements of these approaches can be seen to a greater or lesser extent in open prisons, demonstrating their relationship with more traditional penal establishments. An officer's cultural orientation influences this process of adaptation and their approaches to prison work, including how power and authority are deployed. It is widely recognised that the way staff use power to maintain control varies widely from prison to prison, and in some cases even wing to wing (Liebling et al. 2009; Jewkes et al. 2016), hence the need to explore this specifically in the open setting. My research demonstrates that staff often see the open prison as a setting in which traditional forms of officer power and control is at its lowest.

The open prison's distinctiveness does not disappear when we turn to consider power and control, but I argue that these elements share core features with other types of prison, firmly situating the open prison as a penal establishment, albeit a distinct one. By this I mean that power and control are not diminished, despite the freedom and responsibility prisoners are awarded and the absence of common physical security measures. Mechanisms of control in open prisons remain strong, but there is an increased reliance on softer approaches to power, something that was evident before these became common in the prison system more widely. Staff often fail to recognise the level of control and power that they retain in an open setting due to the limited physical security. Yet, they retain, what might be argued as the ultimate control

over indeterminate prisoners release, having the opportunity to return prisoners to closed conditions for infractions, further contributing to the 'pains of freedom' (Shammas, 2014), experienced by prisoners in more relaxed penal settings.

It is clear that a mixture of more traditional and more relaxed regime approaches, which help support compliance in the form of legitimacy, exist in the open prison setting. And my thesis demonstrates that the research site was no exception to this approach. The cultural orientation of staff, however, effects to different extents, how staff perceive the levels of power, authority and control retained in the open setting. Next, this thesis moves on to explore the research design and the method employed to undertake this research, as well as my own journey of reflection as a 'green prison researcher'.

Chapter Five: Taking An Ethnography Approach – Reflections Of A ‘Green’ Prison Researcher

5.1 Introduction

This is the final chapter which sets out the necessary context for the analysis which follows. Here I detail the research design and methods utilised, as well as some of the challenges, both practical and emotional, faced when undertaking research in a prison setting. I hope to ensure through this a clear understanding of what was done and why, as well as providing an insight into the complex and systematic process of research. As established in the previous chapters, little research has been conducted on staff in open prisons in the UK, and the qualitative and ethnographic design adopted was guided by the need to research an area subject to little previous exploration (Gray 2009). It was also well suited to the overarching concern to understand the role of occupational culture within open settings. This chapter details my ethnographic approach, exploring the methods employed during fieldwork and the reasoning behind them. The challenges of prison research are well documented (Smith and Wincup, 2000; Crawley, 2004; Ramluggun et al. 2010; Jewkes 2011), and acknowledging these is of particular importance when taking a qualitative approach (Silverman, 2000), so I also outline the challenges I faced and how I responded to them.

This is a chapter of two halves. The first explores the ethnographic methodology, including a description of the stages of fieldwork and analysis, discussion of why and how various methods were employed and the value of these for the research. The second half discusses more practical research issues, such as gaining and negotiating access, building rapport, ethical considerations and the emotional elements of research in a prison setting, drawing on my personal reflections of my experience undertaking this research. In line with the ethnographic approach taken, I reflected frequently on the research process throughout my time in the field and the challenges I

faced. Such reflection is important to ensuring trustworthiness in ethnographic research and, consequently, I explore here my positionality as a researcher, as well as some key criticisms of both ethnographic research and qualitative data. The chapter ends with further reflection on research in an open environment, specifically, how it felt as a first-time prison researcher in a prison with seemingly little security. First, however, I set out my research design.

5.2 An Ethnographic Research Design

Despite its wide use in social research, there remains a lack of clarity around the exact nature and boundaries of what ethnographic research constitutes (Noakes and Wincup, 2000). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) identified that, whilst ethnography is one of the many approaches to social research, its meaning is often varied. Ethnography itself is not a method, but a research strategy that comprises different methods, which are mainly, but not exclusively, interviews and observations (Brewer, 2000; Noakes and Wincup, 2009). Taking such an approach is in keeping with a flexible design and allows ideas to 'emerge' (Gray 2009:173) because of analysis throughout the fieldwork (Patton, 2002). Despite the exploratory and evolving nature of qualitative, and especially ethnographic research, a strong design is still required. This should cover key aspects, including a topic outline, broad aims and objectives, a research site, the social group to be explored, resource availability, role of the researcher, types of analysis that will be employed, and how the researcher will withdraw from the field is still required (Brewer, 2000). Such considerations were observed and I will now outline how.

Whilst my research questions were not pre-defined, the construction of a broad conceptual framework, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), helped establish boundaries for this research. This involved initially deciding to focus on open prisons rather than other penal establishments and prison staff rather than prisoners. As seen in chapter one there were various

reasons, along with the gap in the academic literature, why these two areas were of interest to me. Secondly after exploring prison literature more broadly, there were several areas of enquiry linked not only to the open prison, but also to broader prison sociology, that were of interest. I therefore entered the field with an open mind rather than a blank one (Atkinson 2015), in line with the exploratory approach guiding the research, but initial areas of interest included: staff views on their role and approaches to prison work and the aims of imprisonment; perceived differences between the closed and open estates; the maintenance of control, containment and security; and staff-prisoner relationships. The influence of culture was an overarching area of interest throughout the research, so this frame and its influence were important. Whilst these areas of scholarship were of interest from a preliminary literature review, I was open to the emergence of additional, unexpected themes, especially in the initial exploratory phase when, as seen in the data analysis, such issues did arise. The research questions that emerged from the data are stated in chapter one, but have been placed here as a reminder:

- How does the open prison represent a physically and socially distinct prison environment for staff? In what ways does this impact the work undertaken in such settings?
- How do staff adapt to the distinct setting in which they work? To what extent does this involve taking different approaches to prison work? What role does occupational culture play in this adaptation process? What are the impacts on a prison officer's occupational identity?
- How do methods of control, such as time and space, influence the environment of the open prison? What role do they play in the deployment of power and authority and the maintaining of order and control? How do staff perceive this compared with more mainstream prison settings?

A key strength of taking an ethnographic approach, and so spending a prolonged period in the field, is that it gave me the chance to explore such issues in more depth, moving beyond surface level presentations to get to the core of their meaning, which is essential to any understanding of occupational culture. Despite being a highly valuable tool for exploring culture, though, Wacquant (2002) identifies that ethnographic methods in prison research is in fast decline. Access and ethical issues make it hard for researchers to undertake prison ethnographies, but Wacquant (2002) argues that now, more than ever, such studies are needed due to imprisonment being highly politically, socially and culturally relevant.

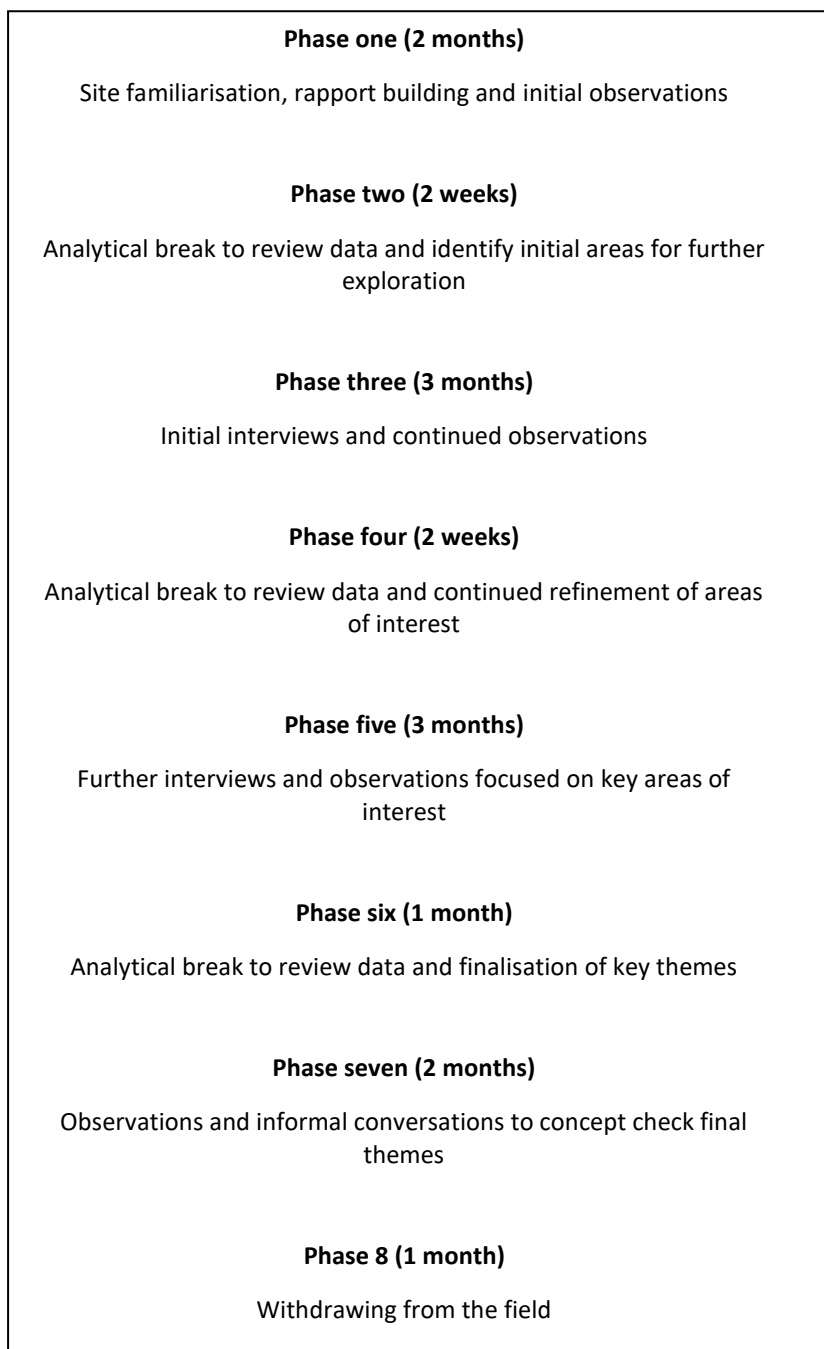
All ethnography involves a case study approach (Brewer, 2000) but not all case studies are ethnographic (Hammersley, 1992). Ethnographic case studies are distinguished by exploring phenomena or instances in their natural setting and defined by the researcher's involvement and participation in that social setting (Brewer, 2000). Whilst this research took place in one setting, it took a collective case study approach, exploring several instances of the same phenomenon to identify common themes by collecting multiple perspectives from individuals within the social setting, along with detailed field notes and observations made by the researcher. Focusing on only one setting leaves this research open to criticism, especially concerning generalisability (Brewer, 2000), which is discussed later in this chapter along with other criticisms of taking an ethnographic approach. First, however, the staged approach to fieldwork is explored.

5.2.1 A Staged Approach To Fieldwork

Fieldwork took place between January 2018 and February 2019 at a Category D male prison located in England. During fieldwork, I visited the prison on over forty occasions at varying times and on different days of the week. This included evenings and weekends. Doing so allowed a greater understanding of how the institution functions (Wahidin, 2006). The research data is

comprised of ethnographic observations and interviews with staff. Fieldwork and data analysis were conducted as a phased process which involved both time immersed in the field and time away from it to reflect and explore data. I entered the field with a similar approach to Holdaway (1984:11), conscious that 'as much as possible should be observed and recorded, even the seemingly routine and insignificant'. Fieldwork consisted of eight phases outlined below in Figure

2: **Figure 2 Fieldwork Phases**



In the early stages of exploratory research, it is important to get a sense of the concepts that will be explored further throughout (Swedberg, 2014). Conducting fieldwork in stages, broken by analytical breaks, enabled me to identify concepts to be built upon and checked throughout. This added rigour to the research process. Phase one was spent observing the site to become familiar with routines and the different roles staff played within the prison. During this time, I focused on rapport building, ensuring my presence caused as little disruption as possible. Phase two involved an analytical break to reflect on the data already gathered, allowing me to identify key areas for discussion in initial interviews as part of phase three. Over the next three months participants, who ranged from uniformed officers and support grades to governors, were interviewed using an unstructured approach informed by my initial observations. Topics discussed were wide-ranging, with interviews participant-led rather than comprising direct questions. This flexible ethos allowed for an 'engaged listening' approach which appropriately reflects the ethnographic and exploratory nature of this research (Forsey, 2010: 558). By undertaking informal, unstructured interviews, participants were able to express individual perspectives (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), allowing important themes to develop from the data (Kumar, 2011). A further analytical break was taken after these interviews to review the data (phase four), at which point two distinct, yet broad, areas of additional interest (control and power) began to emerge.

Phase five involved more structured interviews with both initial and new participants. These interviews did not consist of an ascribed set of questions, in the way a structured interview does, but took the form of 'guided conversations' (Rubin and Rubin, 1995), with participants asked to discuss their thoughts on the broad areas of interest emerging. Another analytical break followed (phase six) during which the key themes became clearer. These themes informed the final phase of research (phase seven), in which I returned to the field to undertake concept checking, through further observations and conversations. Observations were conducted throughout the active

research phases as they are not only useful at the exploratory phase of research but can also assist theme development and concept checking (Robson, 2002). Concept checking helped to ensure I was representing participants as clearly as possible, reducing misinterpretation, and allowing the relevance of key themes to be tested in the field. Again, this contributed to ensuring my research findings were valid. The final phase was withdrawing from the field, and I discussed my reflections on this process later in this chapter.

5.2.2 Research Participants And The Challenges of Confidentiality

A total of nineteen participants took part in interviews, ranging from thirty minutes in the early stages to over two hours later on. Fifteen staff took part in one to one interviews, and a further four were interviewed as a group. Some individuals were interviewed on a one to one basis more than once meaning that a total of twenty-two one to one interviews were recorded and transcribed. Many other informal conversations also took place. Whilst all staff in the prison were not interviewed, at some point in the fieldwork, however, every member of uniformed staff interacted with me, even if only briefly. Table 1 below demonstrates the breakdown of participants by rank, gender and age. Due to the small nature of the prison and the specialised nature of some of the senior officer roles, specific role details have been suppressed to ensure anonymity is maintained.

Age	Sex	Governor Grade (7 or above)	Custody Manager	Senior Officer	Prison Officer
30 - 34	Male	*	*	1	1
	Female	*	*	*	*
40 - 44	Male	*	*	2	*
	Female	1	*	*	1
45 - 49	Male	2	*	*	3
	Female	*	1	1	*
50 +	Male	3	*	*	2
	Female	*	*	*	1
Total		6	1	4	8

Table 1 demonstrates that thirteen participants fall within the uniformed grades, and five were governor grade. Five participants were female and fourteen males. Only two participants were aged 34 or under, whereas thirteen were aged 45 or over, this reflects the dominance of the slightly older demographic represented in the open prison staff at this site. Most participants had previously worked in different prisons, with experience of both open and closed conditions, with some having worked in Young Offenders Institutions. Two participants, however, reported spending all of their career working in open prisons, with the exception of a few weeks of detached duty at different points throughout their career. All participants had ten or more years' experience in the prison service, with ten having 18, or more, years' experience.

Informal conversations occurred throughout the fieldwork, alongside observations, and the results were recorded and reflected upon in my field diary. Taking field notes was assisted by the nature of the prison, as I could often find a quiet space to write up and reflect upon the events of the day while they were fresh in my mind. One-to-one interviews were recorded using a digital device when the participant permitted this. Most did, but two participants declined and, in these cases, notes were taken during the interview and written up as soon as possible. Participants were recruited via a snowballing effect. Initially there was some resistance to participating in recorded interviews, however, once some staff did, and survived the process, declaring it as '*not too bad!*' (field diary, 03/04/18), more staff were willing to. Often staff would ask who had taken part in interviews, seemingly not wanting to be the only person engaging in a more formal way (field diary, 15/04/18). Of course, due to the need to protect participants and maintain confidentiality, I could not reveal who had taken part, yet it became clear that some officers would share their participation with their colleagues if asked.

Confidentiality in such a small prison community, where everyone seemingly knows everybody, did present a challenge, especially when it came to finding private space. Interviews that were

recorded were transcribed throughout the fieldwork stage and not at the end of the fieldwork, allowing me to stay in touch with the data throughout, and assess how themes developed and linked together. Due to the sensitive nature of the information recorded on these devices, especially in a prison setting, it is important to keep this device with you at all times (Sloan and Wright, 2015), which is something I was conscious of. After the interviews had been transcribed, at the request of some of the participants, audio recordings were deleted.

5.2.3 Ethnographic Data Collection – Observations, Field Notes And Interviews

This research involved the use of participant interviews, observation and field notes throughout the span of the research. Observations are a key part of an ethnographic approach (Noakes and Wincup, 2009; Brewer, 2000) and a good method for understanding unexplored social situations (Davis et al. 2011). Observations can be used at both the exploratory stage, as well as to supplement data in later stages of the research (Robson, 2002). Fieldwork often begins with observations often recorded in a field diary, which allow insight into the culture at hand, which are later complemented by other sources of data, such as interviews (Eriksson and Koualainen, 2015), which was the approach taken here. A researcher's approach to participant observation can vary from short site visits to sharing everyday life and experiences with participants (Eriksson and Koualainen, 2015). Observations continued throughout the whole of my time in the field.

Observations and field notes add credibility to an ethnography when they provide, as is the case in research, a 'thick description' of the environment in question (Geertz, 1973; Rashid et al. 2019). Thick description is an effective tool for communicating qualitative research findings (Ponterotto and Grieger, 2010). The 'thick description' recorded allowed for a clear, in-depth picture of the open prison environment to be conveyed to the reader. Such an approach goes beyond the descriptive, providing key context, detail and interpretative commentary that assists with a more

comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of the culture observed (Geertz, 1973; Ponterotto, 2006; Rashid et al. 2019; France, 2022). Chapter six uses ‘thick description’ to set the scene of the research site providing a detailed narrative of the location and work observed providing the context in which the open prison operates. Thick description, then, provides the ‘backbone’ for interpreting the complex cultures that are present in a specific setting, in this case the open prison (Rashid et al. 2019). Whilst undertaking initial observations is about gathering as much data as possible (Swedberg, 2014), they also help with gaining an insider’s perspective (Robson, 2002, Davies et al. 2011), assisting a more complete understanding of cultural meanings and the social group structure to develop. Observations, as an approach to research, are often broken down into two distinct groups: participant and non-participant observations (Cooper et al. 2004; Newburn, 2013), and are, as such, linked to how the researcher positions themselves within the field. The second half of this chapter explores how I managed myself in the field and this is where I reflect in more detail about how I positioned myself as a researcher when undertaking observations.

Interviews are a common method in qualitative research, as well as a key tool for ethnography, and come in many different forms (Silverman, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Charmaz, 2014), ranging from structured too unstructured. Yet their key purpose is to gather the required information (Hagan, 2006). The use of interviews gives the researcher flexibility and freedom concerning how data will be collected (Kumar, 2011) and what form this will take, which makes them advantageous to a flexible ethnographic approach. Given the nature of ethnographic research design, in-depth interviews (Brewer, 2000) were utilised to ensure that the data provided sufficient depth. Such interviews allow the researcher to explore complex issues in-depth and gather the beliefs and thoughts of participants in greater detail in a way that other methods do not (O’Reilly, 2009; Kumar, 2011; Davies et al. 2011). The direct interaction they

allow gathers more detailed information via probing, clarification and elaboration allowing the introduction and discussion of information not anticipated (Whyte, 1984; Hagan, 2006) which was important for the under-researched areas of the open prison and its staff.

Processes of probing and elaboration allowed more in-depth and detailed development of the key themes during my research. What makes an interview ethnographic, however, is the context of a relationship that has been established (Heyl, 2001), since it is not a one-way flow of information. Creating a context for knowledge exchange (Kvale, 1996) via these relationships is important. It is necessary to try and avoid asking too many questions but rather listen to the participants to understand things from their perspective in their own words (O'Reilly, 2009), and this is the approach I took in interviews and informal conversations. Many of these were conversational, due to the flow back and forth between myself and the participant, which stemmed from the rapport I had built up within the prison.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using interviews as a method of data collection. They are time-consuming, which can be a real drawback for many conducting research (May, 2001), yet prolonged time in the field is key to ethnography. Transcribing interviews is labour intensive and, when not tape-recorded, there could be errors writing up data (Davies et al., 2010). This was alleviated by writing notes up as soon as possible on the few occasions interviews could not be recorded and for informal conversations. Concept checking also went some way to addressing this. Transcription was undertaken solely by the researcher and was an ongoing process. Kumar (2011) agrees that interviews are time-consuming and often complex, highlighting that the skills of the researcher can impact the quality of the data collected. Davies et al. (2011) concur with this, arguing that interviewer skills are very important for successful research. Whilst I had not conducted research in a prison prior to this, I have undertaken various interviews, especially with

police officers. I was also trained in undertaking active listening as part of my experience as a counsellor. To ensure that I continued to keep these skills up to date I undertook various professional development sessions on qualitative and ethnographic interviewing as part of the Research Professional Development Programme. As well as various approaches to data collection, ethnographic methods also allow for differing approaches to data analysis and next I will discuss my own approach to this.

5.2.4 Ethnographic Data Analysis

Ethnographic analysis is not an exact science (Berg, 1998), the process of analysis varies with different approaches to ethnography (Brewer, 2000). Ethnographic analysis cannot be achieved by following a specific set of rules or procedures, although Atkinson (2015) warns it is often confused with, or restricted to, the coding rules set out by grounded theory, which is unhelpful and something I tried to avoid. Whilst ethnographic analysis is informed by the ideas of grounded or inductive theory it rarely follows such a prescriptive process (Brewer, 2000). Social settings are complex, and different perspectives will often emerge (Atkinson, 2015:66), so it was important to me that I remained 'faithful' to the complexities of the social setting during analysis. Researchers also need an adequate understanding of the social setting to ensure that analysis is situated within this context (Atkinson 2015). This section describes the way that I analysed the varied data collected throughout fieldwork.

As recommended by both Brewer (2000) and Atkinson (2015) I undertook data analysis at various stages both during and after the completion of fieldwork. This involved asking questions of my data at different stages and cross-referencing themes emerging from interviews with observations in the field. Data analysis, then, was a journey, with several stops to review and

assess, as advocated by Atkinson (2015), with ideas revisited and concepts tested as they emerged. Data analysis was conducted manually, not via the use of a computer program, which provided a fully immersive experience for me. Interacting with my data in this way allowed me to guard against the fragmentation of the data. Interview transcripts and field notes were printed out, then read and re-read multiple times throughout the research. Atkinson (2015) argues ethnographic data should be analysed as a whole, as taking snippets from individual interviews with different individuals removes them from their social context. Whilst themes emerged from the data throughout the research, therefore, at the end of fieldwork all transcripts and field notes were revisited and shared patterns and themes across these reviewed. Brewer (2000) notes that often ethnographic researchers are looking for patterns and themes and focus on exploring their similarities and differences, which was how data analysis was conducted for this research. As demonstrated in the subsequent data chapters, analysis involved situating various types of data, such as field notes, conversations, reflections and interview data into broad categories. Both similarities and differences were highlighted yet the data remained grounded in the social context of the open prison as explored in rich detail in chapter six. Rather than coding, a term Atkinson (2015) argues should be avoided in the context of ethnographic analysis, shared meaning was drawn out across transcripts to understand officers' perceptions of what they think they should be doing, how they think they should be doing it, their views on the role of the open prison and how culture affects these different interpretations. The field notes taken were not only used to create a rich picture of the open prison itself, as discussed in chapter six, but also to triangulate and test concepts presented in officers' interpretations. Interview quotations and field notes are used to explore officers' perceptions, but these are explored in the context of the open setting and, where differences were observed, these were noted (Atkinson, 2015).

5.2.5 Criticisms Of Taking An Ethnographic Approach

Taking an ethnographic approach allows greater flexibility in the research process, which was important due to the exploratory nature of this research and its focus on culture. Whilst seen as a strength to some, this can leave the approach open to criticism (Noakes and Wincup, 2009) and ethnography can be seen to fall short of the standards set by positivism (Brewer, 2000). Yet ethnographic researchers, myself included, however, tend to take a constructivist or interpretivist approach and are not trying to emulate the natural sciences. Meaning is essential to culture and is also contested, thus requiring research methods which can allow for this complexity and nuance, such as ethnographic observations and interviews. The methods used to gather data here, therefore, are valid and established techniques, although an ethnographic approach still requires a strong research design before it is carried out and a systematic research process (Brewer, 2000), which I took steps to ensure.

Rigour in ethnography stems from processes such as triangulation. The multi-strand approach which utilises a variety of different methods to collect data allows for this (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Grey, 2009). I employed triangulation throughout my research, often using observations to test emerging themes from interviews, as well as discussing observations with participants to understand their interpretation of events. Whilst there remains some disagreement over what ethnography achieves, it is a valid way to give meaning and understanding to social processes (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983) and a useful exploratory tool.

There has been much debate in the literature concerning the reliability, validity and transferability of qualitative research findings in general. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) argue some

qualitative researchers consider such issues irrelevant but Ritchie et al. (2003) contend these cannot be ignored as they need to be addressed. Throughout the research process I was aware of the need to ensure integrity in relation to the research process and my findings. However, I considered that assessing reliability and validity in qualitative research should go beyond the technical application of such terms, with their meaning influenced by the researcher's ontological and epistemological perspectives, as both Ritchie et al. (2003) and Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) argue. For this reason Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose different terminology, such as trustworthiness, transferability and dependability, to avoid confusion, terms that guided the quality and integrity of this research. Integrity in qualitative research is about more than the trustworthiness, or consistency, of the findings, or the ability to reproduce such findings, but also about the reliability of the researcher (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015).

Ethnographies are often seen to lack transferability because they involve a case study approach, which leads to data collection from a small sample of individuals in a very specific social context (Brewer, 2000), and in the case of the current research, only a single site was selected. The selection of a single site was intentional; the single or holistic case study allows for the in-depth exploration of a specific site and the relationship between the elements within (Gray, 2009). In a multiple case study approach, different sites are visited and findings are compared and developed across these to aid with triangulation (Grey, 2009). Here however a prolonged time in the field punctuated by analytical breaks as described in allowed for rich detail across the entire site to be discovered and as concepts emerged they could be checked and rechecked multiple times. As already established, I spent an extended period in the field, engaging in a self-reflective process throughout fieldwork, data analysis and writing up, along with other elements of triangulation, such as analytical breaks and concept checking mentioned above. The richness of the data gathered during this research allows learning from open prison settings to be explored both in the

context of other similar prison settings and in adding to the limited literature in this area, as well as that of the wider penal system, as discussed in chapter eight. Whilst transferability of qualitative research may be limited, this should not be overemphasised (Brewer, 2000).

Transferability of findings is still possible due to the depth and richness of the data collected during an ethnographic study (Fielding, 1994). I explore the potential implications of my findings to the prison system more broadly.

Another criticism often levelled at ethnographic researchers is that of being too involved in the research (Robson, 2002), making the process overly subjective (Dey, 1993). This was also a concern to me and in the second half of this chapter I discuss the challenges faced undertaking research in a prison setting and how I overcame these challenges, including steps to maintain my distance, whilst also building genuine relationships. Researcher positionality and reflectivity is key to ethnographic research and reflectivity generates greater levels of transparency in the research process (Phillips and Earle, 2010). First, however, I discuss the ethical consideration for this research.

5.3 Ethical Considerations

Many moral and ethical dilemmas must be considered when researching a prison setting (Sparkes et al, 1996). Before entering the field, my research was approved by the University's ethics panel and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), for which I was required to identify potential risks and how these risks could be mitigated, as well as providing copies of my research proposal, including information sheets and consent forms (See appendix A). At the time of this research, there were concerns about increasing levels of violence in the broader prison system, but this was not considered a particular risk at the selected research site. With minimal risk to my

safety and a strong research design, University ethical permission was quickly granted. Gaining the approval of HMPPS was slightly more complex and time-consuming.

There are four key guiding principles to research ethics which are: avoiding harm to participants, ensuring informed consent, respecting the privacy of participants, and avoiding the use of deception (Gray, 2009). Such ethical considerations informed the development of research and I was mindful of them throughout the research process. Yet any research involving fieldwork can present ethical challenges that were not anticipated during the approval process (Palmer et al. 2014). For example, a key challenge I faced that was not accounted for in the original ethical approval process related to the relationships I developed with prisoners, and how many of them asked if I could make sure their voice is also heard. I had to be clear that I was happy to talk but could not be an advocate for their stories. To ensure I managed this challenge appropriately, I sought advice from both a trusted member of staff with whom I had a good relationship, as well as other prison researchers who had had similar experiences.

Whilst this research took place in a prison, staff and not prisoners were the focus of the data collection, and staff are not considered a vulnerable population in the same way as prisoners. Yet by undertaking research in the setting in which they work they may have been exposed to certain vulnerabilities in terms of perceived requirements by management to participate and consent when observing their work. Obtaining informed consent from participants is one of the guiding principles for taking an ethical research approach (Noakes and Wincup, 2010). For interviews this was obtained from each participant in the form of a signed consent sheet or via verbal means. Participants were given an information sheet giving details of the study and what was expected of them, and I answered any queries before the start of observations and interviews. Due to the

nature of the setting, on occasion, consent sheets were not signed, but verbal consent was obtained.

Alongside interviews, there were observations, which bring their own set of ethical challenges. Consent was sought from officers on duty at the time of any observations and so none were conducted covertly. Staff and prisoners, alike, knew who I was and why I was there. When I found myself in a situation, for example, a group setting, where not all officers present consented to being observed, the observations were not noted. It soon became clear to me that there were certain officers who were not willing to participate and, whilst during my extended time in the field many of those officers changed their minds, a few remained steadfast and I respected their wishes. If observations were perceived to cause concern or disruption, I removed myself from that situation to respect the privacy of prisoners and staff. Whilst I was observing and reflecting on officers' behaviour, not that of prisoners, prisoners were curious and whilst not observing them directly, the interactions that staff had with prisoners were unavoidably seen, many of which were relevant to my research. I also interacted with prisoners regularly and this presented ethical challenges in terms of my role and observation of any behaviour that contravened prison rules.

There was only one occasion where I had cause to discuss a prisoner's behaviour with a member of staff. An individual formed an attachment to me, often seeking me out and trying to monopolise my time, or ask personal questions. This individual had been in prison for many years and lacked various social skills, which concerned staff. I did not report this individual, because I was aware of the consequences of negative reporting, but was asked by staff about my interactions with him. I spoke honestly about this individual, stressing I did not find his behaviour concerning. I later discovered, however, that this male had been removed from open conditions

and, despite staff assurances that his removal was down to several issues and not linked to his behaviour towards me, this made me more acutely aware of my interactions with prisoners moving forward. Many prisoners have a lot riding on their behaviour and actions in open conditions and I did not want myself to become a source of concern that could be turned into a negative.

There is no instruction manual for ethnographers and decisions must be made based on your own moral and ethical beliefs (Noakes and Wincup, 2009). Whilst in the prison there were several ongoing ethical considerations and decisions I needed to make. First, I had to manage the expectations of senior management about reporting findings back to them, or letting them know who had taken part. Luckily, senior management did not apply pressure to reveal findings or participants as the research progressed. In fact it was often, in the early stages of the research, other officers who would inquire more about this. This was easily side-stepped by referencing the importance of confidentiality and anonymity. This may in fact have been the officers' way of testing if I was going to be able to maintain this. As my research progressed, and staff became more comfortable with my presence, this line of questioning petered out.

Anonymity and confidentiality are two key areas of consideration concerning research ethics (Noakes and Wincup, 2010). Confidentiality was discussed with participants at the start of every interview/observation. All data and personal information were stored securely within the University systems to comply with GDPR and the University's own data protection rules. Upon leaving the prison audio files were uploaded to a password-protected computer. Transcripts of audio files were stored on a separate drive from audio files, also password-protected. Data could only be accessed by the researcher and two Ph.D. supervisors. After completion of the study, all data was anonymised and destroyed where required. Remaining data will be kept for the

duration of the Ph.D. and for a minimum of five years following to allow for publications to be written. Participants were made aware of this and their right to ask for their data to be removed.

All individuals were anonymised and this has been extended to their previous or current employment position, location or setting when required. No names or personal information were ascribed to transcripts and care was taken to ensure participants cannot be identified when quotations are used. Participants were asked at the point of interview if they were happy for quotations to be used and informed they could withdraw at any time. They were also able to see a copy of the quotations included in the analysis if they requested to do so to ensure consent and the trustworthiness of my interpretation (see Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In the second half of this chapter I discuss how undertaking prison research is emotionally challenging, and taking breaks from my data allowed me to create some separation between myself and the experience of the field.

5.4 Undertaking Research In A Prison Setting

Prison is a unique place (Farber, 1941) and conducting research there presents many difficulties (Ramluggun et al. 2010). Despite the increased interest in undertaking prison research in the 1990s (Liebling, 1999), studies within prison walls themselves are still relatively rare (Patenaude, 2004). Researchers face practical challenges gaining access (Farber, 1941; Davies et al. 2011), building rapport, establishing key contacts (Apa et al. 2012) and recording and storing data. They must also deal, however, with the emotional and physical toll that researching such a setting can take (Liebling, 2004; Earle, 2004). This section will focus on the challenges I faced during research and how they were overcome. First, however, I consider how I positioned myself as a researcher – or outsider – in the prison setting.

A researcher's background unavoidably influences the process of a prison ethnography, and researchers need to be aware of how personal biographies may have methodological implications (Phillips and Earle, 2010). Due to my background in policing as part of the intelligence and analytics teams, which was associated with its own strong occupational culture, I was concerned I might overly identify with the views of prison officers. Whilst I enjoyed being back in a law enforcement environment, I was conscious of being drawn into the culture, yet at no time felt I allowed myself to identify too closely with staff. Analytical breaks to maintain distance and allow time to process data helped with this. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) argue it is important to accept that in ethnographic research you cannot avoid having an effect because you are physically present in the research setting. Reflexivity is a technique for controlling these effects (Charmaz, 2014; Eriksson and Koualainen, 2015) and I had regular contact with my supervisor to discuss any issues, an important part of the research process (Silverman, 2005), as well as maintaining an extensive reflective diary of my experiences in the field.

A researcher's positionality within the field is a key consideration and researchers need to find a position in the field which will allow them to communicate and interact with participants in a meaningful way (Ugelvik, 2014). Gold (1958) proposed four typologies conveying the role that the researcher plays: 'complete observer', 'observer as a participant', 'participant as an observer' and 'complete participant'. When undertaking research in a prison setting it is hard for researchers to be a 'complete participant' as this involves concealing their identity and becoming completely immersed in the community they are studying. Such research is often undertaken covertly, and this approach would have been ethically problematic and outside the scope of this research. Initially when entering the field, I had the somewhat naïve notion I would be a complete observer. It quickly became clear, however, that I could not take that stance because being involved in the tasks officers completed was important to build rapport and trust. I needed

to be seen to be participating in prison life (field diary 30/06/18). Instead, I took on the role of an 'observer as a participant' (Gold, 1958) or 'reserved participant' (Liebling, 1990: 160), which suits participants who are not normally part of the social setting being studied.

As time went on I became more involved with different aspects of the setting, finding myself described as '*part of the furniture*' (field diary, 22/7/18), with some remarking that it was '*like I worked*' (field diary, 22/7/18) there. Obtaining status as a trusted outsider can lead to a greater exchange of knowledge than being an insider (Buceri, 2013) and I found this to be the case. Once staff realised I was not there to spy, or change things, I was afforded greater levels of social access. Building rapport and being seen as part of the prison officer community was vital to being able to undertake this research successfully and there were various ways I immersed myself in the world of prison officers at this site. Whilst being somewhat accepted and integrated into the prison created benefits, I also needed to maintain a certain level of distance to enable me to record accurate information and focus on 'seeing' the world around me (Charmaz, 2014).

Maintaining distance from staff was something I considered prior to entering the field, but it was not, however, all plain sailing. Prisons are emotional places (Crawley, 2004; Liebling, 2004; Crewe et al. 2014) yet little attention has been paid to preparing 'green' prison researchers for dealing with the emotional aspects of such research (Sloan and Wright, 2015). Consequently I want to include a reflection on the emotional impact of the research process before going on to consider my experiences in the field. Jewkes (2012:64) argues that prison scholars do a 'disservice to those who follow them' into the field by neglecting to fully explore the emotional aspects of undertaking research in such a challenging setting. Difficult aspects of prison research are often acknowledged (see, for example, Liebling, 2009; Crewe, 2009; Drake and Harvey, 2013) but no discussions specifically concern novice researchers, although there is some general advice for new

researchers about prisons. Smith and Wincup (2000) offer practical advice on the three key stages of 'getting in', 'getting on' and 'getting out' of the prison setting, terms first coined by Buchanan et al. (1988) when undertaking organisational research. Similarly, King and Liebling (2008) recommend ten key solutions for undertaking prison research which focus on how you should behave and act on the site, but there is no mention of the emotional impact undertaking such research can have on novice researchers (Sloan and Wright, 2015).

Ethnographies are also known to be emotionally challenging (Warden 2013), especially the reflective aspect, which is vital to the process. However, I found these reflective aspects could be somewhat cathartic when processing some of the emotional challenges I faced. Until you have undertaken research in a prison setting, it is hard to prepare for what you may face. My level of interaction with prisoners, particularly, was a surprise and, at one stage, I found myself becoming more empathic and understanding of their experiences than those of officers. The entry in my field diary below demonstrates part of my emotional journey, including some unexpected emotional challenges I faced:

Until you spend time in a prison environment, you can never really imagine what it will be like. You spend time imagining, learning from the writing of others, talking about the experience of other researchers, but ultimately nothing could fully prepare me. The thing that I was most moved by during my time in the field is that prison is full of people. As strange as that sounds it is the thing that threw me; prisons are meant to be full of prisoners, not ordinary people. My research involved prison staff; getting to know the men who resided there was not within my remit and not something that I had given much consideration to. Yet, due to the nature of the establishment, interacting with the men was very much a part of the process. What I did not anticipate was how invested I would become in some of their journeys and how likeable they were as people. I learnt about their lives, their hopes and dreams, about their families, weddings, births, deaths and the fear of what was to come next. I listened

when they talked about what prison had done to them and for them and what their journey had been like. They often talked of struggles, I saw frustration and disappointment when leave requests were rejected or parole applications denied. Yet, I also experienced the joys of achieving new qualifications or getting a job or even being released after years in the prison system. Prisoners were no longer prisoners to me they were just people and there is no doubt about it, I cared. I still care. A senior governor approached me about 7 months into my research and said to me that having me in the prison as a researcher is not what I imagined it to be...looking back I could not agree more, this experience is nothing like I imagined it to be...! (field diary, 17/7/18)

This reflection demonstrates the depth of emotion, which I did not expect, that can be present when undertaking research in a prison setting. Despite not conducting research with prisoners, the distinct nature of the open prison environment, and the way officers approached their work, meant interaction with prisoners was unavoidable. Not only did I follow the lives and journeys of prisoners on a deeper level, but staff too, as is the nature of being immersed in a prison setting for many months. Such reflections, along with clear periods of separation from the field, helped me step back from these experiences. When I recognised how my interactions with prisoners was impacting upon the focus of my data collection, I took the necessary time away from the field and discussed the issues with my supervisor and colleagues. At the end of the fieldwork phase, I also took an extended break from reviewing the data to allow me time to distance myself from both staff and prisoners. During the initial planning and drafting of data chapters, I did not visit the field or maintain connections with research participants, which also helped to maintain distance.

As well as managing my position in the field, there were additional emotional and practical challenges I faced, ranging from gaining access and building rapport to withdrawing from fieldwork which, as discussed later, was more difficult than expected. In the remainder of this chapter I explore and reflect upon these experiences. During the next three sections the key

stages of 'getting in', 'getting on' and 'getting out' (Buchanan et al. 1988, 2013; Sloan and Wright, 2015) will be considered, with specific attention to the emotional aspects which are so often ignored (Tynan, 2019), as well as the practical challenges I faced as a 'green' prison researcher (Sloan and Wright, 2015:144).

5.5 Getting In - Gaining Access To The Prison

Gaining access to prison is often difficult, with long and complex processes to obtain permission, split into several stages. Cassell (1988) distinguishes between physical and social access, both of which need to be achieved. Physical access is linear, and structured via formal processes, such as application forms. There are various gatekeepers to prison access including HMPPS, the prison governor, the Prison Federation and prison staff themselves. Several documents need to be prepared before making the research application, including consent forms, information sheets, interview questions and ethics forms approval. This can be quite a cumbersome process (Davies et al. 2011). The sensitive nature of work in prisons, which includes a political aspect, affects the process of accessing these establishments (Smith and Wincup, 2000). Management at the prison site recognised this, as reflected below in a discussion with a governor:

Today I discussed the changes to the research since NOMS permission was granted and to ensure that the Governor was still happy for the research to continue. What was interesting to note was the governor's surprise that I had, in fact, been granted NOMS permission. Not because they did not think the research was valid, however, they were surprised at the swiftness with which I had got through the process. They spoke of occasions where people had waited over 2 years to obtain permission. They reflected on the fact that the process was likely too long-winded and picky in the hope that most people would give up after the first attempt (field diary, 26/01/18)

The political context of the individual site also impacts the likelihood of researchers being granted access. For instance, it is highly unlikely for a researcher to be granted fully and unescorted access to a prison, in the way that I was; that is particularly problematic in the eyes of the prison administration. Liebling (1999) highlights how any prison research undertaken needs to consider current penal policy and the context of the time and this extends to the planning of access negotiations, which I discuss in relation to my research next.

5.5.1 Negotiating Access Via Gatekeepers

Access from HMPPS is governed by extremely specific criteria as to the types of researcher who can enter a prison establishment. Research can disrupt the prison routine, and the proposed study needs to be considered worth this disruption (Faber, 1941). Getting permission requires getting gatekeepers to see the relevance and value of your study (Eriksson and Koualainen, 2015). Since prisons are places that are highly dependent on routine, once at the site, researchers need to learn how this works (Martin, 2000) so as to cause minimum disruption. With an ethnographic approach, it is hard to fully articulate likely research outputs, or the exact nature of questions at the beginning of the research process. Ethnography is exploratory (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) and the nature of research changes and develops throughout, as my research process demonstrates. Sloan and Wright (2015) highlight it is hard to demonstrate how open-ended or exploratory research will meet the often-quantitative based targets of HMPPS. Permission and support from the governing governor of the establishments you wish to enter are also key to making the study a success (Ramluggun et al. 2010). Often being known and having previous experience in an institution that is so security-minded is key to instilling trust from gatekeepers (Sloan and Wright, 2015). For me, gaining access to the prison was a relatively smooth process. I had the full support of the governing governor and central permission to enter the prison was granted within three months of application.

The speed at which access was granted surprised not only the governor but also me, given experiences other prison researchers shared in relation to timescales around gaining access. Being 'known' (Sloan and Wright, 2015) to the governor was a benefit for gaining access but also presented challenges. During the time it took to process my application, I maintained contact with the governor who, on more than one occasion, expressed frustration at needing to seek permission from 'high up' when they were already supportive. On occasion I was assured that I could '*just start my research anyway*' (*field diary, 16/01/18*) and had to carefully manage this situation. Having the support of the governing governor is clearly important, therefore, but cannot be done at the cost of the integrity of the research or research participants. Luckily, due to my previous role in a criminal justice organisation, I was experienced enough to negotiate and manage the expectations of senior management, and so I did not find this situation too challenging (*field diary, 26/01/18*). For a novice researcher, however, the will and direction of the governing governor is something that could present a challenge they should be prepared for. As Gariglio (2014) highlights, even once access is gained, unanticipated events can lead to the need for re-negotiation. There was a change in the number one governor during my research, for example, which required re-negotiation of continuing access. Both were equally supportive, and my level of access remained unchanged during this period. Throughout I was granted generous access to the prison site, including permission to carry keys which I explore next.

5.5.2 Carrying Keys And Finding My Way

During fieldwork I was a keyholder, wearing a prison-issue belt with keys. As such, I had access to the whole site and could freely navigate the site unescorted during my visits. Whilst I was initially reluctant to carry keys, they did, in fact, help with the crucial rapport building stage that is so important when conducting ethnographic research. Keys are a symbol of power in a prison setting (Tynan, 2019), further aligning me with staff. Wearing a prison belt comes with its own challenges though. Control of keys is symbolic in prisons (Ugelvik, 2014), and denotes staff from prisoners.

Despite my initial reluctance, carrying keys was ultimately to my advantage when it came to positioning myself within the field within a tight-knit group who are often suspicious of outsiders:

Whilst having keys is useful and seemingly a necessity, as I am unescorted in the prison, I do have to wear a prison issue belt and key chain and I am concerned that this may in some way lead people to believe that I work for the prison service rather than independently. I need to be very clear about what I am doing there and make sure that my status in relation to who I work for and why I am doing this research is very clear. It could however also play a different way, if I am seen around the site regularly and come and go from the same buildings and facilities as the officers that may give them comfort that I am not a complete outsider. (field diary 16/01/18)

Having keys also minimised disruption to staff, as I was able to let myself in and out of offices and lock doors behind me, reducing my reliance on others. Learning how the prison routine works to cause as little disruption to this as possible is important both to fit in and get on (Martin, 2000). Carrying keys, however, did not come without issue. I was aware this was a big responsibility and, initially, was reluctant to use them as they were cumbersome. I was not sure which doors they opened and did not want to appear to not know what I was doing, or where I could go, at this early stage. I often found myself testing keys on different doors when no one was around to make sure I could work the locks and reflected early in my fieldwork on how I needed to work on *'building my confidence in using my keys'* (field diary, 01/02/18).

Whilst I never misplaced my keys, or took them home by mistake, which is obviously frowned upon, I experienced what I can only describe as a hazing incident. When leaving the prison, keys are exchanged for a numbered key tally, however, when one lunchtime I joined staff on a run, when prison belts and tallies are left in the gatehouse:

On returning from this run I could not remember my tally number and therefore the number of the keys I had been allocated. After much embarrassment and asking around I was able to retrieve the number from the system and collect the correct set of keys, yet it turns out the staff knew my tally number all along. From that point forward I made sure I never forgot that number again.

(field diary, 26/03/18)

Accepting that staff may be likely to play jokes and test your boundaries, and how difficult or embarrassing this can be, is something that should be highlighted to novice researchers. Banter and jokes are a big part of prison interactions (Nielsen, 2011) and Geertz (1983) argues that mutual teasing is a sign a researcher has been accepted within the group. At the time I did not feel this; however, upon later reflection, it just became part of the day-to-day banter.

Prior to this project, my only exposure to prison was two previous visits as part of my teaching role. I needed, therefore, to spend time getting used to the space. On my first few trips I was wary due to the freedom of movement that prisoners had. I was conscious of myself as a young female researcher (something frequently commented upon by both staff and prisoners) in an all-male prison. Not having been exposed to this before, it took me a while to feel comfortable in my surroundings. One of the things that surprised me most was that, from my very first visit, I was able to move around the prison freely and unescorted. On previous visits an escort was always provided, and I reflected in my field diary:

I found it slightly disconcerting was that I was left to make my way across the estate, unescorted. I was able to move freely about the prison, mixing with prisoners and staff. On previous visits to the prison I was always escorted, so, this did feel a little surreal. Yet, although the environment was intimidating, it was generally relaxed and, despite being a young female in an all-male prison, I in

no way feared for my safety, it felt quite calm and relaxed it did not feel how I would imagine prison to feel. (field diary, 26/01/18)

Little did I know at this early stage, this is the same experience prisoners have when entering the prison. They are checked in at reception and pointed in the right direction, left unescorted to find their own way to the wing. After this initial exploration of the space, and learning where all the different departments were, I felt more confident on my next visit (field diary, 26/01/18). Despite gaining physical access to the site and navigation this being relatively easy, building the relationships required to ensure enough social access to gather data in a meaningful way presented greater challenges.

5.6 Getting On In The Prison Setting

Building a good rapport with participants is an important initial step in the research process (Pitts and Miller- Day, 2007), especially for ethnographic research. As discussed in the previous chapter, prison officers are a closed group, making successfully accessing them as participants more challenging. Going into the prison I was aware that rapport building was key to getting staff to talk to me and ensuring that data gathered were an accurate and reliable representation of the setting. Rapport building is a way to gain social access (Cassell, 1988), which is far more complex and varied in its nature than gaining physical access, requiring ongoing interaction with a variety of individuals (Tynan, 2019). To ensure successful data collection, both the culture of participants needs to be understood, and a strong rapport developed to help build trust (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

Building rapport helps to reduce the social distance between the researcher and the researched (Tynan, 2019) and it seemed important to the staff that I was there to talk, and listen to them, rather than prisoners. In terms of research, staff often felt neglected, stating people usually want to talk to prisoners rather than staff as that was seen as *'more exciting'* (field diary 17/03/18). Prison officers are naturally suspicious of outsiders and often give more credibility to those with experience. Sloan and Wright (2015:148) highlight how *'what you have done'* can help when negotiating access to the prison setting, and I found this equally important when building rapport with staff. My appearance is that of a young female and many of the staff at this site were older, experienced prison officers, which made my youth seem even more apparent. Tynan (2019) reflected how she stood out, visibly at least, due to very few staff in young offender institutes appearing in non-uniform. Yet I had the opposite experience, with many staff in the prison site wearing civilian clothes, so I could be mistaken for a new member of staff, a question asked frequently in the early stages of my research. Discussion around my previous career in a different sector of the criminal justice system, and the breadth of my experience, not only surprised staff but also led to a greater rapport and the idea that I could *'be trusted'* (field diary, 15/04/18). It also led to many discussions of how old I was:

My age, or rather my appearance, created issues for some. I look quite young and the officer population at the prison tends to be older who have been in service for a long time, so to them I look even younger. This appears to be detracting from my credibility with some people, I am finding myself having to share information about my previous experiences to build up a rapport and credibility. (field diary, 15/02/18)

Building rapport with prison officers was something that took time and, initially, I found it quite tiring. Jewkes (2014) acknowledges that, for the novice researcher especially, the strain of

managing your identity and the presentation of the self in the prison setting can be tiring and stressful:

One thing that struck me on the last few visits is that being in the prison is quite tiring, not because the days are long or the work is hard, but being the outsider is tiring. It seems that I need to always put on a positive front, I can't be seen to be having a bad day, I must be always a happy researcher which can be exhausting. I also find being an outsider quite hard as this is not something I am used to. In this type of environment, I am used to being part of the team, it is hard to see the strong camaraderie between the staff yet sit on the outside of that. (field diary, 15/02/18)

Rapport building took various forms, from finding common ground to joining the staff running club, or sharing details about my own life and spending time engaging in chit chat over a cup of tea. The initial observation period was invaluable to building rapport and trust. When undertaking research in prison you can find that various roles have been ascribed to you by others, often based on their perceptions rather than knowledge (Jefferson, 2015). During the initial phases of my research, some officers were suspicious of my motivations, with some believing I was there to see how many jobs could be cut, or assuming I was a psychologist, while others accused me of being a government spy (field diary, 01/02/18). There was also the assumption I would not be around for long once I had got what I wanted. As the entry in my field diary below demonstrates:

Most people received me well, however, some were suspicious; one asked me if I was a government spy! It was clear I was going to need to spend a lot of time building trust, spending time with officers in their day to day activities to ensure that they become more comfortable with my presence. Some were in disbelief that I would be making multiple visits over a year or more and would not just be going away after a week or so...I was also asked if I was being paid to do this research. Again, there was surprise when I stated that I was here by choice not because I was being paid. (field diary, 01/02/18)

The more time I spent in the prison, though, the more relaxed staff became about my presence.

When certain staff took to me, this encouraged others to do the same:

Whilst I was putting my stuff away and greeting everyone a prison officer to whom I had previously spoken was booking in for the day. He greeted me warmly and was happy to chat which seemed to give me some kudos with the staff who were a little unsure of me. Today was an interesting visit, the officers were more friendly and engaging than on previous visits and were willing to have me involved in having a cup of tea and a chat. (field diary, 15/02/18)

I found various ways of spending time with officers in a more relaxed setting, not just when they were working with prisoners, to ensure I could continue to integrate and earn their trust. Time away from prisoners in staff only spaces is highly valued by officers, and, in these spaces, they were more able and willing to relax and talk freely about their lives, feelings and views. Whilst initially I was shunned in this staff only space, perseverance paid off, and this became a key place in which to spend time with staff, but also for me to relax:

Today I again chose to eat lunch in the staff social room which, until today has been a lonely experience. I was joined in the end by four officers, most of whom I had spoken to in the day. This certainly was time well spent, chatting about TV shows, families, and life in general. This was excellent rapport building time and officers felt more comfortable to ask me questions and act in a more relaxed manner, so it was certainly worth basing myself in there over lunch. I was able to make a further contact who would be willing to talk to me and show me around the OMU department, people were more relaxed without prisoners around. Now I am slowly being accepted this will certainly be a useful space for rapport building in the future (field diary, 09/03/18)

As I became better known by various staff across the prison setting, they became more willing to challenge colleagues who appeared to continue to question my presence and motivations:

Whilst most people were welcoming, one officer came over to ask who I was, and what I thought was doing in the office. He was unhappy that he had not been told that I would be in today or who I was. What was interesting, however, was that other members of staff came to my defence. After 10 minutes or less this same officer apologised to me and stated that he wasn't trying to be rude, he just wasn't used to having outsiders in the building. He proceeded to chat to me, taking time out to talk me through the process in which I was interested. (field diary, 14/03/18)

Having gained trust, from most officers at least, I also needed to consider how best to collect and record data in a way that did not alienate me from this tight-knit group. This became particularly apparent when thinking about how and whether to record conversations with staff.

Recording devices are often an important part of a qualitative researcher's equipment but getting them into prisons presents an additional challenge (Sloan and Wright, 2015). Written permission, for example, had to be sought from the governing governor for this in my case. Some officers expressed surprise I could bring the device in, stating it was not something '*they would have allowed*' (field diary 15/02/18). There can be resistance, or nervousness, to conversations being recorded (O'Reilly, 2009), and I had to provide reassurance that, once the interviews were transcribed, recordings could be deleted on request. As I became more familiar with the site and the staff, two things were apparent that presented a challenge. First officers were not keen on signing consent forms, which formalised their taking part in my research, and, in some cases, staff wanted to provide verbal consent instead. Secondly, space is at a premium and finding a quiet area in which to have a private discussion away from other staff and prisoners was difficult. This meant I had to be flexible about where I met people and at what time of day. Some officers were

happy to chat in groups with me making notes, while others took time out to sit with me in one-to-one scenarios, giving me a rich variety of data. Due to my level of involvement in the prison community, managing withdrawal from the field was both important and challenging and I reflect on this next.

5.7 Getting Out - Withdrawing From The Field

A key area that requires management in ethnographic research is withdrawing from the field. Whilst 'getting out' is an important part of the research process, it is rarely discussed in terms of the emotional and lasting effects this can have (Sloan and Wright, 2015). Jewkes (2005) acknowledged that individuals we meet in a prison setting can have a deep impact on us, creating far-reaching and unexpected effects. As discussed earlier, I was surprised by this during, and after, my time in the field. Tynan (2019), in her openly emotional account of undertaking research in a prison setting, acknowledges that some relationships developed were meaningful beyond the research and I find myself in a similar situation. Even after leaving the site some relationships endured. Withdrawing took longer than I anticipated and, due to my involvement in the prison community, it was important to me and, it seemed, to the staff that I didn't just 'disappear' (field diary, 7/02/19). My last few weeks in the field were dedicated to withdrawing but the nature of shift work involved me making multiple visits to the site to speak with different staff members. During this time I did not conduct any interviews, or note any additional observations, instead, focusing on thanking participants and explaining what I hoped to do with the information they had shared with me. Whilst I did not gather additional data, it remained a period of reflection:

Withdrawing from the field was more challenging than I anticipated. I have been visiting the prison, often multiple times a week, for over a year and it feels odd that, from next week I won't

be having a cup of tea or lunch with the people I have got to know. On some level, I will miss visiting the prison and the people, but all research has to end somewhere. (field diary, 13/02/19)

Whilst withdrawing from the field was a time of deep reflection, at various points during my research I paused to reflect more broadly on the nature of the open setting specifically. Not only because it differed so vastly from my idea of what prison would be like, but because the staff, and other prison researchers I spoke to, also highlighted the distinct nature of the open setting. Having not researched closed conditions myself, it was not possible to make direct comparisons from personal experience, but hearing the experiences of others allowed me to reflect on the freedoms I was afforded when undertaking this research. I acknowledged the privileged position I was in when it came to the lack of violence and control issues that could have impacted my safety and the different nature of the physical and social environment:

One thing that was useful about meeting with other prison researchers was hearing about their experiences in the field. What struck me when listening to the accounts was just how different the open site is from the closed site and how lucky I feel to be at the prison that I am at; especially as this was my first experience of solo prison research. Things other researchers witnessed and dealt with were sobering and moving. I was grateful that many of the problems and circumstances that they have faced, I have not come across in such extreme forms. It made me realise just how different the environment in a closed site is and how the work that I am doing will be useful to further understanding open sites. It helped me put into perspective some of the stories that officers in my prison had told me, giving me a clearer understanding of what these officers and prisoners may have experienced in other settings, further adding to the contrast between this open prison and some of its closed counterparts. (field diary, 05/09/18)

In the early stages of my research, staff often asked me if I felt safe. It seemed important to staff that I was comfortable because that was the type of environment they were trying to create for staff, prisoners and visitors alike. But it also felt at times that staff were testing my resilience:

They asked me how I felt, did I feel safe walking around on my own? I said that I did...I joked about how I was likely safer in the prison than I was on a normal Saturday night in my local town. (field diary, 15/06/18)

These reflections and discussions in the early stages of my research gave some indication as to the distinct nature of the open setting, which is an argument central to my research, but also allowed staff to probe my thoughts and feelings about open prisons. Next, I move on to the first of my data chapters which sets out the distinct nature of the open setting, but first, I summarise this chapter.

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter set out the research design employed, highlighting how the ethnographic approach was an appropriate and valid way to gather data which helped to both refine, and then answer, the research questions. It detailed the different phases of fieldwork and analysis and how these interplayed with one another. Details of the frequency of prison visits and who participated are also provided. This demonstrates how a range of views across the hierarchical structure present among prison staff were collected. It also discusses data collection through in-depth ethnographic interviews and observations, considering the value of taking such methods, as well as some of the drawbacks. Immersing myself in the prison over many months allowed me to conduct in-depth interviews with various prison staff, and also to observe the prison over an extended period. Being able to do this added a richness to my data that could not have been achieved without such an investment of time, or by utilising interviews alone. Such an approach means that this research contributes to knowledge around open prisons and their staff in far greater detail than other

recent studies such as Moore and Hamilton (2016) and Danks and Bradley (2018) which focus on very specific topics. The process of data analysis was also discussed not only in terms of how this was conducted throughout the fieldwork, but also the systematic process of revisiting data collectively before themes were finalised. Consideration is given to the criticisms of undertaking ethnographic research and the ways in which the research was designed and conducted to ensure the integrity of the study. Despite criticisms of ethnography from some quarters, this chapter clearly demonstrates how such methods were appropriate for this project. The ethical implications of undertaking this research are also explored, highlighting how some challenges with which I was faced were not anticipated in the initial ethical approval and how I had to navigate these.

Undertaking prison research presents many challenges, practically obviously, but also emotionally, and these are not considered as much as they could be, especially in relation to novice prison researchers. Such issues were explored in the second half of this chapter. The practical challenges of getting permission and gaining access were relatively easy to navigate, but the emotional challenges were harder to overcome. I reflect on how undertaking research in a prison setting was challenging in unexpected ways and will have a lasting impact on my views of the criminal justice system and those individuals who pass through the prison system. Despite this, it was necessary as a researcher to maintain my distance to some degree and manage my relationships and the process of withdrawing from the field, which I have also examined here. The thesis now moves on to provide the detailed data analysis which was enabled by this research approach. This consists of three chapters which consider the three areas of enquiry which emerged over the course of the research process. The first of these utilises the rich data collected through these ethnographic methods, beginning with a journey around the research site. The

'thick description' this involves establishes, in full, the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison initially introduced in chapter two.

Part Two

Chapter Six: The Distinct Social And Physical Environment Of The Open Prison

6.1 Introduction

The preceding three chapters have provided essential background literature to the rationale behind this research that frames the key areas of enquiry and the research approach. This chapter, the first of three presenting my data, introduces the unfamiliar physical and social milieu of the open prison that my research identifies, exploring the conditions that make up the distinct environment of this penal setting. As established in chapter two, open prisons represent a small, but important part of the prison estate, yet little is known about them in either public or scholarly arenas. The data presented and discussed in this chapter provides a contribution to knowledge by establishing the distinct physical and social milieu that the modern open prison represents, including the focus on distinct aims, and nature of prison officer work. Jones and Cornes (1977) established, open prisons serve a different function from that of the closed estate and staff who work there, recognise differences in the environment and working practices. My research, therefore, brings our knowledge of open prisons up to date.

The chapter takes a journey around the open prison site upon which this research is based, focusing on how it differs, both physically and socially, from more traditional penal establishments, which is detailed via the means of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973). As established in chapter five, thick description is an ethnographic research technique that goes beyond describing the behaviour of those observed, instead, interpreting and ascribing intentionality to it within a specific context (Ryle, 1971; Ponterotto, 2006) – in this case, the open prison. Undertaking an ethnography in a prison setting allows for an important contribution to research via 'thick descriptions of the hidden world of the prison' (Whetter, 2015:341) and this chapter sets out the hidden details discovered as part of this research.

Understanding the physical and social distinctness of the open prison as a penal establishment is central to this thesis and necessarily involves comparisons with other types of establishment. These are frequently made by staff themselves to contextualise the open setting, however, the primary focus of this thesis is not these comparisons but rather to understand and explore the open prison as its own community. This chapter engages with key sociological debates about the aims of imprisonment and the role of prison staff, as well as highlighting the physical distinctness of the open setting and how the environment is less centred around physical containment. I argue these physical variations reflect the emphasis upon differing aims and attempt to facilitate the increased levels of prisoner responsibility afforded in an open setting, which are essential to such aims. This chapter, then, underlines how the environment, opportunities, and ways of working in an open setting enable the aims of resettlement and reintegration to be central to the work undertaken in a way that staff perceive as impossible in a closed environment. It also explores the impact that the distinct social and physical milieu have on the way in which prison officers approach their work.

First, the distinct physical environment of the open prison is established. This is framed via my journey into and around the prison site, from entering at the prison gate through navigation of the many different buildings that make up this space. This chapter concentrates on distinction, setting out how the open environment enables different approaches to prison work. Next, I consider the distinct aims of the open prison, exploring the key concepts of resettlement and reintegration, which form the primary goals at this institution. There are also elements of work which are not officially recognised, though, such as de-institutionalisation and the testing of prisoners. Staff acknowledge that the open prison environment not only allows them to provide the practical support and opportunities required to help individuals resettle into a community but also acts a testing ground for prisoners before release. The open prison is seen as a community

where prisoners can de-institutionalise in a safe environment before they are released, which goes beyond the acknowledged aims of such establishments. De-institutionalisation, and the role of staff in that process in particular, is a little explored aspect of prison work which may be important to successful resettlement. Key to this, in the perceptions of staff, are the close links the prison, and its inmates, share with the community, in ways other prisons do not, especially through the prison Working Out Scheme (WOS), which I consider in detail.

The chapter moves on to explore the role of prison officers in an open prison, examining perceived differences from other prison settings in the nature of work and the staff approach to their role. Whilst officers' experiences of adapting to the social milieu of the open prison is discussed in greater detail in chapter six, here I establish how the environment necessitates and structures this adaptive process. Finally, this chapter engages with the impact of penal policy in an open setting and the ways staff and managers cope with and adapt central policies to allow them to achieve particular aims within a distinctive environment.

6.2 A Journey Through The Open Prison

When I first entered the prison, I was struck by the abundance of green, open space in which people – a mixture of staff and prisoners – can walk freely. This includes allotments, chicken coops and a large field used for playing sports in the summer months. The site is exposed to the elements and not easily reached by regular public transport. I always travelled to the site by car, despite preferring public transport for day-to-day travel. The location of the prison, whilst somewhat beautiful, is not immediately accessible, then, for those without private transport. Though this did not initially occur to me as problematic, it does present challenges for prisoners entering the community for work or home visits, for staff travelling to and from work, and for

those visiting family members or friends who are detained here. Later in this chapter I explore how the open prison tries to foster relationships with the community, which in part relies on strict physical boundaries being removed. Here, however, whilst the boundaries may not be strong physically, there remains a sense of isolation from the wider community which, for me, later detracted from this beauty a little.

The buildings, of which there are many, spread across the vast site. They comprise a mixture of old brick-built structures, hot in the summer and cold in the winter, and prefabricated buildings that would not be out of place in a school setting. It can be bleak and inaccessible in the winter. Indeed, in previous years staff and prisoners recall being '*snowed in and having to dig their way out*' (field diary, 15/5/18). In contrast, it can be beautiful in the summer, with a large population of wildlife combined with a pond and chicken coops, sometimes allowing one to forget this is a prison. As I reflected in my field diary:

Walking around the site, I was struck by the beauty of the area. I wandered over to the chicken coop to say hello to the chickens. I also spent some time watching the rabbits running around the field and admiring the view. On a beautiful sunny day, you must remind yourself that you are in a prison at times. (field diary, 21/03/18)

This was not just my perception. Staff highlighted that prisoners can also find themselves '*forgetting*' (Prison Officer 4) this is a prison, which can lead to conflict. This is not only because of the setting itself, but also the perceived freedoms afforded to prisoners, and this is discussed further in chapter six (see 6.3).

The prison had an operational capacity of over 450 prisoners, or men as they are referred to by many staff (field diary, 06/02/18). The distinctiveness of open prisons is usually most apparent

through the lack of physical security traditionally associated with penal establishments (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Matthews, 1999). The current research site is no exception: the boundary denoted by a hedge, which could be breached with ease; the external gate, acting as entrance and egress for all, consisting of a barrier like those seen at public car parks (field diary, 25/09/18). A large amount of outdoor space surrounds the buildings, with prisoners, staff, and visitors⁶ alike often seen walking around during the day. Staff and visitors can drive onto and around the site, parking in various locations that are unsecured with fencing or gates. Prisoners were also allowed personal vehicles, important given the isolated location, but could not park them on site (field diary, 25/09/18).

Entering the prison via the gatehouse, rather than through locked doors or gates, involves moving through an enclosed walkway designed, it appeared, to protect from the elements rather than enhance security. Prisoners leaving for work, education or home visits enter and exit the same way as staff and, at times, it was hard to distinguish them. Identification was requested from visitors (usually a driving licence) and they were signed in by hand in the log, being reminded not to take in mobile phones in much the same way as prisoners returning were.

During my time in the field, I was provided with photo identification that denoted me as part of the education department and allocated a set of keys. As such, I was not required to show identification when entering the prison, instead exchanging my 'tally' for a set of keys, in the same way as prison staff.⁷ I never witnessed a visitor to the prison site undergoing a physical body search, yet during informal discussions with staff references to 'checking' delivery vehicles,

⁶ It is important to note that the term visitors, in this context, refers to those visiting the site for work related reasons, such as myself as a researcher. There is a separate visits hall in which prisoners meet with family and friends during designated visiting hours.

⁷ See chapter five for discussion on the implications of carrying keys in the prison setting.

especially those delivering meals shipped from another prison, were made (field diary, 15/03/2018). On occasion visitors in the designated visitors' hall were searched, although I personally did not witness this. I was never subjected to a physical search.

Unlike much of the prison, the gatehouse and communications office (located in the same building) are '*staff only areas*' (field diary, 08/02/18) in the sense that prisoners were not allowed within them at any time. Most spaces across the prison, however, are shared, throughout the day at least, and this impacts how they are used. The prolonged interaction between staff and prisoners generates a key element of the social distinctness of the open prison which I explore in more detail in chapter seven (see 7.9). The communications office is the base from which the count of prisoners was managed, radio communications and CCTV were monitored, and the coordination of responses to serious incidents undertaken. Keys to all areas of the prison were held in the gatehouse and this potential risk seemed to be the main reason for excluding prisoners. This demonstrates that, despite more trusting and frequent interactions between staff and prisoners, clear boundaries remain in areas where security could be compromised; a reminder of the conditional nature of trust in such settings which I also identify in other elements of the operation of the open estate.

Staff often began their day by collecting their keys from the gatehouse, then their radios from the communications office, thus forming part of their daily routine when entering the site. This process allowed monitoring of who was on site, which was considered important for both security and safety reasons. Concern was sometimes expressed about failure to do this. One staff member, for example, mentioned that employees would sometimes '*just drive onto the site ... so you don't always know who it was or where they have gone*' (field diary, 28/03/18). In reality,

however, the staff pool are few, and this did not appear to me to represent a security concern but frustration that proper processes were not followed (field diary, 28/03/2018).

The next stop on entering was reception where entrance is, again, via a normal office-style door which remains unlocked during opening hours. Unlike the gatehouse, reception acts as a shared workspace for both staff and prisoners, at least at certain times of the day. I discuss the impact of shared spaces further later (see 7.9). Although staff and visitors are not required to pass through reception they often do, making it an informal meeting area:

Reception was a meeting point for staff, many passed through reception, even though they did not need to, before heading into the prison. People caught up on anything that has happened the day before, or overnight, and issues were discussed informally. It was explained to me that in a closed prison there would be a handover or briefing that all staff would attend, however, this does not happen in a formal way for all staff here. Reception, therefore, acted as an informal gathering place for staff. Individuals from departments such as healthcare, chaplaincy, probation, and education pop in to see if there is anything that they needed to know or just for a chat, not just prison officers. (field diary, 15/02/18)

When reception is open, prisoners used this space when leaving or returning to the prison site. When heading out for work they were rarely stopped, but rather '*passed through*' (field diary, 15/02/18) because that is what is required. On occasion when returning, however, prisoners were stopped and searched, but this was not something I routinely witnessed:

Most prisoners, when leaving the prison boundary, passed through reception on their way to sign out. They collected lunch, showed their book to the staff, but they are not signed out here. Today

several prisoners returning from work were searched by an officer. This is the first time I witnessed this happening; it does not appear to be common practice. (field diary, 15/01/18)

When prisoners leave for or return from, home visits the interaction with officers was more prolonged, involving detailed notetaking of, for example, the clothing and property a prisoner has, and a discussion of the rules they must follow or when they needed to return. Prisoners were also provided with a copy of their licence. Searches were more common after home leave and, sometimes also a breath test for alcohol. Staff considered prisoners returning from home leave presented a higher level of risk in relation to bringing prohibited items into the prison, or having engaged in forbidden behaviour and, therefore, spent time to deter them or identify issues:

Staff on reception deal with signing licences for ROTL, medical appointments, and any other type of release, say, perhaps, for driving lessons, anything that isn't someone going to work. Staff run through paperwork and licence conditions with prisoners and on occasion offered advice about acceptable behaviour outside of the prison. They provided practical support, such as arranging travel or providing a phone for prisoners who do not have one. One prisoner returning from home leave was being signed back in, the officer was checking that the prisoner was only returning with the property with which he left, right down to his clothing being the same colour and style as the ones he wore when leaving four days earlier. I found the need to focus on small details such as the exact colour of clothing somewhat surprising, as this demonstrated a strong sense of control over something seemingly trivial. (field diary, 15/03/18)

Reception was also the place where newly transferred prisoners were received and booked in. During this process, prisoners can see the only cell in the prison, used to confine those being removed, which staff often referred to as *'the only locked door on the site'* (field diary, 15/02/18), although this was not actually the case. Interestingly this cell is located so that, during the day, anyone present could not help but notice if it was occupied. Yet during my time in the field, this

was rarely the case. At the back of the cell is a door into the communications room, which many staff used as a shortcut to reception. Reception, then, is a place of transience for prisoners entering and exiting daily, but also of release for inmates finishing their, often lengthy, sentence, and a final stop for prisoners being returned to closed conditions:

This is the place where new prisoners were received. Also, prisoners who are being released from prison were dealt with here. This is an interesting event. A prisoner who has been in prison for nearly 20 years was released today and it was obvious that the staff had a sense of pride about his being released. Several staff came down to say goodbye and to shake his hand. There is also the only obvious cell located here, however, I saw far more staff pass through this cell as a shortcut than I ever saw prisoners confined in it. (field diary, 15/02/18)

Discussions with officers revealed just how different the reception process can be from that in closed settings, attributing this to the physical environment, but also the way staff behaved. One officer recalled how in closed conditions, when prisoners were received there were often three or four staff there who are *'ready to fight'* (*Senior Officer 1*), creating a hostile environment. The more relaxed nature of the open prison means a lower chance of violence occurring, further emphasising the interaction between the physical and social distinctness of these settings. The importance of taking a different approach in the open prison environment is explored in more depth later (see 5.9). Yet reception is still staffed by prison officers in uniform and so, despite this different approach, the links with closed establishments are evident in terms of staffing, searching and the presence of a cell.

When exiting reception the site expanded, somewhat dauntingly if you did not know where you were going. On my first day unescorted I felt a little unsure where to go, despite having visited the prison previously. No area was out of bounds to me so, whilst I feared getting lost, I knew I

would not end up somewhere I should not be. For a new prisoner, however, who is not escorted but *'pointed in the right direction and sent on their way'* (field diary, 15/02/18), I imagine this could be an unnerving experience.

The site consisted of three residential wings. Two larger ones, like traditional prison wings, and a smaller one more reflective of an old, prefabricated school building. The larger prison wings are a reminder that, despite the various physical and social differences, the open prison retains similarity with the broader penal estate. Along the wings are single occupancy rooms, called this rather than cells. Consequently, overcrowding is not evident in the same way as for many other prisons.⁸ Prisoners had keys to their own rooms and could leave them at any time, although they must remain within the wing between eight at night and eight in the morning, unless they had specific permission to be elsewhere. Further discussion of the control of prisoner movements can be found in chapter eight.

Staff emphasised prisoners taking responsibility for their actions as a distinct element of the social environment of the open prison (something discussed further in 5.3 and 6.4). The atmosphere and set-up in the wings reflected this. For example, I observed the following:

There are three landings on both wings. These landings spur off to the left and right of the wing office. There is also a reception type area and hotplate area in between the two spurs. In this reception area, there were noticeboards providing information for prisoners, as well as a TV screen that displayed various information on a loop. ... There is a lot of information for prisoners to access if they wished to do so. It seems that the environment was created to try and encourage prisoners to help themselves rather than ask for everything. The officers were there as facilitators, acting in a supportive role rather than doing everything for the prisoners. (field diary, 09/03/18)

⁸ Not all open prisons have single occupancy cells or rooms

As well as residential wings, other buildings were used for things like education, healthcare, and exercise. Specific units existed for the WOS and offender management. There was also a library and a workshop, with office space for training, security, management, and administration.

Together these many buildings and offices create the feel of an, almost, self-sufficient community, as I reflected in my field diary:

I remember when I first started going to the prison, I would feel like I needed to take lots of different things with me. ... The more time I spent in the prison and the more comfortable I became I realised that if I wanted a hot meal, I could grab one, someone was usually cooking, in every office I went to there was tea and coffee to be had. If I had a headache someone always had paracetamol. I could go to the gym, go for a walk, I could always find a quiet space to read or make notes. It's like being in a bubble, a little community shut off from the outside world. (field diary, 07/05/18)

Despite this one of the key parts of the open prison is supporting prisoners to seek employment in the community and a whole department dedicated to this is widely recognised as important. I will now discuss this.

6.2.1 'WOS Is The Central Hub Of The Prison'

The WOS is described as the '*central hub of the prison from which everything stems out*' (field diary, 14/03/18). Here work takes place that represents a key area of distinction from the closed estate. Gaining employment for prisoners, both during and after their sentence, is an important aim within open prisons. As discussed in chapter two, inmates can be granted ROTL to attend work and, whilst this is available to some in the closed setting, the frequent use of ROTL is a highly distinctive element of the open setting (Cooper, 2014; HMPPS, 2019). Officers and staff in the WOS support prisoners to find work, as well as carrying out necessary checks to ensure the

suitability of their place of employment. WOS is perceived as important by officers because it plays a key role in supporting prisoners into paid employment outside the prison, which is acknowledged as a key aspect for their reintegration into the wider community. Prisoners cannot enter paid employment immediately. There are different stages through which they must pass, working their way up to paid employment. Entering the community to undertake paid employment is seen by staff as a privilege:

Prisoners must earn the right to work. There are two stages – stage one, volunteer work and, stage two, paid work. There are risk assessments, paperwork to be completed, and permissions to be granted from various organisations ... before a prisoner can be considered for work. Prisoners can then work up to getting stage two jobs which are paid employment outside of the prison. Again, there are risk assessments and forms that must be filled in and approved and agreements with employers must be signed. This is quite a time-consuming process and can cause frustration for both prisoners and officers, especially if it leads to delays in starting work. (field diary, 14/03/18)

In the same department, there are also staff who are responsible for coordinating activities across the prison that play an important role in how the prison operates. Here I reflect on the work of the activities team:

This team is responsible for delivering activities and education within the prison. Each prisoner has an activity plan which is developed, in conjunction with them, soon after arrival. Prisoners are given information about how to apply for jobs and college courses, but the emphasis is on them to apply through the appropriate system. The role of the staff is again to help prisoners help themselves. (field diary, 14/03/18)

The first part of this chapter has explored my journey entering the prison site, exploring the different areas and some key elements that make it not only a physically, but also a socially, distinct environment. As discussed in chapter two, distinctive penal environments allow for different aims of imprisonment to come to the fore. The following section focuses on how the distinct environment of the open setting lends itself to focusing on the aims of resettlement and reintegration and providing support to achieve this successfully.

6.3 The Distinct Aims Of An Open Prison: ‘Cat D is a different type of prison...We are about preparing our men for release’

For staff, a ‘*Cat D is a different type of prison*’ (Prison Officer 1) and this impacts the aims that can be delivered within it. Staff acknowledged that the general aim of imprisonment remains the same across prison establishments, but felt they could focus with a greater level of success on resettlement and reintegration:

The generic aim would be the same. So, you would have a lifer with 30 years left and they (closed prison) would give him a course on anger and aggression. They might also give him a course on resettlement so there is the same general aim. But ours is a very real aim. We want to see him be able to go back to the community on ROTL prior to release, have home leave, have a job, see his family, see his kids and settle back in. It is a different step of the journey. A completely different step. (Governor 2)

The open prison is designed to prepare prisoners for life outside a prison, enabling them to resettle prisoners into the communities in which they intend to live upon release (HMIP, 2019). Whilst the stated aims of imprisonment are the same across all prison establishments, staff at this site saw their aims as somewhat different, involving getting ‘someone back into the community’ rather than ‘*protecting the community from that person by keeping them locked up*’ (Governor 2).

Jones and Cornes (1977) noted how the aims of open prisons focused on rehabilitation. My early discussions with staff involved talk of rehabilitation as a core aim but, as this idea was interrogated in more detail, it became apparent that little rehabilitative work was undertaken here. A key strength of taking an ethnographic approach to research of this kind, and so spending a prolonged period in the field, is that it gave me the chance to explore such issues in more depth, moving beyond surface level presentations to get to the core of their meaning. It was clear that in initial interviews and interactions with staff I received a very corporate account of their work and role (field diary 15/2/18). Yet prolonged exposure allowed me to observe and reflect on what was happening and then explore some of these concepts in greater detail, adding to the richness and depth of my findings. Via these discussions, staff were able to more clearly reflect on the role that the open prison played, in terms of resettlement rather than rehabilitation.

Staff expected much of the work concerning rehabilitation to have already occurred in the closed setting prior to transfer to the open estate. Moore (2012) observes that rehabilitative work is offence-focused, often ignoring the unique individual circumstances that lead to offending and reoffending. Very little, if any, offence-focused work is undertaken in the open prison. Instead, resettlement emerged as key to staff perceptions of the aims they were working to achieve:

This is a resettlement prison. When they first come into the prison estate, some of them on remand, some of them straight from conviction, they have got a journey, depending on the length of sentence. Throughout that journey, they have their plan on how they are going to progress through the system. ... So, by the time they reach us, their purpose is for resettlement. We are at the end of the sentence. We are the last leg in their journey. So, any offending behaviour work they should have already addressed. We are about resettlement and about preparing our men for release. (Senior Officer 4)

Staff felt they could achieve some aims of the prison service, such as resettlement, in a more tangible way because of the distinct nature of the open environment:

Ultimately it is to resettle these guys back into the community. So, working. If they have got a job that they can take with them, housing, reintegrate into the family; that is harder than expected because they haven't had physical contact, whereas here they will have physical contact in terms of going out on town visits, going out on home leave. (Senior Officer 3)

So, the open prison is seen as the last leg on a long journey through the prison system. As such, there is an expectation prisoners will have already received relevant rehabilitation interventions, although staff recognised this is not always the case in practice. Whilst the prison does not run specific rehabilitation courses for prisoners, staff acknowledged some work they do with prisoners, assisted by the greater time they have for this, supports elements of rehabilitation.

Confusion over the meaning of rehabilitation and resettlement is common and the two have been used interchangeably in penal settings (Moore, 2019). The meaning ascribed to these terms can influence how staff interpret them and this is why exploring the meaning staff ascribed to such concepts is crucial. Officers do not see the reintegrative work they do as separate from rehabilitation but as part of a wider process. As one officer described:

We use the phrase rehabilitation and rehabilitative culture here a lot, but we don't actually offer any intervention. We don't offer anything, purely because the expectation is that they should have done that before they get here. What we offer is a forklift course, an electrician's course, a plumber's course, all of that kind of thing. It is the resettlement, it is more than rehabilitation. (Prison Officer 2)

This quotation reflects the dominance of psychological understandings of rehabilitation within the prison system currently, which McNeill (2012) argues is a narrow perspective that hampers rehabilitation by failing to engage with broader meanings. The work staff described to me has commonality with older notions of 'training' that emerged in the early twentieth century in a system which Garland (1985, 2012) argues was more welfare oriented. This focused on re-education and training to tackle poor socialisation and ensure employment rather than quasi-medical treatment. Whilst staff acknowledged that resettlement and rehabilitation, both of which are officially recognised as aims of imprisonment, formed part of their work, the next section explores an additional element in the role of the open prison which is unacknowledged by the prison service and rarely discussed in broader literature. It was, however, seen by staff as important to the work of an open prison.

6.3.1 'It's about getting the institution out of them'

Staff discussions of their role identified a less recognised element of their work, which was too de-institutionalise prisoners. This was seen as assisting resettlement because, without it, inmates were unable to reintegrate:

It's about getting the institution out of them. They are institutionalised and it is about getting that out of them so they can deal with real life. (Prison Officer 1)

Long sentence prisoners, who make up the majority of those in the open setting, go through various stages of adaptation throughout their prison sentence (Jarman, 2020). Staff saw the open prison as part of this process, acclimatising inmates to life outside prison. Staff explicitly acknowledged de-institutionalisation as part of the process of prisoners moving through the prison system:

The way I have always seen the prison service is that we take away more control as they get to each category. They start in an A or B cat where we tell them this is when you get up, this is when you eat, this is when you go to work, this is when you come back, this is when you get locked up. Then they will go to a C cat where they will put a little bit back onto them, so in a B cat we are telling them you are going to do this and that and you will go there. Then you come to a place like this and it's like, 'it's down to you now'. (Prison Officer 1)

Open prisons were originally designed to provide a less institutionalised environment for prisoners (Jones and Cornes, 1977), although actively undertaking work to undo damage produced by closed penal environments is not officially attributed as part of their role. Menis (2020:146) supports the notion that the role of the open prison is to help prisoners regain the skills lost through institutionalisation, which she describes as the 'abatement of institutionalisation'. The distinctness of the open prison is intended, to a certain extent, to reflect a more normalised or community-based environment. Staff recognise this, in part, plays a role in repairing damage produced through experiences in other prison establishments, thus representing a form of de-institutionalisation. Work to undo the more widely considered institutionalisation processes first associated with total institutions by Goffman (1961) is rarely discussed in relation to prisoner resettlement. De-institutionalisation is most frequently understood as the wider social process of closing large-scale asylums, which is considered to have contributed to increased incarceration rates (Parsons, 2018). Recent work has applied the concept to experiences of long-term imprisonment, highlighting the inconsistency between the prison service's commitment to resettlement and the way that 'enforced conformity with the prison regime suppressed the very autonomy on which successful reintegration into society depends' (Grant and Crossan, 2012: 98). Crossan (2009) argues this means inmates who successfully adapt to prison life find reintegration more challenging. This contradiction is central

to some aspects of work undertaken in open prisons but the failure to officially acknowledge de-institutionalisation as part of its role limits policy and academic discussion of this. This links to Auty and Liebling's (2020) observation that little is understood about establishments that can contribute to repairing the damage done by imprisonment, which the open prison appears to be, from the perspective of staff at least. Successful resettlement may require de-institutionalisation, as staff in my research identified, but they are not identical processes and should not be conflated.

Whilst the open prison strives to reflect a more normalised environment, affording prisoners greater responsibility and freedom of movement and so lessening the need for enforced conformity to the regime, it remains a penal establishment in which breaching rules comes with consequences that would not be present in the wider community. As I explore further in chapter seven, the continued importance of order and control in open settings limits the degree to which a more normal, non-penal environment is created and this may hinder staff's attempts to deinstitutionalise prisoners. A further contradiction is evident in open prison work, since the distinct environment there is intended not only to support prisoners to resettle or de-institutionalise but also to test if they are ready to live in the wider community.

Staff saw the open prison as '*a testing ground*' (*Senior Officer 3*) where prisoners can demonstrate their readiness to be released. The distinct environment serves to assess prisoners' ability to cope before their release. Staff noted how they make prisoners aware of this:

I say 'we are testing you'. It is all a test. We are looking at how they cope with pressure and to see how they cope with frustration. It is all part of the process of testing them. (*Prison Officer 6*)

The idea that long sentence prisoners need to be tested indicates that the management of risk remains a key aspect of prison work, even in the more normalised open prison. The open prison, therefore, operates on a system of conditional trust. Prisoners obtain more freedom and responsibility but staff retain control over this through the imposition of rules and sanctions when necessary.

The importance of resettlement and de-institutionalisation in staff's work led them to reflect on the notion of the open prison as akin to a community. The notion of prisons being self-contained communities is not new (Clemmer, 1940). Yet, here, staff highlighted how the ethos they try to create is similar to the wider community into which prisoners are resettling, rather than the prison only functioning as a community that is separate from the outside world. I will now explore these two concepts of the open prison as a community and the re-creation of the community within the prison.

6.3.2 'We try to have a community ethos'

During fieldwork staff spoke of the prison as a standalone community into which they and the prisoners must settle:

We get the ones that don't comply. ... but they are living in a community so it's about respect. Some of them are not particularly clean ... but if we catch anyone, we come down on them because it is about respect and being in a community and helping each other. I mean prisoners never cease to amaze me. We might have someone who is poorly, and they will all rally round so that guy will be looked after probably better than, well we know some will be released into a community that haven't got the level of care or the amount of people to look after them and they just, well we get some quite amazing people here. (Senior Officer 4)

I, too, observed that the prison functioned like a community:

There were a lot of prisoners milling around, listening to music, playing snooker, making tea and generally socialising and yet the noise wasn't deafening. Everyone was co-existing together in their own little community. Many of the doors to prisoners' rooms were open and people were in and out of one another's cells. Whilst the wing building is very much reflective of a prison in structure and scale, the relaxed and buzzing community environment inside the building seems somewhat at odds with this notion. (field diary, 06/03/18)

Additionally, however, staff attempted to ensure the prison was like the wider community, with some describing it as a '*community jail*' (*Governor Grade 2*). Whilst some types of prison have, for many years, been acknowledged as representing their own type of prison community (Clemmer, 1940), the open prison tries to be reflective of the wider community, rather than a prison, to help support the process of de-institutionalisation and reintegration. Yet the extent to which any establishment in which people are held against their will can be reflective of the wider community is questionable. The idea of creating a more normalised, or community, environment is considered important in Scandinavia, where the loss of liberty is seen as sufficient punishment (Pratt, 2008). Whilst open prisons in the UK share similarities with this, the levels of control still present, often subtly, limit the degree to which normality can be achieved, as I explore further in chapter seven. As part of attempts to ensure similarity between the prison and the community, close ties were maintained with the local neighbourhood. As one Governor describes:

We try to have a community ethos, rather than a prison. I think years ago I always thought of the open estate as the same as a closed estate but without a wall. What I try and think about what it is now is like the community, but they just come back at night. So, before, I saw it – the open prison

– as closer to a closed estate, but now I see it as closer to the outside community and I think that ethos helps. (Governor Grade 4)

This quotation demonstrates the degree to which the open prison environment is both socially and physically distinct. Being reflective of the community is considered to allow a greater focus on resettlement and reintegration, as well as the trust and responsibility which assist this. Yet, as discussed in chapter six, at times this can be at odds with security aspects of the staff's role and trust remains conditional.

The more porous boundary between the prison and the community means staff and prisoners not only share spaces inside the prison but also outside:

When chatting with staff today, they were talking about seeing prisoners out in the community during lunch, or on days off. Because of the variety of jobs in which prisoners work, there is a standing joke that you can't go into town to have dinner, do your shopping, get your keys cut, or even get your eyes tested, without bumping into a prisoner. This was not seen in a bad way but used to highlight the sheer diversity of the paid employment that prisoners obtain. Most staff did not seem to be concerned by the fact that they might bump into a prisoner during the day. It made me reflect on the fact that only the other day, when getting the train home from work, I bumped into a prisoner I recognised from the site who was returning from an appointment. We made general chit chat in the same way you might with any acquaintance. (field diary, 18/01/19)

Whilst staff were not concerned by this, it was something they, and I, had to manage. Although technically off-duty, some officers reflected on responsibilities they perceived they had when seeing prisoners in the community. If they observed a prisoner engaging in behaviour that breached rules, for example, they have the power to report this, causing very real negative

consequences. During my time at the site, I was aware of an individual who was returned to closed conditions after being witnessed by an off-duty officer in an unauthorised place during the working day (field diary, 22/05/18). Officers also told stories about other such occasions throughout their career; however, during my time at the prison this was the only incident I was aware of. Prison rules, then, extend into the community with consequences for both staff and inmates. I discuss this extension of carceral space further in chapter eight. So far, this chapter has explored the distinct social and physical environment the open prison represents and how this impacts on its aims and their achievement. I now move on to explore how officers view their role and the increased levels of responsibility they have, which they often contextualise by comparing it to their work in closed settings.

6.4 Prison Officer Work In The Open Prison

There are a variety of staff roles in the prison setting (see 2.6), but officers often make up the largest proportion numerically. This was the case at my research site, yet, on any given day, there could be greater numbers of non-uniformed staff working. Uniformed prison officers, along with Operational Support Grade staff (OSGs), were present on site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. However, this was not the case for all non-uniformed staff, many of whom worked a more traditional Monday to Friday pattern. Traditionally, the ratio of staff to prisoners in an open prison is lower than that in a closed setting (Liebling and Price, 2001), and I remember my surprise at just how few prison officers were present, especially at night:

There are very few staff in relation to the number of prisoners. Overnight there were five staff on duty, two prison officers, two OSGs and one senior officer with often over 400 men in residence.
(field diary, 15/02/18)

Whilst the numbers of uniformed prison officers seemed low, many other staff on site interacted with prisoners, delivering support and services, making the absence of non-uniformed staff overnight and at weekends striking. These included staff from probation, resettlement, education, health, chaplaincy, administration, facilities, and technical support. Whilst some of these staff are directly employed by the prison service, others are contracted to deliver specific services. The focus of this research was prison officers and governors, but it is important to note the vital role that other staff played in delivering support and services, something which is acknowledged by prison staff themselves.

6.4.1 'OSGs provide a vital service'

Alongside prison officers and governors, another group of uniformed staff present in the open prison are OSGs. Their role was visible and went far beyond that described by HMPPS (2019). Whilst OSGs are not prison officers they are, of all the staff in the open establishment, most like prison officers in appearance, shift patterns, rank structure and duties undertaken. When visiting the site, an OSG is likely the first uniformed employee encountered, as they staff the gatehouse. The work they undertake is vital to the smooth running of the prison, playing a key role in overall security at the prison. Any issues or mistakes at the gate can have a large knock-on effect for roll call and the movement of prisoners in and out of the site, and I discuss the importance of this further in chapter seven. The extract from my field diary below reflects my thoughts on time spent with OSGs:

The gatehouse is staffed 24/7, with staff and prisoners coming and going at all hours. Whilst it seems that prisoners just walk in and out, everyone must be booked in and out and must have the correct paperwork. If prisoners have not got the correct paperwork it is the staff in the gatehouse that often resolve the issues. Gate staff are also responsible for all of the keys. Staff are not

allowed to leave the site with keys, so everyone has to go to the gatehouse and exchange their fob for a set of keys. Gate staff interact with everyone across the prison. (field diary, 08/02/18)

As well as staffing the gatehouse, OSGs performed several other functions, including staffing the communications office, the general duties office and providing support to reception, security and visits. The extracts from my field diary below reflect my observations about the OSGs general duties role and, again, highlights how their work impacts across the prison setting:

Staff in the general duties office deal with incoming prisoner emails and post. All letters and emails that come in must be logged...OSGs on general duties also deal with the prisoners' canteen sheets and cash that is received. These are important elements of a prisoner's life: correspondence by post, personal money, and food. They also search through daily newspapers and screen the mail for anything that might be inappropriate. It seems that the important nature of these aspects of a prisoner's life do not go unrecognised. The staff take a lot of care and concentration when reading through the mail and delivering it to prisoners...if mishandled, could have wide reaching negative consequences. (field diary, 08/02/18)

As mentioned, the work of an OSG goes far beyond that covered by their generic job description. Whilst the rank divide between officers and OSGs is clear, the open site could not run as it does without them. As well as providing a supportive role, OSGs play a fundamental part in the security and overall smooth running of the prison and the quality of the lives of the prisoners residing within the open establishment (field diary, 08/02/18). It is not only OSGs that take on additional responsibilities in an open setting. The work of prison officers is also more complex.

6.4.2 'Many different skills required'

My observations of officers' work left me surprised at the vast array of services on offer. I considered the role was 'diverse' with 'many different skills required that you would not

necessarily expect a prison officer' to need (field diary, 15/02/18). Whilst there are similarities between officers' roles in open and closed settings, management I spoke to perceive there to be greater levels of responsibility for officers in an open prison, a further example of the distinct work undertaken there. Menis (2020) also noted that officers often worked at higher levels of responsibility in the female open estate, a finding supported in my work in the male estate. As one governor noted:

Now, it is really hard here. Staff used to just come and work at an open prison for an easy life. An officer probably does an equivalent of a SO's work in closed conditions, SOs here certainly do a CM's work, and the CMs mostly do the governor's work. I don't know what level my work is at, but I know 8s and 9s⁹ in closed conditions that don't do as much work as I do. (Governor 2)

The job descriptions are not officially different in open prisons; however, staff accepted their roles are distinct from equivalents in mainstream settings. My data confirmed those of Jones and Cornes (1977), who considered staff in open prisons engaged in different ways of working, with more emphasis on caregiving and domestic elements. Staff did not necessarily see themselves having additional responsibilities compared to a closed setting, merely differences, which led to distinct challenges. This fed a common perception that not all officers are capable of being able to work successfully in the open setting. I discuss this further in 6.3. The focus of work for officers was primarily facilitation, support, and care, with many staff seeing themselves as role models working with prisoners to help them do things for themselves. Much of this was considered possible because of low levels of violence and the impact of this is discussed further in 6.4. As my field notes record:

⁹ This refers to the banding and grade of the individual, for example prison officers start at band 4

Officers, especially those on the wings, spent most of their day fielding queries and acting as facilitators, helping prisoners learn how to help themselves. The idea that officers are like parents and facilitators was just as apparent and seems to be a constant. A prisoner who had his television removed for two weeks...came in to ask for his television back as his two weeks were up. The officer checked the date and he still had one more day to go. The prisoner knew this but, with a cheeky smile, commented that it was worth a try, it was like a child-parent interaction. This was also evident when I was sitting in the office with a member of SMT who had a constant stream of people wanting advice about education, driving and other skills related queries. Clearly, it is not just uniformed wing officers that frequently field queries. (field diary, 25/06/18)

Whilst participants in this research frequently highlighted that their role differed from that which they undertook in closed conditions, it is important to note that research has also identified the notion of playing the role of a parent, carer, or social worker as prominent in closed conditions (Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008). There is, then, overlap between roles across the estate but the physical environment, regime, aims and use of time and space make possible a greater emphasis on these aspects of work in open prisons. Research into other distinct penal environments presents similar findings (Hagel et al. 2000; Day et al. 2012).

What struck me about the open prison environment was the accessibility of senior staff, including the number one governor, to both staff and prisoners. Governor grade staff often walked around the site, frequently interacting with those they met. Various officers described the governors as more '*accessible*' and '*visible*' (*Prison Officer, 1*). As I observed:

Prisoners frequently approached the number one governor and other governor grade staff to discuss issues whilst they were walking around the estate. From a personal point of view, I find this strange. From my previous experience in the police, the notion that anyone would approach the Chief Constable to discuss a concern or issue whilst he was going about his daily business seemed alien to me. I do not know if other prison establishments are like this, however, discussions with

some staff indicate that this is not the case in closed establishments. This level of accessibility certainly adds to a more relaxed and progressive feeling within the site. No one in the senior management was shut away or unwilling to engage. (field diary, 01/05/18)

Staff across different ranks considered that one element contributing to the success of the open prison regime was ensuring the right kind of inmates were sent there. I consider this in the following section.

6.4.3 'We have a real mixture of people here'

Chapter two demonstrates how semi-penal communities have faced the persistent challenge of selecting the right kind of prisoner throughout history and this concern remains today.

Pennington (2015) notes that the risks carried in open prisons are often underestimated, since it is assumed inmates there are low risk in terms of their offending, but this is a misconception. In reality, open prisons hold a mixture of prisoners, the majority of whom will be serving a sentence of five or more years. Staff acknowledged this diverse mix:

We have a real mixture of people here. Some who have been in a long time and others who have not. People who are lifers, or IPP, or people who have committed blue-collar offences, such as fraud and things like that. You have got people for non-payment of fines, then you have got people who are in for assault, violence, burglary. So, you have got this big mixture. (Senior Officer 2)

Over 58% of prisoners at the research site had served over 10 years in prison (HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2019):

Whilst chatting with officers we talked about the type of men in open conditions. They stated that they take all sorts of people, as long as they have Cat D status. They talked about there being lots

of 'dangerous people' here, including armed robbers and murderers. The only type of prisoner they won't take is serious sex offenders but that is more for the inmate's own protection rather than that of the public. (field diary, 15/02/18)

A prisoner's category can change throughout their sentence, usually from higher to lower security, although those in open prisons can be returned should risk levels change. Indeed, this is an important element enabling control in the open setting which I discuss in 7.10. Open prison populations, therefore, are mainly made up of men who have committed serious offences and are nearing the end of their sentences. Research on prisoners in the later stages of a long sentence shows they often become self-controlled, compliant and easy to keep (Herbert, 2019). Staff noted the type of prisoner placed in open prisons is key to their successful functioning and often talked about preferring to work with 'lifers' or people on long term sentences, a reflection that such men are easier to work with. They are seen as more likely to benefit from the open prison and as having a positive influence on the prison community. In contrast, *'short term people tend to have a negative influence'* (Governor 5). Officers also considered longer sentences gave them *'time to work with them'* (Senior Officer 4):

I like working with lifers because you have got an end product because they get to a point where they think right – 'I have had enough I need to get out of jail I need a job, I need to get somewhere to live'. Whereas the determinate guys doing five or six years are like: 'well I am getting out regardless, so I don't care'. (Senior Officer 2)

The type of men that enter open conditions is considered to have *'a massive impact'*. (Prison Officer 3)

Despite the violent history of many inmates, the time they have served in the prison system and their closeness to release is seen as key:

We are the last step, aren't we? So, before they step off into the big world. So, we kind of add the finishing touches to, hopefully, what has been achieved throughout their sentence. So, kind of moulding. Putting the pieces in place, like home leaves and work etc., so there is that sort of continuity. So, when they step in, well it is not like stepping out of the prison and they have got to suddenly start, they are already up and running. (Prison Officer 4)

Individuals who enter the open prison are carefully selected and staff see the type of men chosen as key to helping maintain the safe and stable environment that allows them to undertake their work. Consequently, there was concern when staff lost elements of control over selection:

We have noticed a change certainly over the last 3 to 4 years where they are pushing more and more indeterminate prisoners into open prisons, some of which four or five years ago wouldn't have got to open because of their behaviour. But because the parole board is making the decision then we have got to have a very good case to say 'no we are not taking John Smith' because the parole board is headed by a judge who has said he is suitable. (Prison Officer 1)

Whilst selective entry into more relaxed penal conditions is a long-standing concern in the UK, Scandinavian experiences challenge this, as a wider range of inmates is considered suitable for such environments.

Staff considered prisoners appreciated the open site and its opportunities, valuing available rewards which made them more compliant. For officers, prisoners should see entering an open prison as a privilege and they identify those that do as more likely to thrive and comply. Such

prisoners are also seen as keeping other inmates stable and compliant, so an element of self-policing is acknowledged:

There is a core of people who genuinely want to get on and the better we get the more of those who come. Some stick to the rules because they don't want to lose what they have got and end up back in closed conditions. The better we do the job the more people who are going to be there for the right reasons, the less they are going to see people mucking about, the better it gets. It's like a vicious circle but in reverse. (Prison Officer 2)

The distinct environment, low levels of staff and a focus on different aims, makes officers' approach to security and safety different. This led staff and governors to rely more on tools such as dynamic security, but also prompted suggestions that open prisons should have their own distinct set of policies to support different ways of working. These are explored in the following two sections.

6.4.4 'Information comes through a whisper in the ear'

Dynamic security is a tool used to help maintain a smooth-running regime in many prison settings (Drake, 2008), helping to address issues before they occur. Staff consider that the flow of information prisoners give to them contributes to a safe and secure environment, especially in a setting with few physical boundaries. Dynamic security relies on these relationships and is most effective when staff interact with prisoners, know them on an individual basis and understand what is going on in the prison (Coyle et al. 2016). Given *'there is a lot more interaction between us and the prisoners compared to closed'* (Prison Officer 1), conditions in open settings facilitate dynamic security. However, it is important to recognise this is also a key tool in other settings,

including the high-security estate (Drake, 2008). Getting to know individual inmates creates a better environment, and staff also see relationships serving a key security function:

Lots of prisoners will say, 'those guys are doing this or that, or making him hold something', and that information comes through via a whisper in the ear or things like that ... lots of the information comes through quietly in corners so it filters through. (Prison Officer 3)

As early as 1972 Thomas (1972) recognised prison officers need to balance security and rehabilitation, and dynamic security techniques are one way to do this. Consensus about this balance is lacking, though, which generated role conflict for some officers in my research (see 6.6). Increased reliance on dynamic security was seen by staff as different from closed settings:

They use a lot more dynamic security here than in closed conditions and it is a lot more of your judgement. I am very black and white, and I found it difficult. There is a huge grey area and that is something that I struggled with. Even now, I sometimes have to challenge myself whether I am being too strict, or not strict enough, I am still trying to find that balance. (Senior Officer 2)

Other staff, who often consider they have better relationships with prisoners, place more value on dynamic security. They openly acknowledge the prison is trying to achieve something different and, consequently, security cannot always be the top priority. For these staff relationships and support are central:

The main focus, or objective, in a closed prison is to maintain security and to keep people safely in custody. The focus in an open prison is about building relationships and helping the offenders develop to a point where they can become useful, independent members of society. (Senior Officer 1)

Chapter seven explores the different approaches to prison work and the influence that cultural values have on officers working in the open setting which are reflected here. Despite differences in the aims of open prisons and the way that security operates there, policy fails to acknowledge their distinct nature, as I will now consider.

6.4.5 'Lots of policies don't fit the open estate'

The impact of central policies on open prisons caused frustration for staff at both governor and officer level alike. Whilst management and staff often had differing views (see 6.7), there was a shared sense of frustration about the impact of policy, or '*red tape*' (*Prison Officer 3*) on the day to day running of the prison:

The amount of red tape is silly. I have been trying to get a printer. I ordered it a while back. I went away on holiday and when I got back it still wasn't here. I mean it's less than £20. If I went through Amazon, it will be here the following day at half the price. You are battling these other things all the time and it detracts from your focus. (*Prison Officer 3*)

Red tape frustrated staff, but also caused friction, sometimes between staff and prisoners, as staff perceived inmates were treated more favourably than them. During my time at the prison, common areas for prisoners were redecorated and given new furniture. Staff frequently discussed how their repeated requests for new furniture were refused:

The governor and staff work tirelessly to improve conditions for the men; however, the same level of care does not seem to apply to the staff areas. I was present when officers received feedback from their Custody Manager about how many of the changes they had requested could not be

implemented. In the main, their suggestions had been rejected due to financial implications.... It seems these types of issues raise the officers' hackles. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Few policies are specific to open prisons, which causes issues for their operation and the work staff undertake. Rosli and Rossi (2014) observe penal policy is centrally controlled and implemented in a 'top down' fashion, often causing staff resistance, and so this is not unique to open prisons. The impact of central policy seemed to be felt more keenly at governor grades and, whilst this filtered down to other staff, policy was often perceived by them as coming from management, not central government.

Governor grade staff frequently indicated how central policy neglects the distinct nature of open prisons. At its extreme this meant some policies, in the minds of governors at least, were simply not applicable:

There is a new violence management tool that central policymakers have developed to address violence. Every prison must implement it or have a similar process in place. When I sat at the regional meeting, they went around the table, saying, 'have you implemented it?' I said 'No we have got a thing called closed prison. They say 'well what do you mean?', and I say 'if someone is that violent to another offender or a member of staff they are not suitable for open conditions'. There is so much violence in the closed estate, they have got to do something about it, but no one thought for a second that we need to caveat this for the open estate. If this kind of violence is perpetrated in open then they need to be returned to closed, end of. Lots of policies don't fit the open estate. (Governor 4)

One governor highlighted how policies hinder open prisons in achieving their potential because '*central decisions neglect to consider their differences*' (Governor 3). Despite governors being represented at some meetings, they still felt the position of the open estate was insufficiently

considered. This reflects ideas among staff that other parts of the prison service view open prisons as the '*poor relation*' (*Prison Officer 1*), with the work undertaken there less valued:

A Governor and I were invited to several meetings about new policies and how they would be implemented. The first couple we went to we were talking about how it could work in an open prison because a lot of contracts from high security to open are the same. So, we had loads of ideas. We were creating loads of opportunities and they listened, they nodded, they all agreed and then, as it got towards defining what it was going to be ... I remember being sat there and them saying 'it's going to be this', and you realise they haven't listened to a bloody word that we have said. (Governor 5)

Top-down centralised policies were also considered to generate negative outcomes, costing the prison service additional money or having a detrimental impact on community links, which are particularly important to open establishments. This can mean opportunities are missed:

With the wing shop that we want to open, for me, we can go down to the farm and buy fresh fruit and veg at a really cheap price, sell it to the men at a really cheap price, and make a little profit. I could go to a cash and carry, I could buy the stock cheaper, I could sell it cheaper for the men, yet I can't do that. The contract that we have is you must have canteen from them (approved suppliers) and no one else. The fact that this company buys it from a cash and carry has nothing to do with it. So, there are things like that, that are frustrating. I can understand why we have policies in place, but they are very restrictive. (Governor 3)

These restrictions caused frustrations because they were seen as preventing staff from being able to do what was best for prisoners. Warr (2008) has argued that policy is often indifferent towards individuals, but staff often are not, and this was particularly clear in this setting:

It is frustrating not being able to do what we want for the benefit of those that we are looking after. I understand why there are certain things there because it is also about the protection of the men we are looking after, but why do I need to justify how I spend my budget? So, it is very frustrating that we can't spend our money how we want to, in the ways that we want to, in the way that it will have added benefit. (Governor 3)

Policy not only limits the way work can be done, but it also creates negative impacts on relationships between officers, management and prisoners. Decisions taken by senior management are often seen by officers as local decisions, rather than something directed by central policy. Although Governors often also found these policies frustrating, they felt it was their role to implement them without expressing this, to maintain a level of professionalism:

I think decisions from the centre have a huge impact on the staff on the ground floor. I don't think the staff on the ground floor realise that it is head office. I think they see it as coming from the management and the governor. I mean you can't complain to staff. You have to play the political game in that respect. It's hard because you want to say to the staff 'I totally agree with you' but you can't. You can see the frustration in the staff's faces and their demeanour, and you think, I do sympathise. (Governor 3)

Policies also impact the type of work available to staff. During my fieldwork, there was a lot of discussion about lost opportunities and the lack of variety concerning delivering a more diverse range of roles. As with many other public sector companies, work had been subcontracted to different agencies and senior staff reflected on how this had a greater impact in the open setting due to the importance of resettlement work:

The resettlement team used to be made up of staff employed by the prison, in the main officers but, later, also non-operational staff, who reported directly to the reducing reoffending governor. National policy, however, led to these services being contracted out to various agencies, which has created problems with the services that they provide. Staff felt that the implementation of national policy turned something from working well into something that doesn't function correctly in the open setting and, is more expensive to implement. It seemed clear that this approach didn't work as well in the open environment. The men in open environment have different needs, on different time scales. The one-size-fits-all policy doesn't work. Between them, they couldn't think of any national policy that was designed specifically for, or with, an open prison in mind. (field diary, 28/03/18)

This highlights policy making without consideration of the open establishment can have wide-reaching negative impacts on the quality of services:

There was a lot of discussion about the negative influence of policy and procurement and how much this holds open prisons back. Even the new ideas, such as employing ex-offenders in the prison service, aren't well thought out and only pay lip service to what is being achieved rather than supporting it. There is a great frustration that policymakers have no working knowledge or understanding about how open prisons function. (field diary, 09/07/18)

Some staff highlighted that generalised rules, such as the ban on mobile phones and the use of the internet, hinders their work trying to get men ready '*for the real world*' (field diary, 27/04/18) because they do not reflect '*real life*' (field diary, 27/04/18). For example, ROTL is a key tool in the open prison, so when changes are made to this, it has a large effect on staff which can cause frustration and impact on order in the prison. It is clear however that, whilst expressing

frustration, staff worked to ensure that policy changes were implemented with as little disruption as possible. Sometimes local adaptations of policy were made:

Finding employment was heavily impacted by changes in ROTL around three years ago. Whilst these changes caused some disruption, staff changed their working practices to ensure that there are now no unnecessary delays. (field diary, 14/03/18)

For staff, the approach of the number one governor to implementing policy was seen as having a large impact. As Cockcroft (2016) highlights for the police, discretion was often used at the site to translate policy into practice:

It is very much dependent on who the governors are and who's supporting you. I have been in periods where I have been very restricted and have been dictated to: 'this is what I want, this is how I want it and this is how it has got to happen', and it has simply been driving it forward in someone else's ideals. (Governor 5)

When the number one governor was supportive of staff and willing to take calculated risks in interpreting policy, there was freedom which was seen as benefiting prisoners:

To be honest the management in the prison service just lurches from crisis to crisis, but we have been lucky in our last few governors. The current governor has a real vision of what it should be and, if it's successful, then more people further up the food chain are thinking 'at least we have got this one success, let's keep at it' and because it's worked we have been allowed to keep it working. It's not perfect but, in the terms of the prison service, it's a remarkably well-run place. The governor is an important focus for a prison and how it is run. (Prison Officer 2)

With support from the number one governor, staff were able to develop and run projects that skirt the edges of penal policy, adapting certain elements to ensure that they serve the open prison in the best way possible:

My direction from the governors was to work outside the prison boundary. Well, it was an empty piece of land, so we started building what was going to be an internet café. The college were doing IT courses in the prison, but there were security issues so they moved down to there, so they could have full internet access under the college's firewalls and all of those sorts of issues. So they are still on our ground and they are still responsible to us. So if we ever had any security concerns with any of the partners they would be asked to leave immediately. But then they could have more freedom because they are not in the official prison boundary. (Governor 4)

This demonstrates one way that governors and staff use discretion to interpret and adapt penal policy to suit the distinct nature of the open setting. Liebling and Price (2001) recognise discretion is an importation tool, which impacts not only on officers' decisions but also policy implementation. Throughout the next two chapters, officers' use of discretion to make decisions is demonstrated, but it is important to recognise this also occurs, possibly less visibly, in the implementation of centralised policies. This may be even more evident in distinctive penal environments if they do not have discrete policies written for them.

Whilst policy can have a negative impact, especially when not adapted for the open setting, there is also acknowledgement of positive outcomes. When reflecting on a conversation with a group of staff and officers, I noted the following:

One of the biggest changes experienced in the last five years was the introduction of the policy that required prison officers to call prisoners Mr, rather than just by their surname...Initially there was a lot of resistance to this, because prisoners were viewed as low lives who had done wrong and didn't deserve the respect of prison officers. As this became more embedded a real change was seen in the jail. The staff I spoke with, reflected on how things became calmer and less confrontational, the respect between prisoners and staff grew and the relationships between staff and prisoners improved which had a knock-on effect for a reduction in violence and confrontation.

(field diary, 03/05/18)

Just as policy can be re-interpreted to assist work in the open prison, staff are also able to take different approaches to their work. In this final section, I explore how staff recognise the variety of different approaches to prison work evident in the open setting.

6.4.6 'We all have different approaches'

Different approaches to prison work are highly valued by prison officers (Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley 2004) and staff at my site also acknowledged the co-existence of different approaches to the work: '*We all do the same job differently; we all have different approaches*' (Prison Officer 4). Yet, despite recognising and valuing this, staff were usually confident in their own approach and would not adjust this to fall in line with other colleagues:

Lots of staff here do things differently to me, but they are brilliant officers that I look up to. But would I do the same job the same way? Probably not, because we have got different personalities.

(Senior Officer 3)

Many officers had been in service for several years and, therefore, whilst advice was often shared, this was always tempered by an officer's own experience and values:

I take advice. I take a lot of advice, but most of the advice I get I don't listen to straight away. I keep it up there as an option. I don't disregard it entirely, but, as I'm developing a rapport with a prisoner, I think oh [names a colleague] said I should do that, so I think it's a mixture between my own experience and the advice I am getting. (Senior Officer 3)

Officers were reluctant to identify a 'best approach' but were comfortable talking about what makes a good prison officer in general. Interestingly given the distinctness of the open environment, key characteristics for this were considered applicable across both open and closed conditions:

The key characteristics, no matter where you work, is the ability to communicate effectively with prisoners of all types, common sense and the ability to adapt to the environment. (Senior Officer 1)

Whilst officers appeared, on the surface, to accept different approaches sometimes, in practice, this caused tension. Informal discussions revealed how officers challenge other approaches or discussed with colleagues of similar viewpoints how *'they don't know why an officer has done that'* (field diary 24/08/18). This indicated that whilst officers may not be comfortable formally criticising colleagues to an outsider, some considered there were right and wrong ways to approach the role. In one group discussion, for example:

One officer asked a colleague about his idea of success. He stated that success to him was men not returning to the prison after release. However, he was challenged on this, and others were encouraging him to give what they called 'a non-pc answer'; however, he seemed pretty genuine

in his response and, whilst it bothered his colleagues that his response didn't match theirs, it didn't seem to bother him. (field diary 24/04/18)

Some staff and managers discussed how some officers '*have more time on their hands*' (field diary 15/10/18) in the open setting, allowing them to examine different approaches and judge others on their decision-making, which can produce conflict. Cultural characteristics discussed in chapter three, such as strong social bonds and solidarity (Crawley, 2004), can be strengthened by the conflict officers face together from prisoners (Liebling, 2004). Lower levels of violence and closer relationships with prisoners in the open setting, therefore, might be expected to weaken social bonds between officers, and this was perceived by some staff:

One officer stated that staff have too much time on their hands to question what other people are doing, including both management and each other, and there is a lack of cohesion because everyone is always questioning each other's decisions. (field diary 15/10/18)

Another acknowledged that in the closed setting, you have to: '*Back staff up even if they were wrong ... because if it kicked off and you pushed the bell you want to know they are coming for you* (Senior Officer 2). Similarly, the absence of threats was considered to make officers more '*confident challenging other staff when you think they are wrong*' (Senior Officer 3).

Discretion in prison work allows officers to take different approaches. How discretion is used is influenced by who the prisoner is and how staff view their role, leading to different approaches when dealing with what, on the face of it, appears to be the same situation, as I discuss in chapter six. Having discretion is considered fundamental to the prison officer's role (Cockcroft, 2016) and it was recognised by staff as a form of power:

The biggest power that staff have is discretion, deciding if they are going to submit a negative report. If a prisoner gets a few negative reports then it gets looked at and you start thinking about if they are ready for open conditions. This is the power that officers have, and it is quite a lot of power. In closed conditions, officers maintain control because of the physical security and the locked doors. It is a very different way. (Governor 1)

Despite tensions and differing approaches, there is widespread acknowledgement that working in an open prison requires more focus on caring, supporting and facilitating, rather than overtly directing or controlling prisoners' behaviour. The next section explores the importance of being afforded time to undertake the role of a prison officer in a different way which the open environment provides.

6.4.7 'Time to talk and do stuff'

Time has previously been recognised as a key enabling factor in the open prison setting (Danks and Bradley, 2018), something staff in the current research reiterated. My data indicates this is a key difference between work in open and closed settings, with time seen as allowing staff to undertake the more supportive and caring aspects of their role. Time was considered one of staff's '*biggest assets*' (Governor Grade 2). Officers explained that, generally, their role in closed conditions was more reflective of the traditional notion of a 'turn-key', with much time taken up 'firefighting', which is a rare occurrence in the open setting:

Because we are not fighting all the time, we have the time to do other stuff, good stuff and make it better for them. So that is probably a very important element. (Prison Officer 1)

In the open prison, an officer's role is more frequently likened to a *'parent, social worker' or counsellor* (Prison Officer 1). Some even described it as a *'hotel receptionist'* (Prison Officer 4).

Staff perceive time to undertake work in a different way is one key aspect that distinguishes prison work in the open setting, supporting the view of Danks and Bradley (2018) that time can be an enabler:

You have got to remember that staff in open have got far more time to talk to men. I mean I will stand outside having a cigarette, which obviously I couldn't do in closed, I will stand outside and that is not me having 10 minutes off because when I am doing that, I guarantee that 9 times out of 10 I will end up having a conversation with a man about a problem he has got. And staff have that time to spend with the men. (Senior Officer 2)

Communication, and *'being able to talk'* (Prison Officer 3), which time enables, are prioritised over being able to fight, with officers suggesting that:

Anyone can work in a closed prison, not every officer can cope in open conditions. (Group Interview - Prison Officer)

The necessity of working in different ways in the open setting means that staff value and accept various approaches, but also consider not all staff are suited to working there. Being able to work in a different way links to how officers legitimise their role in the open setting which is discussed further in the following chapter.

6.5 Chapter Summary

Via the means of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), this chapter has set out the distinct physical and social milieu that is seen in the open prison. The environment, or social milieu, in which work occurs can have a large impact on how this is undertaken (Crawley and Crawley 2008; Young et al. 2009; Kolind et al. 2014). By taking a journey through the research site, key aspects of physical and social distinctiveness have been highlighted. I establish that, in many ways, the open prison does not feel like a prison, since physical security, such as locked doors and hard boundaries, are noticeable by their absence, and the wide-open space is conspicuous for its beauty and wildlife. Yet I also showed, despite these clearly defining features which contrast with other prison settings, elements of a more traditional penal setting force their way through. Whilst some physical aspects of the site share more in common with a school, or other public spaces, other parts, such as the wing buildings, are unmistakably penal in nature. This distinct physicality of the open setting, whilst partial, lends itself to both a different way of working and allows different aims to become the primary focus.

This chapter has demonstrated how the distinct nature of the open environment lends itself not only to increased levels of prisoner and staff responsibility but also to a stronger focus on resettling and reintegrating prisoners into the wider community as a key aim. Open prison acts as a testing ground for, often long-sentenced, prisoners before their release and as a place where staff support prisoners in the process of de-institutionalisation. These are not officially recognised aims of open institutions, but they are recognised by staff as important elements in their work. Despite the differing nature of the open prison and the work within it, staff do not receive specialist training and prison policies rarely reflect the distinct circumstances in which such prisons operate. This results in prison policy sometimes acting as an inhibitor in ways particular to the open setting, despite also occurring in other prison settings, yet staff can and do re-interpret

policy, to some degree, to cause the least disruption and reflect the open environment. Many, however, would like to take this further and see open prisons treated more separately in policy terms to enable such establishments to reach their full potential.

Furthermore, this chapter established how open prisons, and staff within them, strive to create a more normalised or community environment in which prisoners can work and reside. A key reason staff can do this, is because they have more time to engage in different types of work. As such, despite low levels of staff, time is freed up to take a different approach to work, and so acts as an enabler in the open setting. Though this more normalised environment allows for different approaches to work, particularly resettlement, distinctions from a more traditional environment, for both staff and prisoners, can create a sense of normlessness. This produces challenges in terms of both the way work is undertaken and the overall social identity of the prison, to which staff need to adapt. The following chapter explores the different ways in which staff adapt to the distinct nature of the open environment and their work within it and establishes how such adaptations are influenced both by a strong occupational culture present in the prison officer community and sub-cultures within this which enable differential adaptation.

Chapter Seven: Prison Officer Culture And Adapting To The Open Prison Setting

7.1 Introduction

Having argued in the previous chapter that, from the perceptions of staff, the open prison represents a physically and socially distinct environment and exploring how this impacted the work undertaken in the prison environment, (thus demonstrating an officer's need to adapt), this chapter focuses on how prison officers adapt and develop different approaches to work. It argues that the need for this is relevant for staff, as well as prisoners, who transfer to the open prison. Adapting to imprisonment was a key concern of prison sociologists historically (see Clemmer, 1940; Sykes, 1958 and, more recently, Crewe, 2011), yet the focus was prisoner experiences this (Crawley and Sparks, 2006). Little is known about how staff adapt to working in different settings and the interplay with occupational culture (Crawley, 2004), especially in the open prison, this chapter, then contributes to understandings of this underexplored area. It considers the relationship between prison officer culture and the processes of adaptation, but also how the distinct environment can impact an officer's occupational identity, the first step in answering my second research question. As seen in chapter six, Danks and Bradley (2016) found staff who have worked in mainstream prison settings often contextualise their experiences in the open prison through contrasts between these environments, further adding to the perception of distinctness of the open prison environment. Literature relating to process of staff and prisoner adaptation in other distinct settings, as explored in chapter three, offers some insight into the challenges staff face when working in a less traditional prison, thus providing the theoretical framework for these subsequent discussions.

The influence staff culture can have on how officers undertake work has been widely acknowledged (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008), and the type of establishment can influence this (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Bennett, 2016). Yet little attention has been paid to the cultural values of staff in the open setting and whether these are similar to the culture in a closed setting or how the open environment influences staff culture. Little is also understood about the processes of adaptations to distinct penal environments, something to which this thesis contributes original knowledge. As the previous chapter highlighted, staff acknowledge that the open prison environment is different from closed settings, and the focus of work is part of this. Here I explore the relationship between prison officer culture, processes of adaptation, prison work and the management of spoiled identities in the open prison setting specifically.

First this chapter establishes the cultural orientation of the staff at the research site. Culture can vary both between and within, establishments (Bennett, 2016) and existing cultural typologies can provide a framework to understand this, as established in chapter three. When moving to the open prison from closed conditions many officers acknowledge there is a period of adjustment to get used to the distinct environment. As such, it takes time for officers to adapt. This chapter then focuses on how officer culture interplays with and influences the way officers adapt to the distinct environment, but also how they approach their work in the distinct setting. Next, the chapter considers how officers approach relationships with prisoners in the open setting, including the ways they build them, the functions they serve and how boundaries are maintained. The differing orientations, established in the first section of this chapter, demonstrate how the development and maintenance of such relations can diverge depending on an officer's cultural orientation. The final section of this chapter focuses on how the distinct penal environment can lead to perception that the open prison is not viewed as a 'real jail', in which proper prison work is undertaken; an element which contributes to an officer's notion of a spoiled identity.

Environments that differ from mainstream prison settings have often been viewed with suspicion both by penal policymakers and prison officers (Walmsley, 1989, Day et al. 2012). Such distinct environments are often a contradiction of the traditional notions of imprisonment (Shammas, 2014) and the open prison, and the work undertaken within it is considered by staff to be viewed with suspicion in a similar way to TCs and STCs. Officers are then required to come to terms with and manage their spoiled identities. Culture influences how officers manage this and the strategies which help them to re-legitimise their role in the open setting. The divergent orientations introduced early in this chapter influence different approaches to this. For some, both storytelling and an officer's awareness of and preparedness to, deal with violent incidents, contributes to the management of this 'spoiled identity'. Others, however, focus on how their role in an open prison allows them to make a 'real difference', linking aims such as resettlement and reintegration with success.

7.2 Prisoner-focused vs. Prison-focused Staff

In chapter three, I set out some examples of prison officer typologies established in research on closed prison settings. This was to assist in framing the discussion I now present, which outlines how the cultural orientation of officers in the open setting developed through this research. My research identifies that officers adapt in different ways which is borne out in the way they go about their work in the open prison setting. Here I identify and explore how officers culturally orientate themselves either towards being 'prison-focused' or 'prisoner-focused' in their approach. These are not newly defined nuanced cultural typologies and make no claims about an officer's cultural position prior to working in an open prison, but rather provide a broad-brush approach, not unlike that identified by Farkas (2000) to understanding officer culture and the interplay with their approach to work in the open prison setting. Officer's approaches to work saw variations and different degrees of flexibility across the prison-focused or prisoner-focused

continuum. These terms are then used as baseline or default positions into which officers are categorised, but are not indicative to a singular approach to prison work.

Categorisation inevitably reduces the complexity of the social world to some degree. Officers' behaviour can move between types because a high deal of flexibility is required in their working role, and staff also vary their style to suit the environment (Carter, 2004). Approaches also change over time, and many officers operate on the edge of differing categories (Tait, 2011). Yet, as I identified in chapter three, many nuanced typologies rely on two broad categories, which reduces some of these issues. Common in this is a distinction between the disciplinarian/custodian approach and the human service/rehabilitation orientation (Farkas, 2000). I draw on this idea of broader orientations to develop my analysis mainly because the data clearly lent itself to this. However, I also recognised how a broad-brush approach allows flexibility, with more nuanced categorisation running the risk of being limiting and struggling to acknowledge the fluidity and range which can be achieved within a broader approach (Tait, 2011).

As this chapter demonstrates, officers in my research recognised fluidity in their approaches, both within the open prison and also when compared to their role in other prison settings. Given this flexibility, and the rich data gathered in my research, there was considerable individual variation in how staff approached their work. However, within the perceptions of staff a clear difference emerged throughout the research between those who put prisoners first, which fitted better with the ethos of the distinct environment of the open prison, and those who were more focused on following prison rules and ensuring the way officers worked was more akin to traditional prison environments. I refer to these as prisoner-focused and prison-focused staff to reflect the differing nature of their underlying values which had an impact on how they adapted to work in the open setting.

Bifurcated approaches are not uncommon in prison settings (Farkes, 2000). The orientations I identify clearly overlap with others developed through research in different settings. The prisoner-focused approach shares some similarities with 'people work' (Goffman, 1961), along with more specific categories, such as the 'weatherman' (Carter, 1994), the 'reciprocator' (Gilbert, 1997), or the 'humanitarian' (Scott, 2012). To a lesser extent there is similarity with the 'professional' (Carter 1994) or the 'give and takers' and the 'care bears' (Crawley, 2004). Similarly, the prison-focused approach overlaps with the 'bureaucrat' approach (Merton, 1961), and has some commonality with the 'black and whiter' (Carter, 1994, Crawley, 2004), the 'enforcer' (Gilbert, 1997) and, to some extent, the 'avoider' (Gilbert, 1997) or the 'disciplinarian' (Scott, 2012). My research indicated, however, that the differences in approach to work among staff rested on an underlying orientation towards either prisoners or the prison which was not captured in any existing typology. The number of prisoner-focused staff outweighed the number of prison-focused staff at my research site. Additionally, these divergent approaches, which were clearly present at my site, affected the process of adaptation staff underwent and the way they managed the distinct nature of the environment and work within it. Consequently, it is important for understanding staff experiences of the open prison.

Throughout my time in the field, it became clear that officers could be broadly separated in terms of their focus on either their work with prisoners or their work for the prison. Many officers were accepting of the distinct nature of the open setting and the work undertaken there, but others focused on the idea that the open prison was still a prison and should operate as such. Hence, the terminology 'prisoner-focused' and 'prison-focused' is supported in my data as highlighted here:

In the main, when officers talked they focused on what prisoners needed and how their role was to support prisoners. It was clear, however, that this approach was not one supported by

everyone. During discussions today some officers were very vocal about prisoners having it too easy in the open prison and there needed to be a greater focus on making it feel like a prison. (field diary, 15/03/18)

To some degree these divergent approaches were evident to staff, especially management, who also identified two different cultural approaches and noted how they would like this to change in the future:

When discussing different types of officers with prison governors, they acknowledged the different types of officers present, some of whom, in their opinion did not have the 'right ethos' to work in the open setting. They talked about how they hoped that, if I came back in a couple of years, I would be able to see how all of the officers were now focused on putting the prisoners at the heart of everything that they do. (field diary, 15/02/18)

The interaction of cultural type and the distinct environment of an open setting though was complex. For some staff the open prison allowed them to change the focus of their work in ways they could not when working in the closed environment:

Being in a closed environment made me confrontational. You can lock people up and walk away. In open conditions, I am much less confrontational. You cannot just walk away from an issue; you are forced to deal with it differently. In closed, I would use C and R techniques all the time. Here, however, I had to look at myself, I had to do things differently. (Senior Officer 1)

Whilst this officer indicates taking a different approach to work in the open setting, he sits within the prison-focused category, and this highlights a problem with multi-category typologies. As we see here, the environment in which an officer works, rather than a fundamental shift in values or approaches to prison work, may affect the positioning of staff within more diverse categorisations. This warns against the potentially arbitrary nature of too specific an application of classifications and the dangers of ascribing these as an enduring part of an officer's identity,

especially given the variety of penal environments and the complex relationship between this and occupational culture. This further supports the broad-brush approach taken in my analysis.

Flexibility when moving between different prison settings, however, is not evident for all. Some staff undertook their work the same way regardless of setting. For example, in their approach towards prisoners, staff with a more caregiving/communicative disposition, who tended to be prisoner-focused, used this in both closed and open conditions. Whilst not exclusively gendered, it tended to be female staff who reported this. One officer reflected on how they were viewed when taking a more caregiving approach in closed conditions:

Most prisoners know that they are not going to beat the system and they are looking for opportunities not to kick off ... I give them those opportunities ... I was looked at as a bit of an oddity in the closed environment because it worked so well. (Prison Officer 2)

Due to the small number of female participants in this study, firm conclusions about the impact of gender in the open setting cannot be drawn but this has been noted in work on other establishments (Crouch, 1985; Pollock, 1986; Jenne and Kersting, 1998; Farkas, 1999).

7.2.1 'It took me six months to get used to working in an open jail'

For all staff, a period of time was necessary to adapt to the distinct nature of the open prison. For some up to six months was needed to get used to a '*different way*' (Prison Officer 3) of doing things. Prisoners' freedom of movement and the sharing of space, which I discuss further in chapter eight, required particular adaptation:

When you do nights in a closed jail prisoners are behind their doors. The only people out at night in a closed jail are staff. Here I was walking along the landing about 2am and I had this feeling there was somebody behind me. I turned around. My first instinct was to pull my truncheon out and to say 'what are you doing, what are you doing'. He basically cowered on the floor and said 'gov, I am allowed out I'm just using the recess'. That was quite a strange thing because they are allowed out 24/7. They have got keys to their own room you know. But it did take me at least six months to get used to how this place works. It is a big transition. (Prison Officer 1)

Prisoners and staff frequently moved around the site together (see 5.2) and the combination of a lack of physical security, freedom of movement, and low levels of staff, required, in some cases, quite a significant adjustment to working practices:

One day you work over there (referring to a closed prison) and the next day you work over here, and you have to, somehow, have transformed your working processes. (Governor 2)

Processes of adjustment are not only relevant for the transition between open and closed conditions but can be evident in movement between closed establishments. For example, Sparks et al. (1999:133) noted how officers transferring from a local to a dispersal prison found the transition 'huge', taking many months to adjust.

Little attention has been paid to the differing nature of prison work in the open setting, but the influence of the environment on officers' work has been explored in closed settings (Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008; Stohr et al. 2012). One element of the prison officer's role that is different in an open setting is a less overtly discipline-focused approach. One officer highlighted how they felt powerless to discipline inmates because '*they (prisoners) have all the power*' (Prison

Officer 4). Maintaining discipline is key to an officer's role (Crawley, 2004) and approaches to this clearly impacted how some of my participants perceived power relations between staff and prisoners, making the lack of focus on this area of great concern to some. Responses to this though, differed between the two types. Prisoner-focused officers acknowledged the importance of discipline, but also how this had to be measured or balanced due to the different environment and aims in the open setting:

We need the discipline side of it but that needs to be married with the more caring, proactive, sitting down looking for a job, talking to someone who may be crying. (Prison Officer 1)

Whereas prison-focused officers were keener '*to keep the discipline side of things*' (*Senior Officer 2*) and this linked to concerns surrounding vulnerability in terms of safety and security, but also the need to remind prisoners they were in prison and the desire for the open prison to be more akin to a closed prison, to represent a 'real jail', which I discuss further later in this chapter.

Some prisoner-focused officers expressed frustration about this lack of flexibility in terms of adapting to different ways of working, especially in terms of enforcing rules or discipline:

It is funny, you get staff who can be very petty. Who love their rules, love their discipline and I don't think that really works here. (Prison Officer 2)

Such ideas were reflected in the suggestion that not all officers were suited to work in open conditions, something first highlighted by Jones and Cornes (1997):

Staff find it difficult to come here in the beginning because obviously, it is completely different, but I think staff do get into the swing of what we are trying to achieve in the end. It is so different [from closed conditions]. (Governor Grade 1)

Whilst some staff adjusted well, others struggled, occasionally requesting a transfer back to closed conditions:

I had staff who have come from (names a closed establishment) and lasted a day. We had an officer who wants to go back because he can't cope with this atmosphere. (Governor 2)

The presence of a greater number of prisoner-focused officers at the research site may, in part, result from this. If those that struggle to adapt are aligned with prison-focused values, they may request transfer away from the prison, whereas prisoner-focused officers are more likely to remain and adapt. Adaptation was not only necessary for prison officers but also management with one governor describing the transition as *'really alien and really, really hard'* (Governor 4).

Like prisoners, who have been recognised as needing to adapt to the transition from closed to open conditions, often navigating new 'pains of imprisonment' (Shammas, 2014), staff too must manage change on moving to this distinct environment. For prisoners this has been described as 'culture shock' (Brereton, 2013) and something similar occurs with staff. When I first entered the prison, I reflected how navigating the site was daunting and how this must be a challenge for prisoners. Some staff, mostly within the prisoner-focused category, were able to recognise similarity in the experiences of officers and inmates when adjusting to the open environment and could, in some ways, empathise with the difficulties prisoners face:

When they get here it is tough. They have come from this real strict environment where if they want anything, they must ask for it, they can't do anything themselves. They get here and we are basically saying 'off you go, do it yourself'. (Senior officer 3)

Prison-focused staff were less comfortable with such comparisons, instead, seeing entering open conditions as an '*easy ride*' (*Prison Officer 4*) for prisoners, which echoes ideas that the open prison is not seen as a 'real jail' (see 6.8). Acknowledging and empathising with prisoners goes against the traditional macho culture apparent amongst prison staff in mainstream settings (Crawley and Crawley, 2008) which, at my site, was most evident among prison-focused officers. Prison-focused officers also felt more comfortable with traditional aspects of prison work, focusing on how open prisons were not reflective of other prison environments. They emphasised the benefits of open prison to prisoners over potential challenges and were more likely to take a '*just get on with it*' (*field diary, 26/03/18*) attitude:

Here, you come out of the bus and go to reception, you give them a barrow and say 'A wing is that way'. That is their first introduction to it. They are like ... 'sorry ... where?' There is no breaking them in gently. (Governor 2)

Whilst the two orientations often diverged in their approach to work and understanding of their role, some values were clearly shared by all officers. Further exploration of this, however, revealed underlying differences, based on cultural type, in the reasons why aspects were valued. The importance of being experienced in prison work and prepared to deal with any situation, including violence, for example, was a widely expressed sentiment among both categories. Indeed, the value officers place on this is reflected in other research (see Lindberg 2005; Arnold 2008; Crawley, 2004; Crawley and Crawley 2008), indicating it is a deeply embedded element of

occupational culture. Yet, as with other aspects of their work, officers' type influenced why they valued these skills, as I explore in the next section.

7.3 Preparedness And Experience

The lack of violence in open settings leads to lower use of Control and Restraint (C&R), presenting a challenge to which officers had to adapt. Despite low levels of actual violence, officers frequently discussed this, referencing its potential to occur and their preparedness to deal with it. Officers emphasised, to prisoners and other staff as well as to me, that they were prepared to deal with violence: *'if you want to fight, I can fight'* (Prison Officer 1). The idea that officers were prepared to meet violence with violence, if necessary, was often stressed. Arnold (2008) found that dealing with violent incidents and learning to use C&R techniques, which is a core part of officer training, makes this central early in an officer's career (Arnold, 2008), with further reinforcement throughout their career through regular refresher training. Having experience dealing with such incidents and being prepared to do so, if necessary, was clearly valued. Experience was important to how officers perceived each other, seen as enabling officers to be prepared for any incident, as well as impacting decisions they make and how colleagues viewed them:

It is about evidencing that you have the competency and the skills to manage something, re-enforcing the thinking that, I can rely on this person because of ... their experiences throughout their career. (Governor 3)

Interestingly similar concepts were highlighted by Skolnick (1966) when discussing police officer culture and were important to the formation of a particular 'working personality'. He argued that the threat of violence was a determining feature of police officer culture and my evidence

suggests this may also be true for prison officers, even when low levels of violence are actually present.

Being prepared to deal with various situations, not just violence, was one reason staff valued experience, and this was seen as enabling prison work to operate effectively and with little conflict or disruption. One officer highlighted how being '*a jack of all trades*' and willing '*to do a bit of everything*' (Prison Officer 1) was highly valued. Whilst some officers preferred to remain working in specific areas, the importance of being able to take on any problem was important:

Generally, I am [in a specific role] a lot of the time but, I can do all the other roles. You really need to know a little bit about everything. (Prison Officer 3)

Being experienced gave staff confidence that other officers have '*seen it all before*' (Prison Officer 3) or have a '*wide range of experience*' (Prison Officer 4) to deal with incidents and was measured not only by length of service, but also the locations in which an officer had worked and the type of incidents they had dealt with. Yet, as I discuss later, experience also, in some cases, hindered adaption to the open setting. Some officers felt experience in other prisons was necessary to identify when prisoners were trying to '*get one over on you*' (Group Interview – prison officer):

I mean forget 12 weeks for training, the only skill that you need in this job is to be able to look somebody in the eye and, say no and say it in a way that is not going to kick off. That is just experience. (Prison Officer 4)

Officers evidently saw experience in other settings or understanding a '*real jail*' (Prison Officer 4) as vital to their work even in the open setting. Recognition of the importance of experience and

being prepared was fairly consistent across staff but differing views as to what constitutes these and how they were valuable was evident across the two officer types. Yet, regardless of cultural orientation, all officers acknowledge resorting to C&R was often a *'default tactic'* (Senior Officer 1) in closed conditions, whereas in the open prison the use of force was *'no longer a default position'* (Prison Officer 1) Low levels of violence, then, meant things were *'done differently in the open setting'*. (Prison Officer 3)

Prisoner-focused staff concentrated more on how their work can prevent violence. They were positive about the low levels of violence and infrequent use of C&R techniques. Experience and preparedness, for them, was valued in terms of preventing violence, thus allowing them to do what was best for the prisoner, and they emphasised the importance of acting in a problem-solving capacity:

We are an answer to their problem. Eight times out of ten we can probably sort that problem out.

(Prison Officer 1)

This highlights prisoner-focused officers' attachment to the supportive nature of their role and finding a solution less likely to lead to C&R techniques being required:

I really don't want to fight and nine times out of ten, if you give a prisoner a reason not to fight, they don't want to either. (Prison Officer 2)

Such officers clearly preferred to offer solutions to help prisoners when faced with challenges, rather than overtly asserting their authority. Prison-focused officers, in contrast, placed greater emphasis on utilising overt authority even if they did not follow this through with actions.

Prison-focused staff placed more value on the ability to use coercive force. Yet, in reality, this was reflected in conversation, not action, since the use of coercive force to control any situation was rare. Not once, for example, did I see a prisoner being physically restrained. So, while prisoner-focused staff valued experience for enabling de-escalation of situations to avoid violence, prison-focused staff attached higher importance, conversationally at least, to their skills in using C&R in potentially violent situations. That being said, all staff acknowledged being able to use C&R was important, but prison-focused staff referred to this with greater intensity:

We know how to do these things [C&R] even if we have never done them, so we do have that experience. There is a lot of experience here, so we are not lacking on the C&R if we have to use it.
(Prison Officer 4)

These officers, then, valued experience for enabling force to be used to deal with violent incidents if necessary, with less importance attached to de-escalation skills. Arnold (2008) noted how being trained to use C&R gave prison officers confidence, allaying any fears, and even in an open setting staff used discussions about their ability to use C&R to address their perceived vulnerabilities there, as I outline later.

Experience was clearly valued by all officers but, in the context of adapting to the open setting, it can hinder staff who have served for many years in closed prisons. Often referred to as '*the old guard*' (Prison Officer 2), such staff were not only long serving but also presented in the prison-focused type, indicating this term was applied to officers of a certain mindset, rather than simply because of the time in the job:

We lost quite a lot of the old guard, we lost a very experienced set of staff maybe 15/20 people. We bought new ones in, so it's a bit easier to instil that type of thing [calling the prisoners Mr.], but it was very hard for some of the older staff who struggled with it. (Governor 5)

These officers were perceived to struggle to adapt to working in open conditions, partly due to having worked in the prison service at a time when the power dynamic between staff and prisoners was very different from the softer penal power which Crewe (2011) describes. Crawley (2004) also found a divide between old and new staff, with longer serving officers having a shared history which others cannot understand.

Prison-focused staff often tended to value a level of experience across all situations, whereas prisoner-focused staff preferred to assess who was best for the job at hand. This was evident in an exchange witnessed in one of the wing offices:

There were some frank and heated discussions today relating to individuals getting promoted 'too quickly' under the current system. For some staff, this meant there is a lack of experience in the senior ranks. This seemed to cause frustration for some longer serving officers, who argued experience is vital for moving up the ranks. This perception was challenged by one Senior Officer who clearly felt that the best people and people who can do the job deserve to be promoted, not just experienced people. It came to a bit of a stand-off. (field diary, 28/03/18)

In this section I have explored how position within the cultural orientations established influences officers; perceptions of violence and how experience and preparedness are valued within the two different categories. The next section moves on to explore relationships in the open setting, something an officer's cultural type also influences, with differences evident in how relationships are formed as well as perceptions of their purpose in the open setting.

7.4 Relationships In The Open Setting

An officer's type influenced their relationships with both prisoners and staff, as well as their views on the purpose these played in the prison setting. Relationships are recognised as a vital part of prison life (Control Review Committee, 1984; Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004; Liebling et al. 2009) as part of which, officers need to achieve a balance between 'being friendly' and 'becoming friends' (Crawley, 2004; Liebling et al, 2011). Getting this right is difficult, especially given an increasing emphasis on the human services component of the prison officer role (King, 2018). Achieving this balance is necessary in closed as well as open settings, yet the distinct nature of these presents different challenges. Lower use of force by staff makes relationships more central to how the prison runs on a day-to-day basis and, as established in chapter six, staff have more time to undertake the caring aspects of their role, which includes building relationships with prisoners.

As open prisons rely more on relationships between staff and prisoners to maintain order (Jones and Cornes, 1977), the dynamics of balancing 'being friendly' and 'being friends' changes. The 'working personality' of prison officers has an impact on how relationships develop (Scott, 2012) and this is evident in the different nature of relationships formed with prisoners by the two officer types. Again all staff, regardless of their differing cultural values, recognised the importance of ensuring relationships remained appropriate and bounded, supporting the findings of Liebling et al. (2011), who noted that maintaining boundaries is of key concern to staff. Yet, despite this agreement, staff took various approaches to this, placing different values on their relationships with prisoners. Boundaries are important in staff-prisoner relationships as knowing where you stand makes relationships easier; however, due to the complex role that staff play, boundaries are complex and hard to get right (Crawley, 2004, Liebling, 2004). As one officer

noted, finding that balance in terms of relationships with prisoners can require some adaptation in an open setting:

That is something that I struggled with, even now after nearly four years here, sometimes I have to challenge myself whether I am being too strict or not strict enough. I am still trying to find that balance; in the closed prison there is a clear line whereas, at a D Cat that is very difficult. (Senior Officer 2)

Lloyd et al. (2017) acknowledged the lack of research in relation to staff-prisoner relationships in specialist settings. The setting in which prison officers work influences the role they play (Farkas, 2000), and this has mainly been evidenced in relation to TCs (Crawley, 2004). My research suggests the role of officers in open prisons is more akin to other specialist roles, such as those undertaken in TCs or STCs. Similar pressures make balancing relationships in open prisons more challenging than in closed settings, but no officer wants to be perceived as being too friendly with prisoners as this can lead to suspicion (Crawley, 2004). My research found officers were clear that finding a boundary in relationships with prisoners was important:

You have to build a rapport with them. There is an officer/prisoner relationship, but you have to have that boundary. (Prison Officer 4)

There was also agreement across the types that boundaries, whilst important, are more difficult to manage in the relatively relaxed open environment:

It is reminding the men of where the boundaries are, it is very easy for prisoners to forget those boundaries because we chat. I mean most of the prisoners call me by my first name ... and every now and again, because they can walk around and they have got all that freedom, they do

constantly need reminding you know what we are, a jail ... there are some boundaries. (Governor 4)

The relaxed and differing nature of the open prison environment, then, can create a sense of normlessness or anomie (Durkheim, 1938) for both staff and prisoners and staff feel they have to address this to ensure boundaries remain clear. This means they need to redefine relationships and boundaries in the context of the distinct environment of an open prison. As with experience, all staff value their relationships with prisoners but the two types ascribe differing reasons for this value. Officers' views of appropriate boundaries in the open setting vary, then, and are influenced by how they view and undertake their role, with divergent approaches for prisoner- and prison-focused staff observed.

Prison-focused staff emphasised the security and safety purposes that relationships serve. They still, however, recognised the value of interpersonal skills to these. Generally they kept a greater distance from prisoners, maintaining a stronger 'us' and 'them' boundary, and often viewing, or treating, all prisoners the same way. Such officers did not treat prisoners poorly but gave less credence to individual circumstance, therefore *'staff still need to remember that they need to retain a certain amount of suspicion...of all prisoners'* (Group interview - Prison Officer)

Prison-focused staff were particularly conscious not to appear too friendly with prisoners, maintaining a professional distance in various ways, and stressing they did not want to appear to 'be friends' with prisoners, to either inmates or other staff:

It does seem very relaxed, very friendly but you have to have the right line of authority. Even in this environment, we are officers...they are prisoners (Prison Officer 4)

It was important for them, and others, to remember they are *'still an officer'* (Senior Officer 4) in this distinct environment and uniformed officers, especially, needed to maintain a *'certain level of suspicion and distance'* (field diary, 18/07/18). Not only was this apparent in discussions, but also observations of interactions, especially in areas such as reception or the wing office:

Today, some officers were talking about the removal of a prisoner from his work duty within the prison. I had interacted with this prisoner on several occasions with no issue. I asked the officers the reasons behind the decision making. They were not able to pinpoint a specific incident, but rather just stated he was getting too *'comfortable and familiar'* and that *'wasn't right'*. (field diary, 30/11/18)

To maintain distance and reinforce power relations, such staff were often abrupt and formal with prisoners, not engaging in general conversation, such as asking a prisoner how their day was, or responding if they were asked such questions:

Depending on which officers are on duty depends on how long prisoners will stay to chat or the type of question prisoners ask. There are certain officers that prisoners clearly do not want to approach to ask for assistance or to chat with, and this was clear this morning. Yet, when a more approachable officer entered the office, he was faced with lots of different queries and questions and was happy to engage in chit chat. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Prison-focused staff often preferred to be called *'Mr'* to maintain formality: *'I am still called Mr'* and *'I still call them by their surname'* (Prison Officer 4). Different values are evident, however, as other prisoner-focused staff noted that some officers *'don't have good relationships with the men'* and considered this impacted negatively *'on the environment'* (Prison Officer 2). This highlights again how staff perceptions of what *'good'* relationships should look like differ:

It's all about relationships between people. If they find you approachable, they will come and talk to you. If you are not approachable then they will wait for the person that they can talk to. I am sure as you go around talking to staff you will see a few negative people. (Prison Officer 3)

Prison-focused staff did understand their role included helping prisoners, for example with a query or a task, but maintaining distance while doing this helped them remain prepared to deal with situations that might require staff to adopt a more traditional disciplinarian role. Scott (2011) notes how officers addressing prisoners more personally, especially using first names, is more problematic for those of a more disciplinarian nature as it implies a certain level of friendliness and respect. This was clear in my research as well:

For me, as Mr [surname of prison officer], I can still be pleasant but, by using first names, it has broken down those barriers. It then makes it hard then when you have to step back into the role of a prison officer...It doesn't stop you from being friendly, I mean I will call them by their last name, but I will do it in a way that's you know, it's my tone of voice, my persona. And if it's somebody who is smashing up on the landing then I can be that prison officer who can go in and restrain somebody. (Prison Officer 3)

For prison-focused staff, then, relationship building was functional; - something they were expected to do, and did, but with advantages to themselves as officers as the primary focus. For example, whilst prisoner-focused staff acknowledged staffing levels were low, prison-focused staff tended to perceive this as being '*outnumbered*' (Prison Officer 4) and were more aware of potential vulnerabilities in terms of their own personal safety should violent situations arise:

Staff here are painfully aware of how thin on the ground we are. We don't have that luxury of being able to hit that green button and have 15 to 20 staff galloping down the walkway being able to assist us in 30 seconds. Everyone knows that we don't have that. (Senior Officer 2)

The primary advantage of relationships with prisoners within this viewpoint linked to officers' safety on the prison site, as well as to keep the prison functioning, rather than creating a positive environment to aid the resettlement of prisoners, yet prison-focused staff still acknowledged that relationships were important.

Prisoner-focused staff, in contrast, took a different approach. For them, whilst maintaining boundaries was important, these need to be flexible, based on both the individual prisoner and the nature of the environment. Staff highlighted how the focus on supporting resettlement increased contact with family and the wider community, meaning prisoners were likely to need support with a far wider range of issues compared to the closed setting. Consequently, such staff were more involved with personal aspects of a prisoner's life outside the prison. There was acceptance that relationships with prisoners can be different in an open setting and yet remain appropriate. These staff considered taking an interest in a prisoner's life was appropriate and important. Such conversations were not deemed to fall into the realms of friendship, any more than banter was, but instead showed compassion and genuine interest in the individual and their progress. This reflected the more caring, supportive cultural values of these officers:

You are delving quite a bit into them as a person, and their family as people rather than them as a prisoner going through the system. This is the end of the system, so we are more involved with them as a person and their family as people and what their home life is about, rather than what their prison life is about. So, you have got to have that little bit more flexibility. (Senior Officer 4)

Prisoner-focused officers put effort into creating a positive environment in which good relationships could develop, with some highlighting the genuine nature of these: *'I think that relationship is genuine'* (Senior Officer 3). Crewe (2011) demonstrated that when relationships between staff and prisoners are not genuine, this can have a detrimental effect on rehabilitation. My research suggests that resettlement and the levels of trust involved in the open setting also require genuine relationships, at least in the perception of some staff. Genuine relationships for these officers means knowing individual prisoners so *'we can treat them all individually, not differently'* (Senior Officer 4):

I know who not to moan at before 10 o'clock in the morning. I know who not to wind up on the hot plate because they want their food. I think it's all through all walks of life though isn't it, you know who you can have a laugh and banter with and who you keep away from at certain times of the day. (Prison Officer 1)

The genuine nature of these relationships is seen as being more reflective of those that prisoners develop outside the prison environment, and can lead to officers sharing personal details with prisoners in a give and take scenario:

I am not saying we give them every personal detail about us. In a closed establishment, someone asks you a personal question, it's a no, you are automatically thinking why he wants to know this. Whereas here, not that we would answer every question that they ask us, but it's not to the extent that we exclude our lives from their lives. So, if someone came up and you had been on leave and they say did you have a nice time, did you go anywhere, I would be a bit more open, they might talk about their family, and you know you might talk about your family. (Senior Officer 4)

Negative relationships were viewed as detrimental to the open prison environment, hampering communication and damaging trust, both of which were seen as vital to the institution functioning:

Bad relationships with prisoners would affect communication between us and them, if it affects communication, it affects trust, the rapport. (Senior Officer 3)

The perception of the impact of negative relationships also varied depending on an officer's type. Prisoner-focused officers recognised implications beyond the issues of personal safety but, like prison-focused officers, also expressed concern about the potential impact on safety and order if relationships were especially poor.

As with experience, how prisoner-focused staff understood the value of relationships differed, with benefits recognised in terms of both prisoners and the prison environment, rather than in the context of staff vulnerabilities. As such, staff saw developing them as a key part of their role in relation to both rehabilitation and resettlement, not merely safety and security:

Building those relationships and getting through to people is key. Those relationships allow us to support prisoners and get work done. (Prison Officer 3)

The skills required to develop positive relationships were important to these officers, who did not consider these could be mastered by everyone. These were described in various ways:

'interpersonal skills', 'good communication skills', 'honesty' (Prison Officer 1) and 'treating men as individuals' (Senior Officer 4). Furthermore, building relationships with prisoners took *'a lot of time'* (Prison Officer 3) and required effort in their view:

When they come here, over time, you work on them, you talk to them. Many years ago, when I was on the wings, there was a few lifers who would come in the office and they just grunt at you, you say 'morning Bill', or 'hello John'. Then one day they reply 'morning, oh hello Mr'... what you give them they give back to you and I think that's just the way, I think it's the way different staff work really. (Prison Officer 1)

Honesty and respect from staff towards prisoners has been identified as important to building relationships, for example in Liebling's (2004) work on moral performance, which argues treating prisoners in a fair and respectful manner is considered to create a more positive environment and better relationships. Prisoner-focused staff in my research highlighted similar values and examples of this included calling each other by first names or 'Mr', having a joke or a chat, and sharing more than you would in a different prison setting:

I think it is about respect and that respect is a two-way street, but also, if prisoners can see that they are being treated fairly and that we are doing our job professionally, and we abide by the rules, then they will feel more inclined to behave the same way. (Senior Officer 3)

I think it was a good little tool (calling prisoners Mr.) that helped lay the grounding. Sounds such a simple thing but it is simply basic respect, humanising the men. (Governor 5)

Treating prisoners in a fair and just manner can be seen as a form of control via the means of legitimacy, which is an important tool for maintaining order in prisons with fewer security measures (Jackson et al. 2010), although it's important in all prison settings (Liebling, 2004). Prisoner-focused officers described their approach as working with prisoners, not against them –

'we always try and work with them' (Prison Officer 3) – and this focus was seen as different by staff when compared to other prison settings:

It's very static in a closed establishment. They come out, they get their food, they go back to their cell ... you can't work with them. There is nothing you can do, you just can't do anything with them. That is it...but here it is different (Prison Officer 1)

Prisoner-focused staff emphasised how they take time to get to know individuals and learn to look at *'the individual and do what is right for him'* (Prison Officer 6), which was seen as increasing their ability to deal with issues that individuals may face:

I couldn't tell you what half of these men are in here for and I don't need to know. We are not focused on the crime we are focused on the person. Unless you are their personal officer or their OS then you don't need to know. Half the time you don't want to know. We aren't here to be judge and jury, but some officers are like that. We are here to put them on the right road really. (Prison Officer 1)

The nature of the offences committed by prisoners in the open setting, however, was sometimes recognised as a barrier to this. Officers encounter all types of prisoners across different settings and must work with them no matter the crime they have committed, and this has been considered to create emotional strain (Nylander et al. 2011). The kind of population present in open settings, however, with many prisoners serving long sentences, makes this a particular feature which can impact on work and relationship building in open prisons. This was evident for some staff:

We had a young lad ... a real good lad brilliant at his work and I found out what he was in for and he was the same bloke, but my opinion of him had changed so much that I tried to avoid him because I just couldn't see him that way anymore. (Prison Officer 4)

How staff managed this differed across the types. Whilst prisoner-focused officers talked about the individual rather than their offence, there are times when knowing the offender's background influenced the relationship and how prisoners were viewed. This different emphasis on the purpose and function of relationships between the types highlights that they can serve a dual purpose, making the environment more reflective of the community into which prisoners will soon be released, but also officers rely on these relationships as a form of protection, self-preservation and a key security measure, something seen across other prison settings (Sparks et al. 1996; Drake, 2008; Liebling 2009). A key element of the more relaxed regime in the open prison is the prisoners are given increased levels of responsibility not seen in more traditional prison settings. This next section explores how this can create role conflict for officers and how culture influences the way officers balance somewhat conflicting elements of their role.

7.5 Role Conflict And Prisoner Responsibility: security and containment vs. resettlement and reintegration

My research demonstrates how new ways of working are necessary in open prisons because of the distinct environment and the nature of interactions within this. To help prisoners prepare for life outside prison, they are given increased levels of responsibility, some including control over time and freedom of movement. For some officers, this represents a diminishment of power, something compounded by the general softening of penal power described by Crewe (2011). Balancing key issues like security and control, discipline and support, levels of prisoner responsibility and relationships, has been identified as a greater challenge in both the open

setting (Jones and Cornes, 1977) and therapeutic settings (Genders and Players, 1995), with staff developing coping mechanisms to adapt to this. The nature of the prison officer role and the prison environment can lead to a certain degree of role conflict generally (Crawley, 2004) but officers in my research perceived this as more apparent in the open setting, due to the largely domestic and supportive nature of their role, even though a large amount of work in the closed setting also revolves around domestic duties (Crawley, 2004; Scott, 2006; Arnold, 2016).

Prisoners' responsibilities in an open setting come in many forms, such as finding work, possessing keys to own rooms, and being allowed outside the prison. Trust plays a key role in allowing prisoners to engage in such behaviours but, whilst handing over responsibility to prisoners is a key part of resettlement, some officers struggled to adapt to this. Handing over of power was seen as creating conflict between control and resettlement and, once again, adaption to this was influenced by staff's cultural values.

In the final stage of the prison journey, the responsibility placed upon prisoners for their own behaviour is greater than at any previous stage. Officers often highlighted the privileges a prisoner gets in open prisons and their choice over how they spend their time: *'It's down to them to have responsibility for what they are doing'* (Senior Officer 2). Prisoners were encouraged by staff to take more control over their own lives:

We just try to nudge them in the right direction without doing it for them. There are so many things that they can do for themselves. We say 'go over there and have a chat with them' or 'put in an application to see them'. Slowly but surely that self-responsibility comes into play. (Prison Officer 1)

Prisoners take responsibility for many things staff would do in a different setting, including in some cases work. Staff highlighted how this makes their role different from that of a more traditional officer. Officers described their role as *'parents', 'caregivers' 'role models', 'receptionists' or 'social workers' (Prison Officer 3)* rather than prison officers, which emphasises the care-giving side of work. It must be noted, however, that Crawley (2004) found many officers in closed prison settings also described these caring aspects of their role in similar language. Staff can take on more of an overt supportive and facilitating role in open settings, however, because prisoners take more responsibility for their behaviour. Despite this, the security and discipline elements of a prison officer's role were still present.

Prison-focused staff appeared less comfortable with handing over responsibility to prisoners, seeing this as lessening their power, which they considered central to their role. Whilst acknowledging the necessity of this difference, given the low level of resources and lack of control over movement, they found the supportive role more challenging because this conflicted with their views on what a prison officer should be doing and what prison should be like. Crawley (2004) found officers often described themselves based on the work they undertake. However, the way officers viewed their primary role, i.e. if they see it as involving predominantly order and security, rehabilitation work then became, from their perspective, the responsibility of other staff (Lerman and Page, 2012).

Prison-focused staff considered that, as prisoners take more responsibility, they *'forget' (Prison Officer 4)* they are in prison, and so need reminding of this. The consequent erosion of traditional prison boundaries generates normlessness for these staff, which conflicts with their views on what a prison environment should be like. This makes it challenging for them to see prisoners as

individuals and they, instead, focus on the 'us and them' nature of the prisoner/staff divide.

Whilst acknowledging that some level of trust in prisoners is necessary, any breach was seen as the choice of the prisoner, although they also found it harder to individualise breaches of trust:

So, if one of the prisoners betrays this trust it makes you more suspicious of everybody but, also it makes you question your own judgement. (Group interview - Prison Officer)

They showed greater levels of suspicion and lower levels of trust generally, taking a less caregiving role and instead focusing on reminding prisoners they are '*still in jail*' (Prison Officer 4). For these staff, prisoners were given every opportunity to follow rules and so, if they abuse this trust and are caught, they must take responsibility and be punished for their actions. An important part of the prison officer role for them, then, was to remind prisoners of the need to comply with prison rules:

If it were up to me any breach of the rules would be right, you are back to closed ... it is the only power we have and if you give some of them an inch, they will take a mile. It is my job to be an officer, not their friend. (Senior Officer 2)

Often, they favoured harsher punishment should rules be broken and within their viewpoint, little consideration was given to the challenges prisoners may face in the open setting. Consequently, they saw reporting breaches in a formal way, such as writing a prisoner up or 'nicking' them, as important and were less likely to use discretion in their responses. They also expressed frustration at the limited options to punish prisoners when rules were breached:

I mean, punitively what can we do to someone here who does something outside the rules and regulations? Not a huge amount. Yeah, we can put someone on basic but what does that mean in

an open prison? In a closed prison you put someone on basic and they are going to be doing 23 hours a day with their door locked in their cell without a television. We don't lock a man's door because we are an open prison so he can just go into someone else's room and watch TV.

(Governor 3)

Prison-focused officers expressed discontent with the freedom and choice afforded to prisoners and identified their potential vulnerabilities as forcing them to approach work in a different way than they would like, for example, having to use *'kid gloves'* (Prison Officer 5):

We have to run it this way because of numbers. In the past we had 16 on the wing so we ran it from a place of strength. We have to be a bit smarter now there are only two of us. (Prison Officer 4)

Often they suggested discipline should be *'tighter'* so everyone *'knew where they stood'* (Senior Officer 1), which was a way for some officers to address the normlessness of the distinctive physical and social milieu of the open prison. They were also more nostalgic, recalling times when things were, apparently, more disciplined:

We had one governor once who, before they came, the place was running haphazardly. When they came in, within two weeks he knew everybody's name. He must have kicked his junior governors up the backside. He didn't come down and start slamming his fists down or anything but he enforced the rules. This place sharpened up within two weeks. It's amazing how quickly it turned around. The place ran well, and it was great. When he went, in two weeks, the place has run back to this default setting but for those two years, it was great. (Prison Officer 4)

Prison-focused staff often viewed prisoners with high levels of suspicion, as this fitted more comfortably with their core cultural values. They were more likely to consider that prisoners

would break the rules if given the opportunity not to get caught and saw prisoners' progress as 'box ticking' (Senior Officer 2) to ensure release, being sceptical of real change in prisoner outlook or behaviour:

A lot of them, at the time when they come here, they are just looking to tick boxes for the parole board. It's a tick box exercise. (Senior Officer 2)

Consequently, their view of the role of the prison saw little value in rehabilitative or resettlement work. Instead, catching prisoners out was important:

Ultimately, I want them to have paid employment, accommodation before they have left here ... but the problem is you are swimming against the tide. They are only telling you what they want to tell you, what they think you want to hear. They might have illegal opportunities that might earn them a hell of a lot more money. So, they will do that. (Senior Officer 2)

These levels of suspicion and the lack of faith in the ethos of the work undertaken in the open prison, among such officers, was seen as creating additional barriers to achieving the institution's aims by some staff. As one governor highlighted, '*without ground floor buy in*' (Governor 2) achieving such aims is very challenging. In contrast, prisoner-focused staff had rather different views of prisoner responsibility.

Prisoner-focused staff were generally more comfortable with prisoner responsibility, acknowledging its importance. However, whilst these staff were more relaxed, prisoners filling their time in a purposeful way was important to them. Staff who were prisoner-focused saw parent-style facilitation and acting as role models as fundamental to their role. They emphasised trust and honesty in relationships with prisoners, allowing them to build different levels of trust

with prisoners. In contrast to prison-focused officers, trust was considered to work both ways in relationships, making it important that staff:

Do what they say they are going to do and if it doesn't get done explain why, otherwise you will lose their trust. They won't talk to you again. (Prison Officer 2)

Fair treatment, allowing opportunities, building trust and second chances was seen as crucial to the process of prisoners taking on greater responsibility for prisoner-focused staff, and was considered an important part of the overall prison journey:

Well having that rapport with them, getting them to trust you, for them to realise that we are here to help them we are not here to trip them up. (Senior Officer 3)

Preparing prisoners for life within the community was a key function for prisoner-focused staff, with activities such as working in the community and spending time with family valued as key parts of prisoner resettlement. Once again, such officers were more able to empathise with prisoners, recognising they have rarely had such levels of responsibility and can struggle with this after being held in a tightly controlled prison setting:

Some of them (prisoners) can never prepare themselves for release. Some of them can't really prepare themselves for Cat D, because it is so different and they do struggle, and they fail. (Prison Officer 4)

Allowing prisoners to make mistakes, especially when adapting to the open prison, was seen as necessary to their work, with second chances and identifying the necessary support seen as important to avoid future mistakes:

We always try and work with them, even if someone gets a positive drugs test, we won't usually send them back to closed conditions straight away. We will try and work with them...and address the core issues (Senior Officer 4)

These staff did, however, expect prisoners to be honest about mistakes and take responsibility for their actions. Honesty was seen to help build relationships and maintain trust but these officers considered they, themselves, needed to be open and honest in return when mistakes occurred:

I think if we apologise where we make mistakes, it gives them permission to apologise when they make a mistake and sort of draw a line under it. (Senior Officer 3):

They have made a mistake so you can't judge because we have all made mistakes. I have driven over the speed limit. We have all done it. I mean some of their crimes are a little bit more heinous than what we would ever do, but to talk to them as a person. They are the same as me. A human being. (Prison Officer 1)

Security and discipline were still important to prisoner-focused staff, so catching prisoners out was recognised as part of their role, but different views underpinned why this was seen as important and how prisoners should be punished. As established in chapter five, the open prison allows for prisoners to be tested prior to release (see 5.3). Whilst this testing element was important to prisoner-focused staff, they saw their role as supporting prisoners to pass these tests and discussed this approach with prisoners. Such staff acknowledged '*everything is a test*' (Prison Officer 6) but it was not one prisoners were set up to fail:

I say we are testing you; it is all a test we are looking at how you cope with pressure and to see how you cope with frustration, it is all part of the process. I say to them look it is four weeks of your life, so just get it done get it out the way and get it done.' (Prison Officer 1)

When punishments were required, prisoner-focused staff considered they should reflect the 'individual' and their issues, so support, as much as punishment, was the concern. Part of their role for these staff was offering '*hope rather than punishment*' (Prison Officer 2). So even when punishment was necessary, it was important to convey that hope remained of regaining external privileges:

So I think the answer is an open prison is successful if it offers hope. Hope for the prisoner.

Opportunity, real opportunity. Prisons are too centred around ticking boxes, headlines. (Governor 5)

Affording hope, especially to those serving life sentences, has long been highlighted as a key part of the work undertaken in prisons (Mountbatten, 1966) and this was clearly important to prisoner-focused staff. Discipline and change were seen as coming through opportunity and hope, rather than through removing privileges:

I always say the best control ... is hope. You know the more it works in delivering what it says on the can i.e. getting people paid jobs, getting them qualifications, keeping them in touch with their family. That is what the real discipline is. There is a core of people who genuinely want to get on and the better we get the more of those who come and the quicker we get rid of the others. So, the discipline is in the hope. (Prison Officer 2)

Officers' position within the cultural orientation, then, fundamentally affected the way they approached work in the open prison, as well as their adaptation to this distinct environment. Broadly speaking, adaptation was easier for prisoner-focused staff, since their cultural values were more closely aligned to the ethos of the open prison. On occasion, the different approaches taken could cause frustration, although it rarely led to direct conflict. Tensions were also evident, however, between officers and management, in terms of differing expectations of approaches to work and decision making and I will consider this next.

7.6 Staff-Management Relationships – managing conflicting approaches

Conflicts between staff and management on how staff should undertake their work are not exclusive to the open prison and differing views have been found to generate such conflict in both open and closed settings (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Crawley, 2004). Liebling and Price (2011) observed cultural differences between management and prison officers. My research also found this in terms of how each group expected work to be approached, adjudication decisions and views on relationships with prisoners. Management encouraged staff to spend more time with prisoners, especially on the wings during evening association. Some governors wanted staff to develop the kind of relationships with prisoners they, themselves, felt they had, and differing views of what relationships should be like caused friction. Management identified relationships between staff and prisoners as an area for improvement, with one governor stating:

It is one of our weak areas [relationships]. My vision of the relationship is it should be like the SMT. If you watch the SMT and how they interact with prisoners. Go and talk to them, play games with them because it's good for you, it's good for them. Most staff feel that that is an abuse of their time, they think I can't do that, that I'm lazy if I'm seen up there. But that interaction is really important. They will sit in the office because they consider that work. But I consider having a game of snooker and talking to Billy about his day and seeing how he has been that day is a real piece of work. (Governor 1)

For many officers, this was considered inappropriate. As I discuss in chapter seven, association is the time when staff-prisoner separation is most evident within the prison. Socialising with prisoners in a prolonged, informal manner was seen by officers as crossing a cultural boundary, further blurring the line between 'us' and 'them'.

Relationships between staff and prisoners, however, were not the only area of contention. Views also differed on how infractions of rules by prisoners should be dealt with. The rise in managerialism is considered to have taken power away from prison officers (Warr, 2008), intensifying conflict between management and officers. In the current research, this presented itself most clearly in the adjudication process. Staff reported feeling undermined by management when 'nicks' did not progress to more formal punishments, although this partly was influenced by how officers viewed their role in dealing with infractions. Officers' positions within the cultural orientation, then, influenced how they viewed decisions made by management.

Prison-focused officers expressed most frustration with management concerning decisions around adjudications and punishments. They felt they lacked the power to formally punish prisoners because of the freedom of movement in the open setting. When prison-focused officers undertook a 'nicking', if the prisoner was found 'not guilty' or received minimal punishment, this was seen as a betrayal, or lack of support, from management. Officers felt when decisions went against them this undermined their authority with the prisoner:

You will make a decision that is dead on, spot on, fair, reasonable and to the rules and the governor will override it. And that has happened recently quite a few times. (Senior Officer 2)

Prisoner-focused officers, however, took a different view when their decisions were not supported during the adjudication process. Instead, they rationalised that, whilst it was part of their role to undertake 'nicks', it was the role of the management to decide what action to take next. If a decision went against them, therefore, they did not take it as personally because they did not see the decision as theirs to make:

When someone has been nicked and the governor makes the decision for that person to stay, it can be a little bit hard to get your head around. I know governors are bound by criteria as well. So,

I never take things like that personally ... there will be an adjudication and it's the person above my pay grade who decides what happens about that. I can't affect it. I can do what I am told to do but I cannot change it. So, I don't really worry about it because I know that I can't change anything to do with it. If I get upset about it eventually it starts gnawing away at you because you are going to see it more than once. (Prison Officer 3)

Liebling et al. (2011) observe that, when decisions go against an officer, there is a feeling of being undermined, which links to Crawley's (2004) findings that staff felt undervalued, not only by the public but also prison management. This also links into the cultural characteristic of solidarity observed in uniform staff (Crawley, 2004). Crewe et al. (2011), too, found being overruled by management influences officers' confidence and belief in their decision-making abilities which impacted on the consistency of decisions and, ultimately, relationships between staff and prisoners. Whilst my research also demonstrates such perceptions among some staff, the different responses of prisoner-focused staff indicates this is not necessarily uniform and can vary depending on cultural values and approaches to work.

There was frustration from senior management about adjudications, too, with feelings that officers did not always consider the larger picture or reasons for decisions. During an informal chat one governor reflected:

The governor points out that the officers don't always know the full reasoning behind the decisions that governors make, which is often what causes the conflict. Gave example of adjudications where officers felt the offender should have been shipped out but wasn't. Governor was accepting of the reasons and the offender did everything within their power to put it right. However, this wasn't explained to officers, so the rumour mill began. Governors feel as if they shouldn't have to explain these decisions as it is their right to make them. (field diary, 20/08/18)

As with other prison settings, open prisons see conflict between staff and management in terms of the way work is approached and how decisions that influence discipline are made. How an officer deals with these situations, however, is influenced to some degree by their cultural orientation.

7.7 The Impact Of The Distinct Environment On Occupational Identity - Not a 'real jail'

The distinct nature of open prisons and the work done in them leads some officers to question whether such establishments can be described as prisons. The final part of this chapter explores staff perceptions that open prisons are not seen as 'real jails' and the implications this had on officers' identities in the broader context of prison work. For some staff open prisons are seen as operating at the cost of security, leading to descriptions of the site as not being a real prison. Low levels of violence, along with the more relaxed regime and perceived lack of staff power, influences how the institution, itself, is perceived by both staff working there and others within the wider prison estate. On occasion this is the subject of humorous commentary about it not being a 'real jail' (*Prison Officer 4*). The lack of physical altercations between staff and prisoners is one aspect that contributes to this perception:

We had one in the holding room and just before I went in he said "look, I tell you now, I am not going to go without a fight". He said "it's just who I am, whenever I move prisons I have always fought." He did his little fight and the staff bundled in on him, then he was fully compliant again. He just had to do it, but nine times out of ten, we have been able to walk prisoners down without any problems. We do carry cuffs in case we need to use them ...Real fights just don't happen here.
(Senior Officer 4)

I have shown how the role of officers in an open setting is more caring and facilitating, in some ways similar to specialist roles in other settings. During informal discussion officers highlighted how *'real prison officer work'* (field diary 20/08/18) does not happen in more relaxed settings:

Whilst I was at the prison a male was suspected to have drugs on him and he was taken to the cage (the only cell type structure) for a full search. I was asked if I wanted to go and see that work being done as that is what the officer describes as the *'real side'* of an officer's work. (field diary 6/09/18)

Officers with these views tended to be more prison-focused, but the perception that open prisons do not represent a real jail was widely held and not exclusive to one orientation, although differences were evident in how the types responded to this.

When officers reflected on their work in closed settings, they often referred to *'real threats'* or *'real issues'* (Prison Officer 1):

In closed, it is a different environment. It's higher pressure. The dangers are real because they are getting assaulted on a daily basis. (Governor 4)

Not only did staff have their own doubts about the status of the open site, there was also a feeling that it is not held in the same regard as closed prisons by the rest of the prison service, further contributing to the perception that it was not a *'real jail'*. This was evident among management and officers. One governor highlighted their experience at regional meetings:

I mean they love it when I go to these regional meetings because half of them take the mick out of me and ask how the rabbits are ... but that is the perception of the open estate. (Governor 4)

While an officer reflecting on his disappointment when joining the prison and being posted to an open prison:

I did my training in closed and have done detached duty, but since the end of my training, I was sent here (open prison). At first, I was disappointed because we wanted to go to a real jail. (Prison Officer 4)

An officer completely new to the role, having never been inside an open prison, is likely to be influenced by the perceptions of more experienced colleagues. Academic literature has highlighted how the role of the open prison and the level of risk carried there has been underestimated for many years (Pennington and Crewe, 2015). This was reflected in staff views during my fieldwork:

Officers were keen to highlight that there are a lot of dangerous people in the prison that they have to work with. I didn't get the sense they were telling me this out of concern for my safety or trying to scare me, but it almost felt like a justification of the work they are doing and the role that they play. They seem keen to be seen to be doing the work of a prison officer with dangerous people, not just the caregiver side of the role. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Despite this observation by officers, I rarely witnessed any behaviour that caused overt concern and the atmosphere in the prison was rarely tense or challenging for staff, as I reflected in my field diary:

Whilst I have no doubt that there are dangerous people in this prison there is no sense of tension or imminent violence. Overall, everyone is polite, goes about their daily business and the atmosphere seems one that is quite relaxed, the staff certainly don't appear to expect it to all kick-off. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Even though officers discussed the presence of dangerous individuals, there was little consideration for my personal safety, not due to a lack of care, but because they were confident in the safety and stability of the environment. I was able to freely move about the site, including going on and off wings, and regularly engaged with prisoners. The only time my safety was overtly considered was when I attended adjudications, where I was asked to sit behind both the officer and governor present. Prisoners are perceived to be in a position of heightened agitation during the adjudication process and, therefore, officers anticipate the potential for violence is more likely (field diary, 20/08/18). As such, I was treated according to their perceptions of the potential for violence. Whilst the potential threat of violence in this situation justified officers behaving in a certain way in their minds, subsequent discussion with the governor revealed that whilst prisoners can get frustrated with the outcome of adjudications, usually no more than heated words are exchanged and violence remains a rarity (field diary, 20/08/18).

The distinctive nature of the open setting, the lack of violence and the type of work undertaken, fuel perceptions that open prisons are not real jails, creating a 'spoiled identity' (Crawley, 2004:136) for officers and leading them to find strategies to re-legitimise their work and role in the open setting. The next section moves on to discuss the different ways in which officers do this and how it is influenced by their wider cultural values. One consequence of interpretations that see open establishments as not constituting 'real jails' is the generation of a spoiled organisational identity which can spill over into the identities of officers working there, which they must manage (Crawley 2004).

7.8 A 'Spoiled Identity' And The Re-legitimising Of The Prison Officer Role

A 'spoiled identity' is a concept first highlighted by Goffman (1963) and expanded on by Crawley (2004). Crawley (2004:136) explores the concept of a 'spoiled identity' in different ways, including touching on how officers often acknowledged the stressful nature of the job, but would not acknowledge that they themselves were stressed for fear of being perceived as unable to cope. Crawley (2004) also found that officers working in specialist regimes were also at risk of developing 'spoiled identities' because the work in such settings is often based on values that contradict traditional occupational norms. It is this understanding of a 'spoiled identity' that I engage with further. I argue that this is particularly apparent among officers working in the open setting, even though a large amount of work in the closed setting also revolves around similar domestic duties observed in the open setting (Crawley, 2004; Scott, 2006; Arnold, 2016). Officers need to manage this conflicted or 'spoiled' identity and to do this they focus on the value of their work (Crawley and Crawley, 2008). However, not only is there the potential for the officer's identity to be spoiled, but the institutional identity of what prison itself should be like is also challenged by the open setting (Jones and Cornes, 1977).

Lindberg (2005) notes that officers need to value the work they do as this gives them a certain level of status. This was evident in the current research through the ways officers went about re-legitimising their role in response to their 'spoiled identity'. Perceptions of the open prison as not a 'real jail' where officers undertake 'real work' de-legitimises both the establishment and the role of staff in it. Officers took different approaches to re-legitimising their roles in response to the 'spoiled identity' they perceive and these are influenced by their position within the typology. In other distinct environments, such as the therapeutic setting, staff create different coping mechanisms to adapt to these changes (Genders and Players, 1995) and this has similarities with my argument about the open prison.

7.8.1 Storytelling

Waddington (1999) describes storytelling as a way for police officers to repair their identities, helping to keep the exciting aspects of the job in the forefront of their minds and allowing more boring or mundane tasks to be forgotten. Often these stories do not reflect real action and truth is not a key component (Waddington, 1999). In a similar way, in my research, officers used storytelling as a way of managing their own spoiled identity and that of the institution. The content of these stories, however, differed between the two types, a reflection of their differing cultural values. Storytelling is a strong part of police officer culture (Holdaway 1983; Shearing and Ericson, 1991), serving to share information and help officers learn how to do their jobs from one another (Van Hulst, 2013) and gather knowledge about their role (McNulty, 1994). Sharing experiences with other colleagues contributes to a common way of interpreting events and, ultimately, mutual cultural beliefs (Scott, 2012). Many officers had friends or family that work at other prison sites, and so stories are not only told between colleagues at work, but also in the homes and social environments of some officers:

My [relative] works in [names a closed establishment], and in ... 5 weeks they witnessed a murder ... they have seen some horrendous things and I listen to those stories every day. (Prison Officer 4)

Such discussions between staff can be likened to the idea of 'storytelling' identified within police culture. A prison officer's cultural type influenced the type of stories they told, however, with prison-focused officers happy to recount stories where prisoners were the butt of jokes, as the following extract from my field diary demonstrates:

Officers were recalling various stories of pranks and jokes that they have played on prisoners. They were recalling times they had left melted chocolate in prisoners' beds and other practical jokes. Officers were stating how they can't have fun at the prisoner's expense anymore because 'it's not

the done thing'. The prisoner remarked that officers can still pretty much get away with anything, if they told him to wear a tutu and dance like a ballerina, he would have to do it. (field diary, 09/07/18)

They also focused on discussions around violence they have been involved in, or witnessed, to reignite what they perceived to be real prison work in their minds. Violence is discussed as part of prison officer work in other settings (Jackson et al 2010; Jewkes, 2016) but this was also true at the open prison, even though such incidents are rare. Whilst I often heard staff talking about violence and the potential for assaults or disorder, I did not witness any violent incidents during my time conducting the research. Whilst undertaking fieldwork there were very few general alarms sounded, none of which resulted in an assault or violence (field diary 06/06/18). Officers' talk about violence and disorder, therefore, is anecdotal, relating to a different era of incarceration or a different penal setting. Even when I witnessed voices being raised, there was never any sense violence was going to be an option (field diary, 15/10/18).

Crawley and Crawley (2008) identify that, whilst prison officers can legitimately use force in a similar way to police officers, they are also in long term sustained contact with prisoners, undertaking a more caring role. In my research officers used stories to, as Waddington (1999) suggests, help forget the more mundane side of their care-giving role, which is at the forefront of the work undertaken in the open prison. Storytelling links to the concept of machoism, which is a part of prison officer culture that has persisted over time (Crawley and Crawley, 2008). The value officers place on preparedness to deal with violence, as discussed earlier, should it arise also forms a part of this. Despite the talk about being prepared to deal with violence, however, I often observed staff priding themselves on low levels of disorder. Prisoner-focused staff were often able to see the value in keeping the level of violent incidents low, acknowledging that skill was required to do this in a setting with few forms of physical control.

7.8.2 Making a Real Difference

As discussed above, some officers manage their 'spoiled identity' (Crawley 2004:221) through storytelling. For prison-focused officers this often emphasises violence and their preparedness to deal with this, re-living aspects of work in closed environments that they value. Others, however, mainly those with a prisoner-focused orientation, re-legitimised their role by highlighting the skills required to work in the open setting and how the work they do makes a '*real difference*' (*Prison Officer 1*), not only to the lives of the prisoners but also the wider community. Prisoner-focused staff, then, manage their spoiled identity by reversing the wider cultural meanings on which this is based. Consequently, they stress the work that occurs in open prison is '*real work*' (*Senior Officer 1*), even if they do not perceive the environment to be a '*real jail*' (*Prison Officer 4*). These staff emphasised similarities between the tasks undertaken in open prisons and those required in the closed estate. The job description for a prison officer, for example, is the same. For these staff, it is the environment and the outcomes that are achieved that differ rather than the work:

I've always described the difference between open and closed prison as, the same job but in open [prison] you get a lot more breathing space. So, the job is to help people. So, the job they sell online and in newspapers, the job of that nature people want to do it, but at [open prison] you get the chance to do it whereas at [closed prison], it's more of a sausage factory. Get them in, pack them up and send them out somewhere else. (*Prison Officer 3*)

Crawley (2004) identified how officers who work in more distinct settings, such as TCs or specialist wings, managed their identity by focusing on the broader difference their role makes. This was evident among some officers in my research as well:

I mean anyone can fight, we can all fight, but I really don't want to and given half the chance the men don't want to fight either. Here you need to have good communication skills, you need to be

able to work with prisoners, problem solve. It takes real skill to talk a prisoner down from a tough situation. That is where we can make a difference. (Prison Officer 2)

As discussed earlier, officers highlighted that not everyone can adapt to the open setting, partly due to the environment, but also because some officers do not have the skills to undertake the work required there. As one officer noted, you have to '*rely on a different set of skills*' (Prison Officer 1) when working in the open prison. Genders and Players (1995) identified staff working in TCs, another type of distinct penal environment, often described work as more challenging but also more rewarding and this is similar to my observations of some staff.

Some officers re-legitimised their role, therefore, by recognising and valuing the different type of work they do, the skills required to undertake this and the difference they can make. Staff stressed how they can give prisoners '*real skills to live in the real world*' (Prison Officer 2), which officers perceive as not possible in closed settings. Without such support prisoners can find it hard to cope with life outside the prison, creating a barrier to successful resettlement (Revolud 2015; Woodall et al. 2013). Pride was taken in how low the reoffending rate is following release from open prison and this is associated with the support, care and opportunities that staff create for prisoners:

The staff in this team feel that the work they do is the area that really makes the difference to prisoners' lives and really helps achieve the aim of rehabilitation and reintegration. They feel it helps keep the reoffending rate low because, people get skills and paid jobs with the support of the team. (field diary 15/03/18)

To draw out how different officers saw value in their work, some were asked what they would see as a good day, a tactic first employed by Liebling (1999). It was interesting to note that an officer's

perception of a good day varied depending on their position in their typology. Prisoner-focused officers were more likely to identify specific cases where their work had made a difference to the life of a prisoner and, in some cases, their family, taking satisfaction from the work that they do:

One of my nicest days was when someone approached me on visits and said to me 'what have you done to my Billy. He has come home for his first home leave, he's got a job, he's not sworn at anyone, he's not got drunk and beaten anyone up, he was a horrible boy before he came to see you and now, he has completely changed'. That is a good day for me, someone has changed, and you can see that change. Getting them a job, getting them an interview for a job, building their self-confidence up you can see you are changing that person. (Governor 1)

A good day here, is well I've got a roll of 80 prisoners on the wing and out of my 80 prisoners I've got 50 odd out at work. So, I've got over half of my prisoners going out to work every day and they all come back at night between the hours of 5 at night and midnight. So that is great for me because they are all going out earning money and they are helping their family. (Prison Officer 1)

Prisoner-focused officers were able to see and highlight the distinction between what might be a good day in the closed setting versus a good day in their current environment:

In closed it would be not to see anybody get stabbed or slashed and not to have a C&R incident where I would have to go in and use my control and restraint on somebody. (Prison Officer 1)

It was harder to draw such comments from prison-focused officers but, when they did respond, they often focused on the absence of violence directed towards them:

Success from the point of view from a prison officer is having a day where they aren't assaulted.

(Prison Officer 6)

One prison-focused officer took this idea further exploring how the public would likely not see the open prison as a success because prisoners can do what they like in the open setting as discipline is so lax:

When they get here it does seem like, you can do what you want and it's pretty frustrating ... if I was a member of the public. I think in terms of success it's quite poor and we should be doing better, the public are suspicious of what we do here. I think in a sense we do succeed in getting people out and the appearance of it but if you scratch under the surface and said how many people succeed and how many people come back to prison how many people actually go out and have got jobs when they go out the majority of them won't. (Senior Officer 2)

Prison-focused officers, then, struggle with the idea that real change can be achieved in the open setting, remaining highly suspicious of a prisoner's ability to change once left unsupervised in the outside world.

7.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter sets out the cultural orientations of prison officers identified at the research site which, assist with the understanding of differential responses to staff's adaptation to the distinct open prison environment. Adaptation is necessary for all officers to varying degrees, time is recognised as important to allowing this, yet not all officers can or do adapt. Two broad brush cultural categories have been established, 'prisoner-focused' and 'prison-focused' officers. How officers adapt varies depending on their wider cultural values and observations of these differences contributed to the generation of on prisoner-focused and prison-focused staff

orientations which, are very much grounded in the data collected. While these terms are new and represent an original contribution to this research, they have roots in previously identified aspects of prison officer culture, such as the broad-brush categories identified by Farkas (2000). This chapter sets out that officers not only needed to adapt to the distinct environment, and the nature of work undertaken within it, but also that their position within the cultural orientations identified impacted this, as well as how officers viewed the legitimacy of their work and the role of the open prison. Whilst the need to adapt to distinct settings has been more widely acknowledged, the process of adaptation, that I detail here is less clear, further demonstrating an additional original contribution to knowledge.

Whilst there was acknowledgement from officers that, regardless of on officers' cultural orientation, work needed to be done differently, engaging in these divergent ways of working presented different challenges for different officers. Both prisoner- and prison-focused officers shared the perceptions of elements of a 'spoiled identity', yet the extent of this and the ways in which they re-legitimised their role varied. Broadly speaking, prison-focused officers found the transition to the open setting more challenging across all areas, from allowing prisoners increased levels of responsibility, to the apparent lack of discipline. The type of work in which they were required to engage, and the establishment of bounded relationships was also demanding for them. Prison-focused officers were strongly influenced by elements of the need to maintain an 'us and them' culture and retained high levels of suspicion towards all prisoners, seeing open prison as an easy ride for inmates who were, ultimately, unlikely to demonstrate any real change. These challenges further contributed to a 'spoiled identity' for these officers.

Prisoner-focused officers, in contrast, whilst sharing cultural traits, such as suspicion, with prison-focused officers, were able to adapt their approach to work and relationships to a greater degree.

Such officers were able to see the value of their work, buying into the ethos of the different aims of the open prison and develop the approaches required to achieve these. Such staff prized developing genuine relationships with prisoners for offering more than simply greater personal safety. This is not to say such officers did not place a value on security and discipline, but they were not as reliant on seeing these rigidly delivered compared to prison-focused officers. Yet, whilst prisoner-focused officers seem more comfortable with their differing role in the open setting, a certain element of a 'spoiled identity' remained, with views of open prison as not a 'real jail'. What distinguished prisoner-focused officers, however, was their ability to manage this 'spoiled identity' by embracing the different aims and environment, conceiving of these as making a real difference and emphasising the skills required to undertake such work successfully. Chapter five established the physical and social distinctness of the open prison and here I have explored how officers adapt to this and the ways this is influenced by their cultural type.

In chapter eight, the final strand of my data analysis, I move on to explore the distinct and less distinct ways in which power and authority are deployed in open settings to maintaining order and control. This involves consideration of the elements that the open prisons share with other penal settings in these approaches, whilst also acknowledging that distinctions still remain.

Chapter Eight: Practicing Power, Control And Freedom In The Open Prison Setting

8.1 Introduction

This chapter reengages with key sociological concepts linked with the application of power, control and authority, as set out in chapter four, in the open setting. This, then represents the final data chapter which focuses on establishing a response to the final of my three areas of enquiry. The previous two chapters highlighted the distinct nature of the modern open prison environment and the need for officers to adapt to working in this, highlighting the role of occupational culture on this. This chapter demonstrates and explores the role of power, control and authority, staff's varied perceptions of these and, how they manage the application of differing approaches in the open prison. As with many other aspects of open prison work, existing literature tells us little about this specifically in relation to the open setting. Yet, discussions around the deployment of power and authority and methods of maintaining order and control, as outlined in chapter four, in other penal settings provide a useful framework for the analysis in this final data chapter. Here, I explore how the distinct environment and work can lead to a lack of acknowledgement, by officers, of the level of power and control they retain over the lives of prisoners in this more relaxed setting. The greater reliance on softer approaches to power and the deployment of authority to maintain order, which again are influenced by officer cultural orientation, through controls over time and space, in this case both within and outside of the prison boundary, a key element of distinctness, are crucial to these discussions.

Chapter four set out the theoretical framework around which the data in this chapter is analysed. I argue that the deployment of soft power, much of which revolves around controls over time and space and rewards and punishments, remain key techniques through which officers practice power in the open setting to maintain order and control over prisoner freedoms afforded in such

a setting. Despite staff perception of increased prisoner control and responsibility, here, I clearly demonstrate the operation and application of more traditional methods of practicing power, making this an area of prison work where there is some similarity with tactics used more broadly across the prison system. The use of techniques such as daily regimes, surveillance, searches and the IEP scheme, key elements of soft power (Crewe, 2011) for example, are all present in various ways, indicating that a prisoner's control over time and space is, in the reality of the daily operation of the prison, far less than staff perceive, even considering the increased levels of responsibility that prisoners are afforded. I also argue that the deployment of soft power techniques, in these ways, have a far longer history of application in open prisons than previously acknowledged. With our understanding of the deployment of power, especially soft power techniques, mainly based on research in more traditional settings, it is important to consider how such practices are deployed and order and control achieved in a setting with little overt physical security, where there is greater interaction between prisoners and staff and higher levels of prisoner responsibility and freedom are evident.

Time and space function as forms of punishment and reward and control over how prisoners use these is maintained in the open setting, as they are in closed prisons, and conflicts over this were evident in my research. Staff use time and space not only to exert control over prisoners, but also to maintain separation from them, something they value, and which forms part of how they adjust to work in an open prison. As with the adaptation outlined in the previous chapter, occupational culture also affects how officers engage with and utilise their power and maintain control. This chapter demonstrates how control over a prisoner's use of time and space and thus, the way power and authority are deployed, also extends beyond the prison boundary and is ever-present in the life that prisoners are building outside the prison, demonstrating increased levels of carceral control outside of the prison walls. This element of the extension of carceral power,

and therefore prison work is a key area of distinctness that this research identifies. The focus here, however, is on the role of the open prison and prison staff in its application of this to prison work, rather than how prisoners experience these controls. The relevance of such concepts within the open setting is an important qualification to its distinctiveness, making ties with the mainstream prison setting clearer to see, although differences remain. Perhaps because these elements bear some similarity to closed regimes, they can contribute to conflict between prisoners and staff, which impacts the role of prison officers working there, as well as the limited academic interest in open prisons as distinct penal institutions. This chapter then provides a detailed understanding of the deployment of penal power in the open prison setting and the relationship of the application of this with an officer occupational cultural values.

8.2 Deployment Penal Power In The Open Prison

As established in chapter four, there have been various changes to the way penal power has been deployed across all prison settings in recent years (Crewe, 2007; Crewe, 2015). The use of 'soft power', often including control over, how and when, prisoners use and interact with time and space and the type of reward and punishments present in a penal setting, have increased (Crewe, 2009; 2011). Space and time and the use of reward and punishment elements of this were identified as having an important, and sometimes problematic, role in the way power and authority are deployed in open prisons, evident throughout the data analysis process. This is further compounded by the emphasis on the distinct aims and approaches to work as outlined in the previous two chapters. The influence of softer approaches, on how staff undertake their work, particularly in relation to the application and deployment of power and authority to maintain control, however, and especially the influence of culture on this, is something yet to be explored in detail in the open prison, making this an original element of the contribution to this research.

In chapter four I establish how 'softer' approaches to the deployment of authority and power to maintain control have been present throughout penal history in more relaxed or distinct penal settings such as the open prison. Control over space and time in prison is considered a key process to assist the maintenance of order in various ways (Matthews, 1999). For example, the use of a daily regime or time-controlled spaces is something reflected across all types of prison establishments, yet as I identify here, elements of how time and space are controlled are distinct, with greater reliance of softer approaches in light of increased level prisoner responsibility rather than the use of physical coercion and hard boundaries. Externally, most prisons are characterised by large walls and locked gates, all of which are designed to keep prisoners confined in a designated space within the prison (Matthews, 1999). Yet, as discussed in chapter six, open prisons lack these characteristics so physical boundaries are less clear (Matthews, 1999). Controlling prisoners' use of space, then, is less reliant on physical security measures, thus placing a greater emphasis on the use of softer approaches to controlling the way they interact with time and space. This indicates that how officers deploy their authority and power, over time and space may operate in different ways, to maintain control in this distinct environment; although my analysis shows that traditional applications of time and space based controls, along with other element of recognisable deployment of authority and power remain key methods for maintaining control in an open setting, albeit in distinct ways.

8.2.1 The Regime

Whilst the open prison often has a more liberal regime compared to closed establishments (Jones and Cornes 1977), prisoners' time and interaction with space is still controlled, which demonstrates how the approach in the open prison is, in some ways, tied to that taken in more traditional prisons. Staff often mentioned there was only one locked door on the site on the cell

in reception. Apart from this, which is rarely used, the perception is that prisoners move around the site freely, yet my observations revealed most spaces are controlled using time and locks to some degree. Whilst in the prison I encountered many locked doors; for example, often having to use my keys or knock on doors to access different parts of the site (field diary, 15/02/18).

The implementation of a daily regime is a commonly used control tool in all prison settings (Ugelvik, 2014; MOJ, 2019) and this remains true for the open prison. In open settings, in other countries it has been found that, whilst prisoners appear to behave in an unrestricted way, there are still rules and boundaries, such as curfews, drug testing and roll calls, which dictate prisoners' movements at various times in the day (Shammas, 2014). Missing these check-ins carries consequences. Similarly, my research indicates that the implementation of the daily regime is no less important in the open setting than in other prison environments, with staff seeing this as an important part of their work:

Talking about day-to-day work, some officers mentioned how every day can be different in terms of dealing with problems. Yet it seems from their descriptions that much of the work is routine and repetitive. There was a real focus on the time at which things needed to be done, for example, the time men were allowed out of the wing, the time they could go to the gym, the time for lunch.

Ensuring such things were happening at the right time was discussed as an important part of their work. (field diary, 2/11/18)

Despite this use of time and space as a control mechanism, staff develop differing views about the level of control the daily regime provides depending on their cultural values. Prison-focused officers discussed how the current regime lacked discipline and left them feeling as if they were powerless to control prisoner movements:

Today some officers were focused on how they were looking forward to the arrival of the new governor. They felt that a stricter set of rules would be introduced, and it will be more like a prison 'should be'. They hoped for more structure and discipline, wanting to see changes in the regime. (field diary, 2/11/18)

In contrast, prisoner-focused staff felt the current regime was not different enough from closed conditions, concurring with an assessment by Jones and Cornes (1977) that the regimes in closed and open settings could be strikingly similar, albeit this was a reflection on the short-term open prisons that are no longer in existence in the modern prison system. Some officers went as far as to say the daily regime did not reflect how prisoners would live in the community and, therefore, hampered the process of reintegration, meaning in some cases '*rules set prisoners up to fail*'

(Prison Officer 2):

One officer felt that the prison was too regimented and 'not reflective of the real world into which men will be released'. This officer did not believe that there should not be a regime, but that men could have more freedom and control over their time. They certainly did not feel that officers needed to be given increased control over the movements of prisoners. (field diary, 2/11/18)

Maintaining a sense of control and power over prisoners was important to prison-focused officers, yet the power of this tool, made so clear when observing officers work, was rarely recognised by officers in either type. Staff made little reference to the use of the daily regime as an overt method of control when discussing their work, often highlighting how, during the day, the prisoners' time was their own to fill. As one officer notes when talking about the levels of freedom prisoners are afforded over time:

Alright, you are in your room for roll check, but the rest of your time is your own time isn't it.

(Prison Officer 4)

This demonstrates a lack of recognition of the deployment of control and authority via 'soft power' techniques when not supported with the levels of physical controls over movement seen in more traditional prison settings. Despite the perception among officers that free time for prisoners is abundant, much of a prisoner's daily routine is controlled – food-time, gym-time, library-time, chapel-time, worktime, bed-time, the time you can access services – all are controlled by designated regime hours. If prisoners needed to make use of these services, they must do so within the designated time or ask for permission. For example, I witnessed how prisoners who were not at the servery during the allocated lunchtime went without a main meal (field diary, 18/01/19).

It was through the conjunction of control over time and space that prisoner movements were most restricted. Prisoners could only visit staff in the WOS or OMU, and even reception, at allocated times, with notices denoting these on the doors. Rarely were prisoners permitted to enter outside these hours, unless special permission had been granted. Doors to various buildings would be locked when prisoners were not meant to be there. If a prisoner wanted to visit outside a designated period, they had to ask staff to make a telephone call on their behalf to obtain permission, which would not necessarily be granted:

The WOS office is open to prisoners between 8 am and 9 am, then again between 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm...Like with other areas of the prison the peaks of business ebbs and flows; whilst the work

is constant the face to face time with prisoners is limited to ensure that the work behind the scenes is done. (field diary, 14/03/18)

Whilst this use of similar methods of control may appear to contradict the argument for open prisons' distinctiveness, I contend that understanding the open prison in the context of such regimes helps emphasise its distinctive aims and challenges and the issues such establishments face in terms of their identity, how they are staffed and how prison work is undertaken. Staff in the open prison in the main have transferred there from the closed setting, thus bringing with them core aspects of prison officer culture, yet as the previous chapter demonstrates adaptation to undertake work in the open setting is required to varying extents. The reason the implementation of a regime, like that seen in the closed setting, is challenging is because it is not aligned with the aims of resettlement and reintegration, the primary goal of the open setting. Yet, because the open prison is still seen as part of the broader prison estate the regime forms a part of its identity as a prison and how staff, especially prison-focused officers, identify the work they do as prison work.

8.2.2 The Importance of Roll Call

Roll call occurred three times a day and was considered a particularly important part of the daily regime by staff, functioning to control the movement of prisoners within the prison at certain times. As in closed institutions, roll call serves a strong security purpose, concerning control of movement on and off the site. Yet, unlike in closed settings, prisoners move on and off site at various times throughout the day and levels of physical security are lower, which actually makes roll call a more important tool for security and control:

Their first order of the day and an ongoing priority throughout is making sure that the roll call is correct. This links into safety, security and containment, knowing where prisoners are, which is a part of their role officers take very seriously. (field diary, 9/03/18)

Control is about making sure prisoners are in the right space at the right time (Ugelvik, 2014) and roll call is a chance for officers to do this in the open setting, where they perceive their powers over prisoners' use of time and space are diminished. The implications of the roll being incorrect are wide-reaching, the rest of the day could come to a stop until that prisoner could be located. On such occasions inmates were not permitted to leave their wings until everyone could be accounted for, even if this had a knock-on effect for attending internal or external jobs or education:

If the roll call is correct this information is fed down to comms, shared across the prison and the day's activities can commence. If it is not correct, it can have a large knock-on effect for prisoners getting where they need to go, placing restrictions on their movements for longer. (field diary, 9/03/18)

Unlike other prison settings, however, roll call is very much focused on those prisoners who should be on the prison site at those designated times, giving the process an added layer of complexity. Prisoners who were away undertaking other activities were not accounted for at these specific times, which means maintaining the records of who is entering and exiting the prison is vitally important to this process. Different methods are used to maintain control over prisoners outside the prison as well, though, and this is discussed further later in this chapter.

Officers are taught to value security over other aims, such as rehabilitation, during their initial training and this often stays with them throughout their career (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Crawley,

2004; Crawley and Crawley, 2008). Staff in the wing offices, reception and the gatehouse spent considerable time ensuring the count was correct, checking and double-checking it throughout the day. Staff saw this as an important part of their role and a valuable use of time:

Passing through the communications office today there appeared to be an issue with roll call. This put a lot of stress on the communications officer who did not want to engage in usual conversation due to the urgency of sorting out the discrepancies. I also chatted with an officer on the wing who was frustrated that the numbers for roll call weren't adding up and it wasn't immediately clear why. (field diary, 08/02/18)

During roll call prisoners present on site were required to be in their rooms, to ensure staff could account for everyone. Officers often failed, as with other aspects of the daily regime, to recognise roll call specifically as a tool of control, nor did they acknowledge its influence. If a prisoner was absent in an unauthorised way, rather than a counting error, there could be serious consequences, yet smaller infractions, such as not staying in their room, sometimes went unpunished which some, more often prison-focused, officers found frustrating:

I mean we do try and enforce things to let them know we are still here. When we do roll call, we try to get them to stay behind their doors, but even when they don't we aren't giving IEPs for people who are wandering the landings. Roll check is something that we try to enforce but it's not really a prison. (Prison Officer 4)

During roll call, staff unlocked and opened doors to check prisoners were in their rooms, a seemingly regular part of daily domestic duties that happened with little conflict. Whilst serving a penal function in terms of control, it was carried out in a very domestic way:

Whilst walking around doing the roll call some prisoners were still in bed, officers wake them up by opening the door and calling out good morning. To me this was reminiscent of a parent waking a child up and telling them to get up and get ready for the day ahead, it reminded me very much of what happens in my household every morning. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Roll call is a clear demonstration of how both time and space are used together to exercise control, yet the actual act itself is domestic. Inmates are required to be in a specific place at set times throughout the day, and the way the prison site changed during roll call was clear from observations:

Outside areas, especially on a nice day, are usually busy with prisoners taking a walk or sitting looking out at the surrounding area. During roll call, when prisoners are effectively confined to the wings, these spaces are empty and silent, with often only staff moving around the site. Once the roll call is completed and correct, what was only a few moments ago a relatively peaceful area springs into life. There is a stream of prisoners in and out of the office, picking up their books, dropping keys off, wanting their queries addressed or having general a chit chat. One officer mentioned to me how they try to stagger people leaving so reception and the gatehouse are not inundated with prisoners all at the same time. (field diary, 09/03/18)

By controlling spaces at specific times, staff were able to see if someone was out of place and identify potential risks, security issues or acts of noncompliance more easily. Imposing restrictions on how and when space can be used helps prisoners understand and stick to boundaries. Giving prisoners space and time boundaries reminiscent of those experienced in the closed setting makes expectations of what they can, and cannot, do clear, making certain aspects of this distinctive prison environment feel less normless at certain times. Indeed, at night movement around the site was more tightly controlled than during the day, further reducing normlessness:

The prison starts to come alive from about 7:30 am, with most staff arriving to start the working day. It seems that 8 am to 6 pm is when the 'work' happens from the staff point of view in the open prison. This made me reflect on the notion of what the open prison represents at night, perhaps the open prison turns into a closed estate at night. (field diary, 26/03/18)

Prisoners were locked in the wings by eight in the evening, thus confining their movement to that space alone. This was seen as prisoner association time in the more traditional sense, as in the closed estate, again lessening normlessness. At ten in the evening prisoners were given a bedtime call by the wing staff:

At 10 pm one of the jobs is to go on the wing and shout 'night', so they all go to bed and get their rest'. (Governor 2)

Prisoners could still leave their rooms to move around landings after this time and, as seen in chapter six, this can take some getting used to by staff, but this is strongly discouraged and viewed with suspicion. This level of control means that, at night, the open estate takes on characteristics that are like those seen in closed establishments which, again, shows open prisons are more closely tied to traditional establishments at certain times of the day:

Between 8 pm and 7:45 am the wings are on night mode, whilst prisoners are not locked in their rooms they are locked on the wings and expected to be in their room by 10 pm. There are communal showers and bathrooms on the wings, as well as hot water urns and microwaves that they have access to. Staff point out, however, that prisoners are not allowed to shower late in the evening. If a prisoner needs to leave the wing before 7:45 am and has the appropriate permission to do so staff will unlock the wing to let them out individually. At 7:45 am the bell is rung, and the first roll call of the day begins. The wing officers describe this as kicking the day off. (field diary, 9/03/18)

Chapter six established that the distinct nature of the open environment can lead to a sense of normlessness for both staff and prisoners and imposing restrictions on how prisoners can use time and space through implementation of a regime reduces this at points for staff and prisoners. Yet the flux between normlessness and more traditional forms of control further contributes to the 'spoiled identity' of some officers and that of the institution itself. Work is an important aspect of the identity and purpose of the open prison and a key part of the day-to-day routine within the prison as I will now discuss.

8.2.3 A Working Jail – Using Time Purposefully

Engaging prisoners in labour is seen as a key element to maintaining control across prison settings (Guilbaud, 2010), yet open prisons have many prisoners who work in the community rather than just within the prison boundary. Staff referred to the prison as '*a working jail*' (*Prison Officer 1*) in which every prisoner, except for those who are ill or retired, was expected to work either inside or outside the prison. Work was key to the daily regime, with the length of the working day for prisoners who work within the boundary set by the prison. Those with jobs outside must have the locations at which they work and their hours approved. Prisoners working inside were required to undertake work-related activities during specified hours, rather than having control over how they use this time. Staff were keen that time should be used in a '*purposeful way*' (*Senior Officer 2*) and work was seen as a purposeful activity. When prisoners' time was occupied, such as through work, exercise, or education, this was seen as purposeful and as a motivation to comply.

Prisoners who worked outside the prison not only had the location of their employment risk assessed, but also the hours they worked agreed and approved. Minimal time was allowed for travel to and from their employment and set times for returning to the prison were strictly monitored. If prisoners were late returning from work, they must prove they were unavoidably

detained. For example, during my observations, one prisoner was late back from work due to delays on the road network, which were widely known to the staff, some of whom were also struggling to make it to work on time. I was subsequently informed this prisoner was required to attend an adjudication process and prove this was the reason for his late return, rather than officers taking his word for it (field diary, 15/10/18).

Occupational culture influenced how flexible officers were in terms of enforcing rules, with prison-focused staff sticking to the working day rules more rigidly than prisoner-focused staff. During my time in the wing offices, for example, I observed staff refusing prisoners the use of items because they should not be used during work hours, regardless of whether these prisoners had jobs or not. Prisoner-focused staff, however, were more relaxed and, if the prisoner was not meant to be doing something else with his time, were happy for such items to be used even during the working day:

There were occasions when prisoners entered the wing office and asked to use the hoover or the iron, and who was on the desk impacted on whether the request was granted. Today the officer on the desk refused use of these items because it was 'during the working day'. Yet on other occasions, I saw officers allow prisoners, who were on a day off, for example, to use these items, as long as they weren't meant to be doing something else with their time. (field diary, 4/5/18)

This further demonstrates how the two types of officer develop different relationships with prisoners using discretion in varied ways to practice power and control. Discretion is an important tool for officers, and, as seen here, can be used in different ways to support a non-coercive form of control in a prison setting (Liebling and Price, 2001; Cockcroft, 2016). Discretion was influenced by staff's cultural type, with prisoner-focused officers more likely to be flexible in terms of how prisoners could use the working day. Whilst staff differed on their views as to what prisoners

should and should not be able to do during working hours, there was a greater level of consensus in terms of being allowed to work, especially outside the prison, which was viewed as a privilege for which prisoners should be grateful.

Prisoners working within the prison occurs across a variety of prison settings, but the large numbers of prisoners entering the community to undertake paid employment is something only seen in the open setting (MOJ, 2019). There was a strong feeling from staff that prisoners should want to work and should be willing to put the effort in, within the establishment, before earning the privilege of working in the community. Staff highlighted how prisoners should recognise and acknowledge the value of such opportunities, which they would not get in other prison settings. The notion of privileges earned via compliance and punishment for non-compliance has endured throughout the history of penal policy (Sparks et al. 1999). Whilst filling time with purposeful activity is important to staff, being able to undertake some of these, such as working in the community, is a privilege that needed to be earned:

They [the prisoner] look at the WOS and see if they want to progress, if they do, they have to do a period on community reparation work; non-paid work. In that time, if they are at the stage in their sentence that they can start in paid work, then they will look for their own jobs, same as they would in the community. They have to arrange the interviews and then we have to do the work to check up on that and if they then pass the interview. If they get offered the job it then goes back to the WOS, because we do all the police checks then a member of the WOS scheme will go out to the company where they are going to work to make sure the health and safety is up to date and everything like that. (Senior Officer 2)

Staff expressed frustration when prisoners did not value opportunities given. There was also conflict between prisoners and staff in relation to how each group viewed activities that are considered purposeful:

Some prisoners think that working out is just going to give it to them there and then. They will come in and go 'oh I have done a week there and I do not like it'. You cannot do that in life and sometimes we are not giving them the reality. (Prison Officer 6)

The idea that education and paid employment should be privileges was strongly prevalent, demonstrating just how different officers perceived the freedoms and rewards for prisoners in the open setting to be from more traditional prison settings. With so many prisoners leaving the prison during the day, for various reasons, officers have to maintain control over the prison boundary differently. In a closed setting, prisoners do not leave the prison unescorted daily, so the main focus is keeping the boundary secure to prevent escape. The key aims of resettlement and reintegration, however, mean that prisoners regularly leave open sites unescorted; therefore, controlling why and when prisoners leave the prison boundary is important to the role of prison officers in this setting. This frequent use of ROTL, allowing prisoners to work and visit family in the community on a daily basis and for extended periods of time, I argue, creates a distinct element of prison work for officers. Due to the juxtaposition of open prisons remaining penal in nature, yet, officers having to find different ways to undertake work, the way officers assert authority over prisoners leaving the prison boundary demonstrates the important still attached to maintaining control as a core element of prison work.

8.3 Maintaining Control Over Leaving The Prison Boundary

The time prisoners can leave the site was set by the prison and paperwork was closely checked by staff. Prisoners' details needed to be on the printed list kept in reception or the gatehouse, otherwise, they were not allowed to leave (field diary, 08/02/18). In the main this process seemed to go smoothly; however, there were occasions when I witnessed various problems. On one occasion, for example, a prisoner's work licence had been revoked but they had not been

informed before trying to leave (field diary, 04/05/18). How staff dealt with these issues differed. Some sent prisoners back to sort out their paperwork themselves, whereas others helped sort the issues there and then. This was often dependent on which staff member was present:

Different OSGs dealt with prisoners, who on separate occasions didn't have the correct book to go out, in different ways. One sent him away to sort this out himself, the other made the call for him and was able to ensure he got on his way with minimal delays. The OSG who sent the prisoner away felt that it was likely he was allowed out at that time, rather than there being a genuine mistake on the paperwork. (field diary, 08/02/18)

The time at which prisoners are allowed to leave the site can lead to conflict, with some prisoners deemed to be 'trying it on' (field diary, 16/05/18) by leaving early in an attempt to gain control over their use of time. On several occasions, I witnessed prisoners coming to collect their books up to an hour before the time they could leave the site. Such attempts were seen as challenges to prison officers authority. All were challenged and told to come back at the appropriate time:

Whilst in the office, a prisoner entered to hand in his key because he was due to go on a hospital visit. This is a prisoner that I recognised, he had been in open conditions for some time. However, when he tried to hand his key in and go down the officer challenged him as to what time he could go out. He was 15 minutes early and, despite insisting that he had been told he could go early, the officer would not accept his key and allow him to go and sign out. (field diary, 16/05/18)

When discrepancies in time became smaller, some staff were more flexible. This was dependant, however, on an officer's cultural orientation, with prisoner-focused officers slightly more flexible than prison-focused staff. In general, however, the time at which prisoners were allowed to leave was subject to a far more consistent approach than other areas of discipline and control:

It was interesting to note that the same prisoner, who had been in five minutes earlier wanting to go out to the hospital, approached the returning desk officer to sign out and the time wasn't questioned. This shows that the men will try it on with different officers in the hopes of getting a different answer but also that different officers will give different answers so there is, perhaps, a lack of consistency in the way that rules are enforced. This appears to be the officer's discretion in action. (field diary, 16/05/21)

When prisoners are outside the prison there is the perception among staff of heightened levels of risk in terms of opportunities to break rules. Whilst there are checks and controls in place, officers must place an increased level of trust in prisoners. The relative consistency across officer types in terms of enforcing when prisoners can leave the prison acted as a form of risk management. If prisoners were to engage in what was deemed to be inappropriate behaviour outside the prison setting when an officer had allowed them to leave early, this could reflect badly on the officer who had allowed a prisoner to breach the rules. Therefore, by managing this risk, responsibility for any breach of the rules can be placed firmly with the prisoner, without calling the decision of the officer into question.

The flexibility of the open environment makes discretion more evident, enabling time and space to function as forms of control in ways which have a greater impact on the lives of the prisoners than in a closed environment. As such, control is maintained in different ways using discretion. The level of control can be influenced by an officer's cultural values but also by their own decisions. How officers use discretion to interpret rules and subsequently apply them was discussed in chapter six.

8.3.1 Managing Risk - Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL)

A prisoner's time is not only controlled inside prison but also outside, when at work or spending time with family and friends. Control over movement and activities extends outside the carceral space through the setting of licence conditions, which prisoners have to adhere to. Electronic monitoring (Gill, 2013) and halfway house accommodation (Allspach, 2010) have been recognised as extensions of carceral space which create penal-like spaces in the community. A similar effect is evident in relation to the use of ROTL which is important to the resettlement and reintegration work of open prisons, as I discussed in chapter two. Prisoners were still restricted by rules imposed by the prison establishment whilst outside its physical boundary. Where prisoners could be, and at what time, as well as how they interacted with spaces, was controlled by detailed plans submitted for prior approval. Officers were also responsible for checking on prisoners to make sure they complied with rules whilst outside the prison:

Officers are responsible for checking up on prisoners, over the phone or in person, to ensure they are doing what they are meant to be doing and that they aren't somewhere they should not be.

(field diary, 14/03/18)

When prisoners are granted Resettlement Day Release (RDR) or Resettlement Overnight Release (ROR), they must submit for approval detailed hour-by-hour plans of their movements and who they plan to encounter. The idea of prisoners spending their time in a purposeful way also extended into activities whilst on home visits. One officer reflected on how plans that did not provide enough detail demonstrating how prisoners would spend time purposefully were challenged:

If you just looked at the ROTL plans that I have just re-done and the whole reason for that ... was so the prisoners could give more detail rather than just saying 'spending day with family'. How is that purposeful? (Senior Officer 2)

If these plans changed, even in the smallest way, prisoners were required to inform their supervising officer. Places they could enter during leave were also restricted. Staff considered detailed plans vitally important for monitoring and managing risk:

Yes, it is strict, yes, it is a bit over the top what we are asking for. You know exactly what they are doing every hour or two hours of the RDR, but the only thing they have got to do is those two forms. (Senior Officer 2)

The extra emphasis on risk management when prisoners were outside the prison, or returning from the community, re-occurred throughout the work of staff, as shown in chapters five and six. Detailed plans were considered to help the management of risk, alongside the searching of prisoners returning from home leave. Controlling how prisoners use spaces and time acts as an extension of penal power into the community setting. This is somewhat at odds with the aim of reintegrating prisoners into normal community life, which is key in open prisons, and further demonstrates the conditioned nature of trust prisoners are afforded. Such levels of control, in an environment where prisoners are meant to be afforded increase levels of responsibility and freedom can cause conflict, not only between prisons and staff, but also for more disciplined orientated staff who maintain high levels of suspicion of prisoners behaviours outside of the prison boundary. It could be argued that staff see the behaviour of prisoners outside of the open prison boundary as a reflection on prison work that occurs inside the prison, thus extending the role of the prison officer outside the boundary daily.

Staff also exercise control over how prisoners interact with different spaces within the prison. Chapter six highlights how certain areas, such as the gatehouse, were seen as staff only areas. I now consider other areas, such as wing offices and prisoners' rooms, in order to demonstrate the potential conflicts these can create. Implementing the daily regime generates little overt conflict between staff and prisoners, but control over space, including the time at which it can be used, did cause tensions.

8.4 Maintaining Control Over How Prisoners Use Space Within The Prison Boundary

Controls over both time and space are representations of power by the more dominant force, in this case, prison officers. Prisoners' freedom of movement, control over time and increased levels of responsibilities in comparison to closed conditions gave staff the perception they have less day-to-day power, yet it was clear from my observations that officers retain the majority of power even in this more relaxed setting:

Whilst the RES officers do not see their role as all that powerful, they are the gatekeepers to a lot of things the men want or need. They can have a strong positive or negative influence on prisoners' daily lives. (field diary, 05/10/18)

Prisoners are often encouraged to take greater control over their behaviour, especially in open conditions, as I showed in chapter six. However, Crewe (2011) argues this autonomy remains tightly controlled and conflicts over space and time observed during my research demonstrate this. Staff highlighted that they cannot get away from prisoners or *'just lock them behind their doors'* (Prison Officer 3) but instead found other ways to assert their power and authority:

When certain officers are together, there is a very 'us and them' atmosphere between themselves and prisoners. This is most evident when officers are together in the wing offices. Today I

witnessed offenders being told to shut up. Whilst these words were not said with aggression prisoners were left with the understanding that the words were not to be challenged. These officers would rather carry on their conversations, making prisoners wait, as a display of power rather than for any meaningful purpose. (field diary 25/09/18)

This was especially prevalent among prison-focused staff who were generally more uncomfortable with the levels of power they perceive prisoners held, leading them to display control over prisoners' use of the prison environment when they could. Struggles for control over different spaces varied depending on whether staff or prisoners saw the space as primarily theirs. This is particularly evident in the contrast between the wing officers and prisoners' rooms.

8.4.1 Maintaining Control Over Space - Wing offices

Staff based on the wing were often the *'first port of call'* (field diary, 09/03/18) for a wide variety of prisoner queries. The wing office was often busy and the desk officer, and any other staff located there, faced a *'constant stream of queries'* (field diary, 06/03/18) throughout the day and evening, although this ebbed and flowed with time. Working on the wing was described by some officers as like manning *'a hotel reception desk'* (field diary, 28/03/18), due to the domestic-related nature of the tasks and queries:

An interesting aspect of the wing office is the sheer number and breadth of queries received on an almost constant basis. When in the office I observed queries about how to send a Mother's Day card, right through to men who needed to talk about their levels of anxiety and depression as well as queries about money, licences and ROTL and everything in between. (field diary, 9/03/18)

Whilst the wing office was primarily a staff-controlled space, prisoners did enter it regularly. How prisoners interacted with this space was dependent on the staff on duty at the time, whose responses varied depending on their type. Prison-focused staff maintained a harder boundary. In some cases the office door was kept half-closed, meaning prisoners must request permission to enter. Whilst in the office they must not lean on the desk, take a seat, or help themselves to the item they require. Prisoner-focused staff, however, allowed prisoners to walk into the office more freely, and to sit down when talking with an officer. They also sometimes permitted prisoners to use the telephone rather than calling for them. All staff, though, regardless of their cultural values, expected to be addressed by a prisoner entering the office, even if it was just to collect a toilet roll:

In one wing the office door is fully open, and prisoners can come right into the office and speak to staff, which they often do. On the other wing, however, the bottom half of the stable door is shut so prisoners must stand outside the office and talk to staff who are seated within. (field diary, 01/02/18)

Officers controlled how prisoners interacted with this space but, without exception, if the office was unattended it was locked, preventing prisoners from gaining access without supervision. Early in my research staff would always ask me to leave, too, so they could lock up but, as time went on, I was often given the option to stay. It was always clear, however, that locking the office was the preferred option for most prison-focused staff, rather than leaving it without an officer present.

Other spaces, such as classrooms, SMT offices and staff toilets, were also locked when staff were not present. Physical constraints are used to control space, then, when officers feel that prisoners should not enter them alone. Some spaces, such as the gatehouse, were always locked even

when staff were present (for further discussion on the gatehouse see 5.2). Prisoners' rooms, too, were an area where officers exercised control over inmates' interactions with space as I will now consider.

8.4.2 Maintaining Control - Prisoner Rooms

Cells are often seen by prisoners as personal spaces (Goffman, 1961); however, in many sites these are often shared, making such a sense less strong (Jewkes, 2005). Single occupancy rooms with fewer moves for prisoners at the research site, though, is likely to generate greater feelings of ownership over these spaces for prisoners. Staff pointed out giving prisoners keys to their own rooms afforded them control over movement in and out of this space. This led staff to perceive prisoners as having control over their rooms as a personal space, yet observations during fieldwork indicated this was not the case. Staff had expectations of how prisoners should keep their rooms, with one officer highlighting they have to teach some prisoners to:

Keep their room clean and tidy ... because when they get out and have a house and a family...that is what they should be doing. (Prison Officer 4)

This again highlights the domestic nature of officers' work and, like waking prisoners during morning roll call, this is reminiscent of a home situation.

Prisoners' rooms were not private, however, nor were they prisoner-only spaces. The items prisoners could have and the activities they could do in their rooms was controlled by prison policy, which is regulated and enforced by staff. Staff could, and did, enter prisoners' rooms to

conduct checks and searches, or confiscate items, often without the prisoners' presence. Unlike the unlocking of rooms during roll call, this became a source of conflict:

Whilst sitting in the wing office a prisoner, who is usually chatty and friendly with the staff, entered and was highly aggravated by the fact that whilst he was out at work, officers had entered his room, conducted a search and removed items. (field diary, 25/09/18)

Officers had entered his room and removed his curtains, which were now prohibited. Staff explained to the prisoner that, due to policy changes, they needed to enter his room and remove the prohibited item because he had not done so himself, despite being given the opportunity. Changes to local or central policy, then, affect how prisoners use space and time, reducing prisoners' autonomy over this space. In this case frustrations reflected this, with distress that officers had entered the prisoner's room in his absence when there was ample opportunity to do otherwise, but also a perception that *'it had been left in a mess'* after the search. (field diary, 25/09/18)

Policymakers and prison staff often have different views on how rules should be enforced (Liebling, 2011). Policy changes can alter what items are prohibited and staff have to ensure removal. Cell searches act as a reminder to prisoners that their space is not private (McDermott and King, 1988). Indeed there were no private prisoner spaces. Staff felt strongly their authority, and even responsibility, to enter these spaces without the need to inform prisoners first. When prisoners challenged staff on this, they were reminded of staff rights to enter any room at any time, demonstrating their power to control these spaces and enforce what prisoners have in them. In the case mentioned earlier, for example:

The officer in the wing office challenged the claim that the room had been left in a mess and reminded the prisoner he had been told the items would be removed by today if he hadn't removed them himself. (field diary, 25/09/18)

Searches of prisoners' cells causes conflict in many penal environments and, although they occur less frequently within the open prison, the same remains true, placing a strain on established relationships because of what is seen as an invasion of personal space as it does in closed conditions (McDermott and King, 1988). Later in this chapter, I explore how the role of searching, especially prisoners' rooms, can also be a source of conflict, especially when differing levels of discretion are used.

Staff not only controlled prisoners' possessions but also which spaces they resided in. The movement of prisoners between rooms or wings is recognised as a form of control which can often cause contention in other penal environments. Sparks et al. (1999) demonstrate how staff often have to find a balance between rule enforcement and the maintenance of the day-to-day routine with minimum conflict. This was also evident in an open setting. Movement between rooms caused tension on occasion, especially as some staff were more accommodating in relation to this than others. Despite attempts by staff to enforce a no room move policy during the research period (field diary, 05/10/18), moves were, on occasion, requested and accommodated. Staff approaches to this differed. Some listened to the prisoner and assisted the move if they could. Others would not discuss the possibility of a move, referring prisoners to the no room moves policy. This is highlighted by an entry in my field diary:

One man wanted to move rooms when a room became free. The officer to whom he spoke attempted to accommodate the man but was quick to fall back on the 'powers that be' excuse. Whilst the officer who was present was doing their best to accommodate this move, the prisoner

told this officer how he had made the request previously and was told, by another officer that he wasn't allowed to make such a request and just to get on with it. For some, there is genuine frustration that policies get in the way of them helping prisoners, for others this is used as an excuse not to act. (field diary, 5/10/18)

Such actions serve to display staff power, acting as a reminder that, whilst prisoners may have more responsibility and freedom, they are still in prison and subject to rules. Lack of agency over where prisoners reside is a key 'pain of imprisonment', as discussed by Sykes (1958). However, asking to be moved within the prison, or transferred to another institution, is a way for prisoners to attempt to exercise some form of control over their lives (Rowe, 2016), even if these requests are often denied. This level of control staff had over the way in which prisoners used time and space contradicts notions held by staff about prisoners' autonomy over these. Ultimately, despite staff perceptions, prisoners lack private space, even within the open environment, and this reflects a social divide between officers and prisoners (Matthews, 1999).

8.4.3 The Use Of Signage As A Form Of Control

With few physical boundaries in the open prison (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Coyle, 2005), staff are not only reliant on using time to control prisoners' movements, signage also created '*invisible boundaries*' (Prison Officer 3). Signs are used in prison environments to convey power and give instruction (Ugelvik, 2014). One of the few studies conducted in open prisons by Jones and Cornes (1977) identified that, despite there being few physical boundaries, prisoners still knew where they could be, often through signs. I also observed this:

Various signs across the site denote areas which are out of bounds to prisoners always. For example, prisoners are not allowed to enter the onsite staff car park. These are not protected by

fences but large 'out of bounds' signs meaning only staff and visitors are permitted in these areas at any time. (field diary, 25/09/18)

Signage also denotes when prisoners can and cannot be in certain spaces, another reflection of the interaction of time and space in control of the open environment. For example, a large handwritten sign outside reception, a space many prisoners passed through daily, stated times they could visit to complete different tasks. If prisoners visited outside these times, they could be subject to punishment, such as withdrawal of privileges (field diary 18/01/19). This sign was not part of the official prison signage but was placed there by officers who were 'fed up' with prisoners entering reception outside the designated hours:

Today there was a flipchart on a tripod situated outside reception with a handwritten sign denoting the times prisoners could and could not enter reception. I asked the officers why this had been placed there, as it looked scruffy and unofficial. They stated that they were fed up with prisoners trying to come in and out of reception to collect things when it was not the allocated time. There are set times at which prisoners can do certain things like collect property etc. One officer mentioned that prisoners could be 'stuck on' if they repeatedly tried to do things outside of the allocated time. (field diary, 18/01/19)

Signage is a useful tool in the open setting and represents one way in which control can be exerted over prisoners. Reliance on time and space as methods of control have been clearly demonstrated so far throughout this chapter, yet, despite the differing aims of the open prison and its somewhat more relaxed regime, traditional approaches to security such as surveillance, drug testing and censorship are also used.

8.4.4 Searching And Security As A Form Of Control

Despite the more relaxed regime, security remains a routine consideration in the open estate, but as discussed in chapter six there is an increased reliance, at least within staff perceptions, on dynamic security. This reliance on more dynamic methods of security reflects what Jones and Cornes (1977) found about security and containment in the open prison. Similarly, Joyce (2006) has observed that an emphasis on security is not compatible with the core aims of open prisons, such as reform. Here I explore the challenges faced when trying to balance the aims of security with resettlement and reintegration in an open setting.

Security helped ensure prisoners were in the right space at the right time, engaging in appropriate behaviours and in possession of authorised items. My observations indicated security measures, such as surveillance of space and searches, were still employed as tactics in the open setting:

Whilst security, outwardly, seems minimal there is a lot of work that goes on in the background in relation to intelligence reports, searches, cameras, drug testing. It seems there is a focus on different types of incidents rather than focus on containing violence. (field diary, 24/05/21)

Staff were allocated security duties daily, with tasks including searching rooms, individuals or the grounds, reading prisoners' mail, highlighting potential security issues through intelligence reports, or monitoring CCTV. Intelligence is used to plan searches of prisoners' rooms to look for contraband or prohibited items. Prisoners' mail is opened and checked prior to delivery, a reflection of the censorship which is common practice in other settings and which further demarks officers' power over prisoners (Jewkes and Johnston, 2009). Censoring mail is seen as an important part of security duty, and the focus is on looking for what might be deemed

inappropriate communications, or even in some cases, as demonstrated by a recent study (Ford and Berg, 2018), hidden drugs. However, it seems that, as with many elements of prison work, discretion as to what may or may not be appropriate plays a role in deciding whether prisoners should receive their mail:

An OSG brought a letter into the security office today, they felt some drawings on the envelope were inappropriate and wanted a second opinion. After some discussion, no one was 100% sure what the symbols represented but it was possible that they may have racist connotations so it was decided that the prisoner would not receive that letter. One officer then stated that they would need to keep a closer eye on that just in case he 'might be an issue'. (field diary, 21/05/18)

Other items, especially the food shipped in for mealtimes, were also routinely searched. Whilst inmates, themselves, are not searched every time they return, this does occur, particularly after returning from home leave. No contraband was found on any individual during my observations, although officers did share stories of this happening. I did witness searches of prisoners' rooms that resulted in items being confiscated, including drugs and electronic devices:

When conducting searches officers told me about various items they have found and confiscated, including drugs, mobile phones, mobile device chargers, even if there was no mobile present, and on some occasions food. (field diary, 18/01/19)

As discussed in chapter six, discretion allows officers to take different approaches to their work and implement policy in different ways. Such discretion is also evident during searches, with some officers removing items they perceived to be wrong:

During a recent room search an officer found a large quantity of fruit in a prisoner's room and, whilst this is not a banned item, it was removed because the officer felt that the prisoners shouldn't really have it. (field diary, 18/01/19)

Whilst staff often discussed available options in relation to searching and security, with the exception of Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT), other security activities did not appear to dominate staff's day-to-day work. Domestic duties were more prominent, with proactive security activities being undertaken on a more ad-hoc basis when staff levels and time allowed for this:

There is also an aspect of security detail; however, this appeared to be more ad-hoc depending on staffing levels. The security officer will often act on intel received and check up on various issues. Today there were reports of needles left in drains; however, the officer on this duty checked this out for an hour then disappeared off to help in another area where they were short staffed. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Security was discussed at daily meetings amongst senior staff, but for officers on the ground this did not cause much concern in terms of daily work. Although they would often discuss security matters in detail, overt action in relation to addressing issues was rarely taken. There was a certain level of acceptance that, whilst security issues were important, they were not the primary focus:

Security breaches were discussed, in that people had been coming onto the site, yet these issues seem to be somewhat accepted on the open site. Security do what they can to tackle them, however, they are not seen as the be all and end all. It seems these problems are linked to people bringing in food and alcohol for prisoners and this is something that has happened for years, however, it does seem the focus is more on rehabilitation and resettlement than it is on security which may feel conflicting for some of the staff. (field diary, 26/03/18)

As well as searches, Closed Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) were a tool used to monitor behaviour in the open prison.

8.4.5 The Use Of CCTV As A Tool For Security

Since the prison covers a large open area with few staff present, frequent reference was made to the use of surveillance equipment (CCTV) to monitor activities across the site. Staff impress on prisoners that someone is watching even when staff are not physically present; however, CCTV cannot be monitored across all locations round the clock in this way. The size of the site and its permeable boundary makes keeping people or prohibited items out a challenge. Contraband does make it into the prison, but discussions of prohibited items focused on items such as alcohol and take away food, rather than drugs or mobile phones. This is not to say, however, that such items are not taken into the prison:

There are issues with items such as fast food and alcohol being smuggled into the prison ... prisoners get fast food shops to deliver to the prison boundary. Some officers mentioned how they were going to patrol the boundary to catch prisoners having food delivered. (field diary, 27/04/18)

Whilst outside the prison, prisoners can access things that would be considered contraband inside, such as mobile phones or take away food, making the rules inside and outside blurred. One officer commented such rules seem *'too restrictive'* (field Diary, 27/04/18), especially when trying to prepare prisoners to live in the community.

This chapter has, so far, explored the ways prison officers use time and space to control prisoners both within and outside the prison. The level of power held by officers is clear and prisoners' lack of autonomy over some things can clearly be seen. Due to the overarching power staff have over

spaces within the prison, there is no official prisoner-only space. Yet, at certain times, staff allow prisoners more control over certain spaces by decreasing their physical presence in these. As I have mentioned, the open prison reflects a more traditional prison establishment at night, with the vast majority of prisoners on site and staffing levels at their lowest, meaning officers often physically withdraw to the wing offices.

When staff decrease their physical presence in the wings in this way, these spaces effectively become prisoner-only spaces, in the sense they are occupied solely by prisoners for a time, unless staff were given a specific reason to enter. This is particularly evident during evening association when staff are also more wary of their own vulnerabilities:

The prison was far busier than I have seen before ... it seemed staff were slightly more on edge at this time of the day. At night, the wings have a different feel, unlike during the day, they are full of prisoners who become confined into a relatively small space. It is also noisier. There are far fewer staff on the wing and across the prison in general at night. (field diary, 06/03/18)

The two main wings were manned at night but the smaller wing, which consists mainly of prisoners who work outside the prison, was not. Staff revealed this had not always been the case, as all wings used to have a staff presence at night. Whilst prisoners on the smaller wing were locked in at night, they could move freely around it, albeit they were expected to stay in their rooms. Staff could enter the wing at any time to supervise these spaces, but it was unclear how often this happened. Discussions with staff revealed differing attitudes, dependent on their cultural type, in relation to a request to staff this wing again at night. There was general agreement amongst staff that it would be of benefit to have an additional staff member based in this wing but reasons for this differed. Prison-focused staff were concerned with suspicions about

prisoners' behaviour when unsupervised, while prisoner-focused staff highlighted the usefulness of an extra pair of hands:

Staff talked about how they were unhappy with the low levels of officers on duty at night. There was general agreement that it would be good to have an officer based in C wing overnight, but it was interesting to see the different reasons for this. One officer said prisoners 'could be getting up to anything' in that wing overnight. Another officer stated that they were most likely 'just in bed' but it would be good to have someone in there to help with any issues that came up. (field diary, 28/03/18)

On the two larger wings staff were few at night and I did not witness them routinely patrolling, although they dealt with issues drawn to their attention. During one evening I noted:

There were no officers on the landings at all. Staff in the wing office did not leave the office the whole time I was there. There was no patrolling of the landings and wing staff only interacted with prisoners if they came to them with a query in the office. (field diary, 06/03/18)

Staff were conscious of the lack of interaction and physical presence at night, often, apparently, referring to association as '*their time*' (*Senior Officer 4*). There was a perception that prisoners did not want staff around during that time:

The wings are weird on an evening because it is their time and they don't really want us involved.
(Senior Officer 4)

Staff considered prisoners made them feel unwelcome on the wings during association but their explanations of this differed. Again, those who were more prison-focused in their cultural values had higher levels of suspicion, often seeing this as a sign prisoners were up to no good. More

prisoner-focused staff, however, acknowledged prisoners' desire for time and space away from them so as to not feel constantly supervised. This was seen as giving prisoners a greater level of trust; however, even staff who placed more trust in prisoners acknowledged the increased potential for rule breaches during these times:

Generally, they don't necessarily want or need us continuously on the landing. Yes, some of the time it is because you have got people doing something they shouldn't...You will be going on there because you will be challenging loud radios and stuff like that. But it is completely different at night ... because sometimes, it sounds weird, but you are not as welcome on the landing. Not always necessarily because they are up to no good it's just, they have been to work all day and they have come home for the evening. They don't really want us to be continually looking over their shoulder. We shouldn't have to. (Senior Officer 3)

Despite perceptions that prisoners did not want staff on the wings in the evening or at night, officers were keen to point out they can, and do, enter them. This was in fact demonstrated to me on an evening visit to the prison:

Tonight, I was escorted around during association time. My presence on the wing was greeted with surprise by the prisoners, there were no other officers present on the landing at the time. There were a lot of prisoners milling around, listening to music, playing snooker and socialising. Yet the noise wasn't deafening, everyone was co-existing together in their own little community ... One prisoner was playing loud music, however, as soon as the officer and I walked past the room they apologised and turned it down. (field diary, 06/03/18)

The lack of interaction with prisoners during association is a cause of friction with management, who felt wing staff should use this time to improve relationships:

Every night on evening duty, we have been asking them for months 'please come out of the office, go upstairs and play snooker or cards or anything you want with the men. Go and talk to them, go and play games with them because it's good for you, it's good for them. If you like snooker go and have a game of snooker, go and watch football with them'. They will sit in the office because they consider that work. But I consider having a game of snooker and talking to [a prisoner] about his day and seeing how he has been as work. (Governor 4)

With few staff on shift during association, this is often when they feel most vulnerable (King and McDermott, 1998), which may explain why, at such a time, the wings feel like prisoner space. A key element of prison officer culture is to be strong and not show fear (Crawley, 2004). Officers act this way but can often feel fearful on the inside (Liebling and Maruna, 2005). Whilst allowing prisoners control of space at certain times can cause concern for staff, it is also acknowledged that these elements had an overall positive impact on the prison environment. Time and space control movement and form a fundamental part of the prison regime; however, they are also key tools for the reward and punishment system present within the prison as I will now discuss.

8.5 Practicing Power and Control - The Use Of Rewards and Punishment

Rewards and punishments, often associated with time and space, are key tools for control in prisons, as time is a bargaining tool for compliance (Matthews, 1999) but can also be used for punishment (Wahidin, 2006). The use of time and space in this way plays an important role in maintaining order, and moving prisoners to an open prison, itself, is seen as a reward (Matthews, 1999). This section will focus on how, in the open prison, time and space are used and perceived by staff as rewards and punishments to help maintain order, control and compliance. Whilst this shares some similarities to closed estates, staff view the aspects of time and space that can be offered and removed in an open setting as a far greater motivator for compliance.

Staff played an important role in how time and space function as rewards and punishments. They believed prisoners valued time and space highly and feared their loss. Crewe (2011:519) describes the IEP scheme as a form of 'psychological power', or a softer approach to power deployment which has replaced more physical forms of punishment. My research demonstrates the wide application of this in the open setting. Staff were very aware that time and space is something they can use as both a reward and a punishment, which they have long been in many prison settings (Sparks et al. 1996). Whilst space can be used as a reward, staff are also able to use the removal of privileges linked to space as a punishment, therefore how officers control this form a key part of how power is practiced in the open setting:

The men here know, I mean, I imagine that in the back of their mind that there is always that: 'if I do muck up, I am going back into a three-man cell. I don't want that. I won't get to see my family. I won't get to take the kids out...have Sunday dinner at the table.' All the normal things that you and I would do and think of as normal things to do on a Sunday. (Governor 3)

Staff in the open prison had less opportunity to use moves between rooms or wings as punishment because prisoners have a high degree of free mobility for most of the day anyway. However, they could use extreme forms of control over time and space as punishment through the removal of prisoners back to the closed setting. Removal to the closed setting is particularly impactful for the prisoners with indeterminate sentences, many of whom reside in open settings. Indeterminacy increases the capacity for control in these ways.

Time in shared spaces and family visits are used as a reward across all types of prison (Rawlinson, 2019). Inmates in open prisons already have increased time out of their cells and greater

opportunities to spend time with their families, both in the prison environment and within the community. Staff recognise these things as strong motivators for compliance:

There is always an element of compliance from the idea of losing Cat D status and going back to closed. (Prison Officer 1)

Whilst this appears to be the ultimate loss of autonomy over space, I rarely observed staff use this threat in an overt way. It seems to be something implied and understood by all without having to discuss it directly:

In open conditions there is always an implied threat that they will be returned to closed ... this isn't a threat that staff need to use it's just a kind of understanding between the staff and prisoners. (Governor 1)

I did once, however, witness the following exchange between an officer and a prisoner:

A prisoner was frustrated about not being allowed home leave which he believed was going to negatively impact his parole hearing. He was angry, venting his frustration at the system and how it had been treating him. The CM and another officer were challenging him on what he was saying. They were speaking to him in a direct and firm manner, trying to reason with him and calm him down. Telling him he needs to 'chill' because all his behaviour is recorded and the way he was acting could be seen as him not being suitable for open conditions. (field diary, 21/05/18)

Staff often discussed compliance in terms of prisoners having more to lose and being more appreciative of the privileges the open establishment offers. Resettling prisoners into the community using day release is an important part of the work undertaken in an open setting, yet

Herzog-Evans (2020) found, in French prisons at least, that the prison service sees day release as a bargaining tool rather than a vital part of their sentence. It acted as both during my research.

Jarman (2020) considers that 'lifers' have adapted, and become conditioned, to the prison environment and the behaviour required of them, and so compliance by lifers nearing the end of their sentence is not solely motivated by the incentives on offer. So, this aspect of control may not be as impactful as staff believe it to be. Some staff acknowledged that whilst the threat of being returned to closed conditions acts as a motivation for compliance, prisoners still take risks. They consider low levels of violence occur because, at this stage in a prisoner's sentence, it is not worth the risk. Breaking other rules, however, such as being in possession of a mobile phone, might be deemed a risk worth taking to some prisoners because of the advantages it brings:

We have got low violence here; it is just that it is too much of a risk for them. Carrying phones, them doing that is a risk, but it's a more calculated risk, they can talk to their family so it's more of a justifiable risk, whereas fighting is way down on their scales. They risk assess themselves. They are quite intelligent in that sense. I just think that violence comes quite low down. (Senior Officer 2)

Prison-focused staff were, however, more focused on the idea that prisoners were likely to break rules, a reflection of the higher levels of suspicion within this type. Staff are conscious that space can also be used as a reward, especially in relation to time spent in the community or with families and this gives them different opportunities to exercise control over prison freedoms. Spending time in close proximity to other prisoners is recognised as a 'pain' of imprisonment (Sykes, 1958) and staff understand inmates want to spend as much time away from the site as possible, providing a motivation to comply. Yet staff noted that such a reward had to be earned over time, with any behaviour perceived by staff to be negatively impacting on a prisoner's ability

to earn release privileges. When prisoners arrived, they were *'on a three-month risk assessment period, known to the prisoners as lay down'*. (Senior Officer 4). Again, staff highlighted the importance of time and getting to know the individual, especially during the risk assessment process:

It may be quite a long period but sometimes you do need a fair period of time to assess people because it is easy to play the game. That three month period gives you time to see their true colours. (Senior Officer 4)

During that time risk and suitability are assessed and prisoners must submit a *'resettlement intentions booklet'* (Senior Officer 3) when they start employment, which is initially unpaid community work:

They eventually end up at risk level five ... this means they can go out on home leave, on a town visit ... more than likely be working out, spending a fair amount of time outside in the community. (Senior Officer 4)

When ready for outside work, there is additional paperwork prisoners must complete, which eventually enables them to stay out overnight. So, there is a gradual build up to longer periods away from the prison:

We will ask them to complete paperwork ... for the RDR working out scheme and eventually for the overnight. (Senior Officer 3)

This is a key example of how time and space together act as a form of control in relation to gaining rewards in this setting and how officers maintain a level of control over if this can be achieved by prisoners or not. Whilst staff may not acknowledge they use the removal of space as

a punishment in ways other than returning prisoners to closed conditions, there were examples of this occurring. The adjudication process is available when prisoners contravene the rules and outcomes can result in the removal of privileges linked to time and space. However, use of the adjudication process is sparing in the open prison, often representing a last resort:

Whilst chatting to the adjudicating governor and the number one governor they stated that overall, they have very few adjudications compared to the closed estate. This affords them more time to listen to the mitigation put forward by the prisoner and to explore any underlying issues that may be driving non-compliant behaviour. Today there was only one adjudication to hear; however, the governor pointed out in closed that after a weekend there could easily be 30 or 40 adjudications to deal with on a Monday morning. (field diary, 20/08/18)

My observations of the adjudication process revealed punishments, such as reduced time in the gym or removal of canteen privileges, as well as the adjustment of risk levels, meaning prisoners could no longer leave the site. Staff were aware such punishments impacted on prisoners' behaviour, as the following entry in my field diary indicates:

Whilst it seems to an observer that there is a lot of power in the process, the adjudicating governor feels that this process is more effective in closed conditions because the guidelines are quite restricted, the range of punishments in an open prison is less impactful. Overall movement around the site cannot be restricted, and whilst the prisoner may be banned from the gym they can still run around the site, if they are friendly with another prisoner, they could still watch TV in their cell, therefore these types of punishment are perhaps less relevant. However, the power to change risk levels and stop people working, having ROR or RDR is powerful too, because this is something all the prisoners value highly. (field diary, 20/08/18)

Yet, as discussed in chapter seven, an officer's cultural type impacted how they viewed things, and the adjudication process was no exception. Prisoner-focused staff were more likely to

acknowledge the impact of punishments associated with adjudications and, whilst not always agreeing with the punishment decisions, were accepting of them. Whereas prison-focused staff were more likely to become frustrated with a perceived inability to enforce stricter punishments. To round out this final data chapter, I next move on to explore the impact that increased level of shared space and prisoner responsibility can have on prison staff, the way they approach their role and practice power and control in an open prison setting.

8.6 The Impact Of Shared Space

Staff recognised that allowing prisoners some control over time and space has positive influences for control and order. Other research supports the idea this can assist to alleviate some 'pains of imprisonment', such as confinement within the institution or lack of personal security (Sykes, 1971). It is also acknowledged that, whilst a more relaxed approach comes with benefits, it can create different issues for prisoners linked to the pains of self-governance (Crewe, 2011), creating a different set of concerns for prisoners to address. My research identifies that more relaxed approaches can also create conflict and challenges for staff and different types of prison work in which they need to engage. Dealing with challenges presented by increased elements of self-governance links to the role officers saw themselves as playing in de-institutionalisation as outlined in chapter seven:

It's giving them life skills, there are a lot of people here who don't have life skills they don't know how to live with other people. You have to push them in the direction of what they need to do. Before coming here, they haven't had to make any of those decisions for themselves. (Prison Officer 1)

Prisoner rooms at the site are single occupancy, meaning disorder-related issues associated with overcrowding are not experienced (field diary, 18/01/19). As seen in chapter six, occupying single

rooms with their own keys afforded prisoners a certain amount of personal space and this allows them to walk away from situations which may, under other circumstances, lead to conflict. Staff noted that giving prisoners control over the use of space and time assisted compliance and perceptions of fairness, as research suggests it would (Pilling 1992; Liebling, 2004). However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, even prisoners' rooms are not fully in their control.

Staff acknowledged prisoners leaving the prison boundary for work or home visits '*gets them out*' (*Prison Officer 1*) and keeps the prisoners occupied, which is seen as helping to maintain order:

One thing that contributes to order, is the variety of things on offer to the men who reside there. The fact that there is so much on offer helps keep order within the prison because people are occupied and have opportunity. Staff often talk about how without the opportunities and the support to develop, the men would not have as much to work for and there would therefore be an increase in discontent leading to a less settled environment. (field diary, 03/05/18)

Despite this acknowledgement, the increased time prisoners and prison staff spend in shared spaces also created additional challenges in this distinct environment. The number of shared spaces is an unusual feature of the open prison environment. It impacts how officers undertook their role and the relationships they developed with prisoners, which I discussed in chapters six and seven. This section, however, will focus on the perceived positive and negative impacts of shared space as identified by staff and how this relates to the way power is deployed and control maintained. Increased interaction with prisoners was viewed positively by some who saw this as enabling them to better undertake their role. Prisoner-focused staff emphasised how spending time in shared spaces helped them gain knowledge of individuals, thus improving relationships and the overall environment. These staff were able to reflect on the importance of making the open prison feel more like a community and shared space was seen as one element that allowed

the open prison to better reflect a *'normal community'* (Senior Officer 4). Such officers emphasised interaction with prisoners in ways they would wish to be treated by others in the wider community:

It's a community and I would treat them the way I want to be treated. (Senior Officer 3)

Shared spaces encouraged the development of working relationships and a greater level of respect for what others were doing. Staff acknowledged that the prison *'wouldn't work'* (Prison Officer 1) if it were not for the prisoners and valued a prisoner's time as much as their own:

If they ask me something I am not going to keep them waiting just for the sake of it, I am going to do it as soon as I possibly can. (Prison Officer 2)

Prisoner-focused staff were also more likely to allow prisoners to express their thoughts and raise concerns without fear of repercussions, such as having their behaviour noted on file, an important element of bureaucratic control in action. These staff acknowledged that:

We all have our off days. I mean I have had three here that have lost it with me then a couple of hours later they come back and apologise because it wasn't actually aimed at me. That is what you want. You don't want them to get angry and not come back. You want them to listen and understand where you are coming from and try and explain why this has happened. They aren't knockbacks they are learning curves. It's about how you deal with it, and we have got to give them the skills to learn to deal with it. (Prison Officer 1)

Increased time spent sharing space created concern among prison-focused staff about the potential ease with which staff could come to harm. For prison-focused staff, then, shared space increased perceptions of their own vulnerability within the prison environment. Such officers

tended to point out the potential for situations to *'kick off'* (*Prison Officer 4*) in terms of violent disorder and emphasised how sharing space made staff vulnerable. They reflected there would be little chance of containing prisoners should disorder occur:

Our problem is that in a closed jail you have got a certain area, be it a cell or a recess, to restrain the prisoner. Here because they have so much movement if one kicks off and starts running about well, unless they give us Segways ... we are in trouble. (*Prison Officer 4*)

These feelings of vulnerability are reflective of time spent in conditions where levels of violence were higher or, for those who had never worked in closed establishments, very specific and isolated incidents rather than current events. See chapter seven for discussion of officers' preparedness to deal with violence, low levels of violence and discussing the role violence plays in re-legitimising the role of the prison officer in an open setting.

Not only do prisoners and staff co-exist in spaces in a more domestic way, they also share workspaces and, in some cases, similar roles. As well as co-existing in a prison community on a day-to-day basis, staff and prisoners also worked alongside one another. Locations where this was common included: reception, WOS and, to a lesser extent, the wings, gym and resettlement. Prisoners have job roles delivering various items across the prison and, at times, prisoners and officers are doing what appears to be similar work in these office-based jobs. However, there were distinct differences; for example, the paperwork prisoners collected and delivered was kept in locked boxes to which only staff hold the key:

Throughout the day different prisoners arrive to collect paperwork and deliver it to other areas of the prison. The paperwork is placed in locked boxes, staff have the keys to these boxes in various locations across the prison. Some prisoners enter the office and can open the boxes and put the

paperwork in themselves, on other occasions the staff will do this, not allowing the prisoner to handle the keys or paperwork directly. (field diary, 09/03/18)

Whilst staff and prisoners mostly worked harmoniously together, the separation between them was clear to see. For example, making prisoners ask staff for the key to locked boxes when delivering paperwork shows that trust is conditional, with staff maintaining power in such situations. Prisoners working within the prison in office locations, such as WOS, could be identified by t-shirts denoting their role. They occupied a separate space and were grouped together, which again maintained a level of separation between them and officers. Workspace seemed least bounded in reception but, even here, separation is evident, as inmates undertook the more menial tasks, such as cleaning and making the tea:

This is the first time that I have seen prisoners and officers working so closely in the same environment. If the prisoners weren't wearing t-shirts to identify them then you wouldn't have known that they were in fact prisoners. Whilst they do work closely with the officers there was not a lot of chat between prisoners and staff; however, there was a lot of chat and banter between staff so there was still an element of prisoner-staff separation. (field diary, 14/03/18)

Staff told stories about how some prisoners had been removed from jobs in shared spaces because they were deemed to be too familiar with staff. It was not necessarily that a prisoner had broken rules, but rather a sense officers developed that something may go wrong in the future. Being able to have a prisoner removed from a role due to concerns over potential future behaviour was a clear display of power and use of discretion by staff. This is yet another demonstration of how staff used discretion as a form of control as in many other areas of their work.

As I argued earlier, time can transform how penal space is used and workspaces are only shared at certain times of the day. The prisoners' working day is usually shorter than that of staff in these spaces. When prisoners are not working in the same space, how staff interact with and use that space shifts. Controlling when these spaces are shared through time is, then, another tool officers use to maintain a certain level of separation between themselves and prisoners. As discussed in chapter six, reception was often an informal meeting place for staff, but this was not always the case. Observations in reception when prisoners were working noted informal chats between officers, but little discussion of personal issues or concerns in relation to safety and security across the prison. As staff offices are separated out across the site, this is sometimes the only chance staff have to share information with one another. Certain work areas of the site, such as the gatehouse, were identified as staff only areas, yet due to the prolonged interaction between staff and prisoners, staff also value space in which they can relax away from prisoners.

8.6.1 Staff Only Space

Personal space to get away is not only important to prisoners but also staff. Research has shown how prisoners carve out spaces for themselves to help survive the experience of prison (Van Hoven and Sibley, 2008). In my research staff took a similar approach, establishing 'staff only' spaces in response to the increased time spent in shared social and workspace in an open environment. Nylander et al. (2011) identified that staff working in prisons with greater interaction with prisoners rarely have 'back-stage' areas where they can let off steam, which is important for dealing with the stress caused by emotional labour. At the research site, the staff room clearly acted as a 'back-stage' space for staff. The staff recreation room is one of the few areas on the site which prisoners are not permitted to enter at any time, and so is very much a staff only space. Staff valued this separation, knowing this was a location where they would not be disturbed. The door was always kept locked unless officers were present and, even then, staff

often locked the door after entering because they did not want prisoners to 'chance their luck' (field diary, 26/03/18) and try to enter.

This space was particularly important to staff who worked on the wings or reception area. They had the most frequent interactions with prisoners throughout the day and were less likely to be able to spend their working days in other staff only spaces. Staff on the wing acknowledged their visibility and availability: '*When we are on the wing, we are available*' (Prison Officer 3). This was supported by my own observations when in these areas in terms of the high levels of interaction between staff and prisoners. Indeed, if I needed time to think I would often have to seek out a 'quiet space' elsewhere (field diary, 09/03/18).

At certain times of the day, the staff room was especially busy, for example at lunch time and dinner time, when uniformed officers, mainly those who work on reception or wings, gathered for their break. As a 'back-stage' area, the staff room represented a safe space for officers where they could be themselves and discuss more personal or controversial issues. As I have mentioned, officers were initially uncomfortable with me being in their safe space. During the early months of the research, it became clear that officers were avoiding this space. After chatting with some officers with whom I had built a close rapport, the importance of that space to staff became evident. During my time at the prison, this also became my own 'safe space' where I could get away from people when I felt I needed to. Time was also used in order to create staff only spaces. So, for example, staff and prisoners shared recreational facilities, such as the gym, but they did not use these at the same time (field diary, 24/05/18). This section has demonstrated the impact that sharing space with prisoners both within and outside of the prison boundary has an impact on how officers approach their work and practice power and control over prisoner freedoms in different ways.

8.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter sets out the way power and authority are deployed in different ways to maintain control and order in the open prison. Such methods are used often across a variety of prison settings and this chapter demonstrates, some of the distinct and less distinct ways that power and authority are deployed to maintain control. My research demonstrates that power and authority can be deployed in distinct ways in open settings, but elements of how they operate to maintain order, such as the use of control over the use of time and space, shares similarities with the closed setting. Thus, demonstrating most clearly its links with the approach to prison work in mainstream prisons. The use of familiar techniques, such as a daily regime, association time, the locking of prisoners on wings at night, or the use of time centred rewards and punishments are all classic features of control in closed prison settings. These remnants of traditional forms of penal control, though, can lead to conflict.

Perceptions that prisoners have increased levels of control, which are over-emphasised by staff, leave them feeling they have little power to punish prisoners and the increased reliance on softer methods of power further emphasises this for some officers. These conflicts are managed in different ways by officers depending on their cultural orientation, yet the management of risk, for both staff and prisoners, in making decisions about the control afforded is always considered. Undoubtedly prisoners do have greater autonomy in these distinct environments, yet the levels of control staff retain over this is greater than outward appearances suggest, and staff often do not acknowledge this. Not only does the open prison present challenges in terms of control over time and space within the prison boundary but also, this chapter demonstrates how this extends far beyond this. The extensive use of ROTL, utilised to support the aims of resettlement and reintegration, means that carceral space is extended through the control of time and space outside the prison which is a key distinctive element of the open prison.

This chapter also established how the importance of time and space, especially in the open setting, goes far beyond a means of control, and staff see this enabling their work. Thus, there are distinct elements of time and space that require staff to adapt which, as with other aspects of this distinct environment, is impacted by officer culture. Managing the existence of more spaces shared by staff and prisoners is established as a key challenge to which staff must adapt. Consequently, this is an important area that distinguishes how work is undertaken in the open setting. Staff recognise the benefits that time and space can have in relation to undertaking more caring and supportive aspects of their roles and the positive impact this has on the prison environment, demonstrating how time can be an enabler in the open prison setting. Prisoners are given more or less control over different spaces at different times, and this is most evident in association time, from which staff often withdraw. Staff only space is limited but highly valued, and how I interacted with these spaces was also something to which I had to adapt.

This marks the end of the data analysis chapters. In them a comprehensive picture has been developed of the distinctive social environment of the open prison and staff perceptions of, and approaches to, work within it. Chapter five established key aspects of the social and physical distinctness of the open prison through thick description. Chapter six explored how officers adapted to this unusual penal environment and the influence of occupational culture on this adaptation process. Here I have explored the role of time and space in the open prison setting. The following chapter concludes this thesis by drawing together the key arguments made throughout and identifying how this research sits within the current literature and how it makes original contributions to knowledge. Also explored are the wider implications of these findings in the context of the broader penal system in the UK.

Chapter Nine: Acknowledging The Distinctiveness Of The Open Prison

9.1 Introduction

Throughout this thesis, I have explored the often-neglected issues that contribute to a wider understanding of the role of the open prison as a penal establishment. These include studying the role of occupational culture, processes of adaptation, and the work of prison staff within such establishments. This is the concluding chapter of my thesis that wraps up the overarching findings and insight. This chapter, then, reaffirms my findings and original contributions to knowledge by revisiting the three research areas my thesis addresses. Firstly, I summarise my original contribution to knowledge, then I re-engage with central arguments presented throughout this thesis. I explore how the acknowledgement of open prisons as distinct settings inform current understandings of prison work and officer culture. Consequently, in it I consider not only the open prison as representing a distinct physical and social milieu, but also acknowledge less distinct areas, thus demonstrating the undeniable relationship that situates open prisons within the broader prison system, despite their distinctive aspects. What my research contributes to our understanding of other distinct penal environments is also discussed before engaging with how the distinctness of open prisons could impact the penal landscape more broadly. Finally in this chapter, I consider areas for additional research that will build on the contributions made in this thesis.

9.1.1 An Original Contribution To Prison Scholarship

This research provides an original contribution to knowledge across four areas, the first of these is the history of open prisons. My analysis of the perpetual challenges of early release and suitable establishments to prepare prisoners for release, something open prisons attempt to address, I argue, can be traced back in history far preceding the birth of modern imprisonment. Secondly,

my rich ethnographic data allows me to establish how the social and physical environment of the open prison is a distinct one, in ways not previously recognised. My research then, allowed for the identification of the existence of a distinct social milieu, including aims, such as de-institutionalisation and differing approaches to prison work, as perceived by staff, in the modern open prison. Thirdly, I demonstrate why, and how staff adapt to this distinct setting in different ways. This included the development of two broad-brush officer orientations; prisoner-focused and prison-focused officers. I demonstrate how cultural orientations identified play a role in approaches to prison work, staff-prisoner relationships, the deployment of authority and control, and the process of adapting to a distinct penal setting. I show how distinct elements of the social and physical milieu of the open prison, combined with the firm rooting of these within the more traditional penal continuum, contribute to the notion of a 'spoiled' occupational and, to a lesser extent, organisational identity. I recognised how officers manage their 'spoiled' identities, building on the work of Crawley (2004), and the interplay this has with their cultural orientation, which, as in other more traditional prison establishments, ranges from staff who are more discipline focused to those who are more welfare orientated.

The final original contribution is the exploration of the way that power and authority are deployed to maintain order in an open environment. I established distinct elements in the way power and authority are deployed, (both within and outside of the prison boundary), yet I identify similarities with approaches to maintaining order with more traditional prison settings. This includes the use of traditional methods of control, specifically related to time and space, but also the deployment of softer power, increase in prisoner responsabilisation and a heavy reliance on staff-prisoner relationships. I explore, then, what the work of Crewe (2009, 2011), centred on soft power and other more traditional methods of order and control such as those described by Sparks et al. (1996) and Liebling (2004), can tell us about the deployment of power and authority

in an open setting from the perspective of staff. I argue that, softer approaches to maintaining control have a longer history in distinct settings, such as the open prison, when compared to more traditional prison settings, where its emergence, as described by Crewe (2011) is relatively recent. Whilst other similar control techniques that are seen in more traditional prison settings are present in the open prison site, the deployment of these can be distinct and the physical and social distinctness of these settings lead officers to utilise these approaches in different ways. A key element of this distinctness is the increased freedom of prisoner movement both within and outside of the prison boundary. Contemporary studies of the prison boundary have identified how across various prisons settings, the boundary is more permeable than previously recognised (Turner, 2016). Yet, crucially, in open prisons I explored the extension of penal power and the role of prison work outside the prison boundary via the use of ROTL, on a scale not seen in more traditional penal settings. This is an area of distinction that has yet to be fully acknowledged in discussions of open prison, something my thesis goes some way to addressing, from an officers perspective at least. Having summarised the key areas to which my thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge, I now move on to directly address how I have responded to the three areas of enquiry outlined in chapter one.

9.2 The Open Prison: A Physically And Socially Distinct Milieu

My first area of enquiry concerned the distinct environment of the open prison and asked: how does the open prison represent a physically and socially distinct prison environment for staff; in what ways does this affect work undertaken in such settings? My thesis demonstrates that the open prison represents a distinct physical and social milieu compared to traditional prison settings, this is strongly evident in staff perceptions. I argue that the distinctness of the open environment, and the nature of prison work there, is not sufficiently explored or recognised in policy or academic research; this can hamper the ability of these institutions to deliver the work

required of them. My research plays an important role, then, in exploring staff perceptions of the distinct nature of these environments and the work undertaken in them. Broadly I found that the open prison should be considered a distinctive environment, however, it retains key features of a prison and so remains penal in nature. It shares some characteristics with other types of distinctive penal environments, such as STCs and TCs which have been studied more frequently. Other elements of its distinct physical and social milieu, however, are particular to the open prison. Especially important to this are the frequent use of ROTL, thus extending control and prison work outside of the prison boundary, the practical focus on de-institutionalisation and resettlement, the increased reliance on softer approaches to power with very few physical security measures and the perceived increase in levels of prisoner responsibility, over varying aspects of their lives, both within and outside of the open prison.

Recognition of the distinct nature of non-traditional penal environments, has been touched upon in literature relating to various penal settings, yet the only text to explore a UK male open prison in detail is by Jones and Cornes in 1977. Elements of the open prisons are acknowledged as distinct, yet this has mainly focused on key physical differences (Jones and Cornes, 1977; Morris, 1995; Matthews, 1999), a feature that has changed little over the last forty years. My research, however, foregrounds additional, but less-recognised, elements of distinction related to the social milieu, rather than just the physical one. I establish how open prisons are more distinct than previously recognised. Since Jones and Cornes conducted their research, the penal system has changed significantly, yet my research demonstrates that, elements of the long-term open institution they described, and the challenges these institutions faced finding their place within the broader penal system, remain, in part relevant today. My research, however, explores these in greater depth, whilst also identifying additional knowledge to our understanding of these complex environments, including; a deeper understanding of the interplay between officer's

cultural orientations and their approaches to work, including the deployment of power and authority (within and outside the prison boundary), and the adaptation process for officers to these distinct settings. Yet, as I explore later, I also identify how the open prison retains strong links with traditional penal settings, with elements of approaches to prison work lessening its distinctiveness to some extent.

Jones and Cornes (1977:5) described open prisons as 'alien bodies' functioning within a wider penal system, with Menis (2020:143) also acknowledging the 'unconventional custodial environment' that female open prisons represent. The idea that open prisons are somewhat 'alien' (Jones and Cornes 1977:5) and 'unconventional' (Menis, 2020:143) when compared to their closed counterparts, in terms of both their physical set-up and their focus on different aims is clear and is supported and expanded on by my findings on contemporary male open prisons. My work, then, brings research on male open prisons up to date, testing the degree to which there has been change or continuity over the last forty years, but also adding rich detail to our understanding of these distinct environments, and implications for the work that is done there. My arguments about the distinctiveness of open prisons are complex, so I next explore elements of distinctness identified to demonstrate key areas where this is evident. First, I will touch upon the distinct prisoner population often represented in the open prison.

9.2.1 The Distinct Prisoner Population

Part one of this thesis established that a key role of the open prison and other semi-penal institutions is to resettle long sentence prisoners, something my research supports. Therefore, open prison populations are often made up exclusively of those who have served long sentences, such was the case at this research site. Prisoner populations in open prison carry a level of risk, that Pennington (2015) argues, often goes unacknowledged. Whilst prisoners must be perceived

to be low risk to enter open conditions, the conditions themselves can contribute to increased levels of risk due to a prisoners need to adapt. Towards the end of long sentences, Herbert (2019) notes how prisoners become more self-controlled and compliant, whilst to a certain extent my thesis supports this, from perceptions of staff, ensuring compliance remains a key part of prison work. Prisoners who reside in the open prison have, however, passed through various other penal environments on their journey to the open prison: they are the same prisoners. Whilst this may seem to lessen their distinctness in terms of the population, not all prisoners, even some of those who have served long sentences will get to an open prison. In England and Wales open prisons are seen as the end part of a prisoner's journey; yet, as this thesis establishes, both currently and historically a long-standing and distinct element of the open prisons, and other semi-penal institutions, is the careful selection of prisoners for transfer there (Leitch, 1951; Jones and Cornes, 1977). This process of selection, of the 'right kind' of prisoners is what makes these prison populations distinct. This careful selection has historically been associated with their success, selections were often made with security in mind, thus denying such institutions the opportunity to achieve their stated role for the broader prison population (Leitch, 1951; Jones and Cornes, 1977). This research identified that the selection of prisoners for the open prison setting remains tightly controlled, with transfer viewed as a reward to be earned, not an automatic right. Selection is controlled through the security categorisation process, although currently more prisoners are considered suitable for open conditions, but spaces are unavailable (Home Office, 2016). Yet as chapter two demonstrates views about suitability criteria for transfer to open conditions vary over time.

My research found that staff considered the careful selection of prisoners for open conditions impacted what could be achieved there. Consequently, they did not see open prisons as suitable for all, or as a necessary part of imprisonment, but rather an exception for a select few. The

possible impact of selecting the right kind of prisoner, and perceptions that this is key to the success of open prisons, has a knock-on effect for decisions on expanding the use of the open prison estate. When exploring this possible expansion, as discussed later in this chapter, consideration then needs to be given to the role that selecting ‘the right kind of prisoner’ plays in the distinct social milieu observed in the open prison and further research should be conducted to help establish this. Similar arguments, in terms of select populations, could be made about the high-security estate, an area of the prison system which has been subject to greater academic interest. The selection process for prisoners who enter the high-security estate, often at the beginning of their sentence, is also influenced by the type of sentence they receive in a way that is different from the selection process to enter the open prison, making these populations very different. Gibson (2021) explored how in some cases positive social climates for rehabilitation can be created in high-security prisons, yet little can really be established on the true nature of rehabilitation in such settings as prisoners are rarely released directly from them. Such establishments are more akin to traditional prison establishments with a focus on security, containment and control compared to the resettlement and reintegration aims emphasised in open prisons. Progression through the system is required before a prisoner could be released and, as this thesis establishes, those who started their sentence in a high-security prison may well end up in the open setting where their readiness for release is tested, with staff recognising that there is much work still to be done in the open setting to make resettlement into the community for such prisoners a viable option. This indicates that despite the work that is carried out in terms of supporting resettlement and reintegration in other prison settings, this is not deemed by staff to be effective in these settings, yet these aims are far more tangible in the open prison.

9.2.2 Distinct Aims, Prison Work And Relationships In The Open Prison

The aims of open prisons are, both historically and within modern imprisonment, different from those of more traditional establishments, with an increased emphasis on supporting resettlement

and reintegration in a practical way. Resettlement and reintegration, whilst distinct from other penal settings in the extent to which they are pursued in open prisons, are officially recognised as the primary aims of such institutions. This thesis supports the notion that the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison enables increased emphasis on resettlement and reintegration over security and containment. Frequent and less formal interactions between staff and prisoners, and increased freedom of prisoner movement both within and outside the prison are key to this. Alongside the recognised aims of resettlement and reintegration, I also identify an additional aim, which forms a key part of a prison officers work in the open setting, that is the de-institutionalisation of prisoners. This thesis established how elements of the physical and social milieu created a more normalised environment, closer to that seen in the wider community which aims to support resettlement, reintegration and de-institutionalization. Birk (2011) argues that a more normalised environment assists with the achievement of aims such as resettlement and reintegration, I established how staff at the research site perceive this to be the case. Yet, I identified that security, containment and risk management remain important, despite the emphasis on rehabilitation and resettlement, making open prisons distinctly penal in nature, as well as places enabling resettlement.

My research identifies that trying to create an environment that is more reflective of the community, in what remains, essentially, a prison setting can lead to a sense of normlessness for staff, and whilst I did not research prisoners, staff indicated that this impacted upon them also. Balancing these somewhat contradictory aims, therefore, becomes more challenging than in other settings. Resettlement and reintegration and more traditionally rehabilitation have been more widely recognised and accepted as the aim of the open prison. The focus at the time Jones and Cornes (1977) explored open prisons was on achieving rehabilitative ideals utilising training, employment and education in a way that was not that different from the closed setting. I identify

that these remain key to the work undertaken within open prisons, but the increased focus on resettlement and reintegration over rehabilitation in the open setting has emerged. A key difference is the use of ROTL to facilitate practical elements of this outside of the prison setting. The focus on resettlement in the open prison is mirrored, to some extent, in the development of language used in recent penal policy. Yet despite this emphasis on its importance across all prison establishments, my research shows, from the perspective of staff at least, practical work to support resettlement remains something confined to open prisons, since they perceive closed prisons do not have the right environment or opportunities to practically support such aims.

Interestingly, the focus on resettlement and reintegration in open prisons now remains, it seems, close to the social approach to rehabilitation linked with the classic models of training dominant in the mid-twentieth century, which Garland (2001) argues were more welfare orientated. This somewhat contradicts the shift towards psychological treatment programmes, seen in mainstream prison establishments in recent decades, which not only hampers broader understandings of rehabilitation (McNeil, 2012) but likely also contributes to the interchangeable, and somewhat confusing, use of these terms by prison staff identified in this thesis. Despite this shift towards psychological treatment programmes, open prisons, it seems, have been able to maintain a social approach to rehabilitation. It is clear from my research, however, that the creation of a more normalised environment is a key contributor to enabling the process of de-institutionalisation, resettlement and reintegration to thrive.

As well as providing additional knowledge around the aims of the open prison, this thesis also contributes knowledge to the understanding of how staff view and undertake work in an open prison setting. Our understanding of the work that goes on in open establishments and how this work is viewed in terms of understanding broader prison work is limited. I found that increased

emphasis on supporting resettlement and reintegration combined with the distinct physical and social milieu led to, the need to adapt to and establish, new ways of undertaking work in the prison setting. I demonstrate how the open prison is an environment in which officers perceive themselves to undertake a different kind of work, with the distinct environment allowing for a focus on distinct approaches to prison work. The role of the open prison and the work of prison officers in resettlement and reintegration of prisoners is clearly identified by my research. Yet alongside this, I have identified additional roles, however, which are not officially defined, such as supporting the de-institutionalisation of prisoners and testing their readiness for release; an element which, as my research demonstrates, from the perspective of officers is key to achieving successful resettlement and reintegration. It is widely recognised that imprisonment can lead to institutionalisation through what Liebling (2009) describes as damaging environments. This thesis establishes that staff see a key part of their role as undoing some of the damage caused within the closed setting. Yet, de-institutionalisation, in particular, is a little explored aspect of prison work that represents a distinct area evident in staff perceptions of their role. My thesis highlights how the distinct environment lends itself to such work. These go beyond the stated aims of open prisons but were recognised by staff as important areas of the work they did, supporting the findings of Menis (2020:146) who argued that women's' open prisons also have a role to play in the 'abatement of institutionalisation'.

Officially acknowledging the role of open prisons and prison officers in de-institutionalisation, however, presents a challenge for policymakers who would be required to admit the damaging nature of imprisonment. It is important, however, to note that closed settings vary in terms of the damage they cause (Liebling, 2009) and prisoners do not all experience harm in the same way. Nor am I suggesting that open prisons are not, in their own way, potentially harmful, as demonstrated in the work of Shammass (2014). Prisoners' perspectives of de-institutionalisation in

an open setting were not explored in this research. This is an important area requiring further research, though, which could build on Crossan's (2009) work on prisoners, as well as my own on staff. Such a process may be important for successful resettlement more broadly, and this requires further research in prison settings. Next, however, I explore how my research contributes to understanding how the distinct setting impacts on the development, roles and management of staff-prisoners relationships.

Relationships are important across all prisons (Liebling and Price, 2001; Crawley, 2004; Liebling et al. 1999), this research demonstrates that staff also perceived their relationships with prisoners as important, but in some ways different, in the open setting. My research demonstrates how the distinct milieu of the open setting and the prioritisation of different aims, both those acknowledged and those overlooked, requires the development of distinct relationships between staff and prisoners; staff perceive themselves as having to take a different approach to these in the open setting. Relationships were important to all staff, but for different reasons. Distinct relationships are often evident, as they are in my research, by increased levels of interaction between staff and prisoners and the greater levels of trust and responsibility afforded to prisoners to do things for themselves, both within and outside the prison boundary. However, this was a key area to which staff had to adapt. My thesis demonstrates how staff perceive the different nature of these relationships helps to support resettlement and reintegration. I identify that the open environment allows more time for these relationships to develop in a different way, something also seen in other types of non-traditional establishments (Shafer 2010; Baybutt et al. 2019).

Work in other prison settings found that occupational culture, and its effect on work and relationships in prison settings, can be seen as having a negative impact, not only on the prison

environment (Warr, 2008), but also on resettlement and rehabilitation work (Shamir and Drory, 1981; Young et al. 2009; Nylander, 2011). Whilst this is undoubtedly true for some settings, my research demonstrates culture is not monolithic, and many staff in open prisons use their cultural values to enable the development of relationships that they see as positive for the resettlement process. Despite the cultural barriers which often prevent staff from trusting prisoners within prison officer culture generally, this thesis highlights that such culture can be flexible, with staff able to adapt to trusting prisoners with increased levels of responsibility. This, therefore, has an impact on the way relationships between staff and prisoners develop in the open setting.

This section has summarised and discussed the key findings that my thesis contributes in terms of a deeper understanding of the physically and, particularly, the socially distinct milieu that the open prison represents. These differences are significant, and staff recognise that they require adaptation to working practices and approaches. My findings explore this process of adaptation in depth for the first time in the context of an open setting, highlighting how an officer's cultural orientation can influence how they adapt to this distinct setting. It is key findings in relation to this that I will now explore.

9.3 Staff Adaptation To The Open Prison And Managing 'Spoiled Identities'

My second area of enquiry stems from the distinct environment of the open prison discussed above and concerned staff's adaptation to this. This addresses the following questions: How do staff adapt to the distinct setting in which they work? To what extent does this involve taking different approaches to prison work? What role does occupational culture play in this adaptation process? What are the impacts on a prison officer's occupational identity? My thesis clearly identifies both the distinctness of the open setting and the need for officers to adapt to this. Key to my findings on this is the way that the cultural orientations of officers become important to

the processes of adaptation they undergo, but also the way in which they approach their work. I explore two cultural orientations – ‘prison-focused’ and prisoner-focused’. These are used to understand the different approaches officers take to work and relationships in the open prison setting more generally, as well as influencing how officers re-legitimised their role. My work is not the first to acknowledge the need for officers to adapt when moving between different settings but, provides valuable original insights into how officers utilise their cultural values and identities to navigate this process of adaptation in an open setting. I demonstrate that officers find new ways to approach work in the open setting, showing how allowing time to adapt to a distinct environment is important to staff, and uncovering some of the challenges this presents. Officers adapt in different ways, although as noted in chapter six not all can achieve this. Crawley (2004) and Liebling (2004) acknowledged that different prisons have different cultures, working practices and priorities, meaning adaptation often occurs when moving between sites. So, this is not solely relevant for transfer between closed and open settings. Yet my research indicates that adaptation to the open environment, from the perception of staff at least, is greater than with other moves.

Open prisons rely on ordinary prison officers, many of whom have worked in closed conditions, and, as Warr (2008) shows, staff who have been long in service often become cynical because they have become institutionalised and bring with them many aspects of well-established occupational culture. This thesis establishes that open prison staff are not unique in their recruitment or selection, nor are they trained differently, something also noted by Jones and Cornes (1977). The fact remains, then, that prisoners and staff who enter the open prison have usually passed through more traditional prison settings. Staff, therefore, bring with them working practices, experience, cultural influences and views on how prison should be that have developed while working elsewhere and, these affect how they approach their work in the open setting. Adapting to the open setting, then, requires an element of de-institutionalisation for staff as well

as prisoners, and this is reflected in their adaptation process. Indeed, this use of conventionally trained prison officers is one element that inevitably ties open prisons to the wider prison estate despite their distinctiveness.

Despite the elements of distinctness that my research has identified as summarised in this section, my research also reveals that whilst open prisons prioritise distinct aims, and focus on undertaking prison work in distinct ways, contributing to the greater levels of adaptation required, they remain intrinsically like other penal institutions in some ways. This close juxtaposition with the wider closed estate, I argue, is challenging and contributes to the notion of an officer's 'spoiled identity' (Crawley, 2004), as well as a wider spoiled organisational identity for the open prison as a penal establishment within staff perceptions. Jones and Cornes (1977: 2) alluded to this, noting how open prisons can be seen as 'a denial of the essential nature of the institution of which it purports to be a variant', because of the different role such institutions play whilst remaining closely linked to the broader penal estate. They did not, however, explore in any depth how officers navigated this adaptive process as I do.

My work is not the first to acknowledge and explore the concept of a spoiled identity in a distinct setting. Rather it builds on the idea of 'spoiled identities' presented by Crawley (2004), demonstrating the relevance of this for staff working in open prisons. My findings on this expand Crawley's, demonstrating that the open prison itself, due to its distinct physical and social milieu that I vividly described, has a spoiled organisational identity among staff, evident in the perception that open prisons are not seen by many of them as 'real jails' where 'real prison work' occurs. Furthermore, I establish how officers manage their own, and the organisation's, spoiled identity in order to re-legitimise their role. Crawley (2004) discussed the concept of a 'spoiled identity' among those who worked in specialist regimes, such as TCs, where regimes were

contrary to those seen in more traditional settings. Whilst officers see both the role they play and the aims of the open prison as different from that of the closed setting, elements of their work, which they recognise as distinct, such as a domestic and caretaker approach, can be seen across the wider prison estate (Crawley, 2004; Lindberg, 2005; Crawley and Crawley 2008; Arnold 2016). This indicates that the conflicts staff in open settings feel are not unique, as there is a degree of confused identity for staff across other types of prison establishment (Crawley, 2004). Yet I argue the specific nature of the physical and social milieu, the perceived differing nature of the work undertaken, the wider penal context in which such establishments operate, and the close ties to closed prisons mean these conflicts manifest themselves in more obvious ways in the open prison. Consequently, I not only extend the notion of spoiled identities to open prisons, but also expand it, providing a depth to understandings of how officers manage spoiled identities that has not been established previously.

My research found that staff in the open prison respond differently to the notion of a 'spoiled identity'. As with other aspects of prison work and adaptation, this is influenced by an officers' cultural orientation. Lindberg (2005) notes that officers need to value the work they do as this gives them a certain level of status. This was evident in my research through the ways officers went about re-legitimising their role in response to their 'spoiled identity'. In other distinct environments, such as the therapeutic setting, staff create different coping mechanisms to adapt to these changes (Genders and Players, 1995) and this has similarities with my argument about the open prison. I identified how the re-legitimation process involved both story-telling and an emphasis on the difference the work that officers undertake makes on the lives of prisoners going forward. Crawley (2004) identified how officers who work in more distinct settings, such as TCs or specialist wings, also managed their identity by focusing on the broader difference their role makes and also elements of storytelling. My findings build on this work by Crawley (2004),

identifying how officers in another distinct setting, the open prison use similar approaches to re-legitimise their work as observed in other distinct settings.

Finally in this section I move on to address my third area of enquiry where I explore key arguments related to the deployment of power and authority, in the open setting, to maintain control and order when there are few elements of physical security. In relation to this, there are aspects of distinction but also important areas where mechanisms of control remain similar to more traditional settings.

9.4 Deploying Power And Authority In The Open Prison

My third area of enquiry related to the deployment of authority and power in open prisons and asked the following questions: How do time and space, as methods of control influence the environment of the open prison? What role do they play in the deployment of power and authority and the maintaining of order and control? How do staff perceive this compared with more mainstream prison settings? My thesis establishes that there are clear distinctions in the way that power and authority are deployed in the open setting, as might be expected from the tendency to focus mainly on physical differences between them and closed institutions. Yet it was in relation to this area that my research uncovered elements of the open prison which are less distinct, and this reaffirms my argument about its close ties with more traditional penal establishments.

The deployment of power and authority in prison is much studied, but detailed consideration of how officers approached this and what influences these approaches in the open setting is mainly absent in existing literature, something this thesis addresses. As might be expected, I identify that

there is a strong reliance on the use of soft power techniques, with a specific focus on the use of time and space in differing ways to deploy authority and maintain control. These control features are not unique to the open setting (Sparks et al. 1999; Matthews, 1999; Crewe, 2011; Rawlinson, 2019) but there are two key distinct elements relating to them in open settings that my research demonstrates. These include the more extensive history of the deployment of soft power in open settings, something Crewe (2011) describes as a relatively recent development in the UK prison system. Whilst it could be argued that the use and reliance of soft power techniques in other more traditional prison settings lessens its distinctiveness in the open setting. I argue how officers perceive the distinct physical and social milieu afford them little option other than the use of such techniques. They do not have the opportunity to fall back on other ways to deploy power or maintain control as can be utilised in other, higher security, settings. Thus, making the level to which officers rely on these approaches distinct.

Less recognised, yet I argue a key element of distinctness, is my finding that the frequent extension of power and control beyond the prison boundary, which stems from the high use of ROTL which necessitates prison work to encompass the community and not merely the prison. Whilst it has been acknowledged that prison boundaries across various type of institutions are more permeable than previously acknowledged (Baer and Ravneberg, 2008; Turner, 2016), a key role of more traditional penal settings is to ensure the secure containment of prisoners within the prison boundary. My research demonstrates how individuals residing in the open prison face tight controls within the prison, but also when in the community attending work or home. I identify how leaving the prison boundary to attend work or home visits is something officers in the open setting see as a key part of life for prisoners in the open prison, this then happens frequently. Yet unlike being released at the end of a sentence, prisoners must return to the prison at night. During these times, prisoners remain subject to rules and regulations that other members of the

community are not, restricting their autonomy and presenting them with the threat of sanctions for breaches. This acts as an extension of the carceral boundary, as is also seen with establishments such as half-way houses (Allspach, 2010). Rarely, however, does this occur for other institutions on the prison continuum, thus does not routinely form part of prison officer work. This, I argue, not only extends the work of prison officers outside the boundary, but also limits the prison's capacity to support de-institutionalisation and resettlement, because prisoners remain within institutional control even when outside. For those released on life-licences such control never ends, as such, since they can be recalled to prison at any time (Padfield, 2012), although the probation service takes on the supervision of these inmates after release, not prison staff.

Additional elements of distinction were identified in my research, including staff perceptions that the greater availability of time and the freedom prisoners have over, using their time distinguished open and closed settings. Yet, whilst this is the case to a certain extent, my thesis demonstrates that increased levels of controls over prisoners' use of time and movement were still present in the open setting. My thesis also establishes that the use of time as a reward, whilst present in other prison settings (Matthews, 1999; Sparks et al. 1999), is much greater in the open setting and closely interlinked with space, since time outside the prison is at stake. The reward of unescorted ROTL, rarely an option in other prison settings, is perceived to have a significant impact on order and control in open prisons. The classic time-based punishment of confinement in a cell (Matthews, 1999) was not evident in my research, although the open prison retains its equivalent through the greater power of returning inmates to closed conditions which is more restrictive in many ways and, potentially a more effective threat for those on indeterminate or life sentences where any setback could delay release indefinitely. Whilst I have established that many elements of the open prison are distinct, the relationship it has with more traditional prison

settings is also important and I argue that the challenges this creates are central to understanding the open environment and the way staff work within it.

Other elements of more traditional regimes were also observed, including roll call, censorship of prisoners' mail, mandatory drug testing and the searching of prisoners and their cells. Whilst I show that staff perceive these techniques are utilised far less than in the closed setting, they remain an important part of an officer's work, further demonstrating the conflict between security and control and the primary focus of resettlement and maintaining open conditions. Yet, as noted by Jones and Cornes (1977), the use of such methods is not conducive to a more liberal regime and conflicts with the aims open prisons are trying to achieve. My findings show that staff responses to these contradictions differed depending on their cultural orientation. Some staff, generally those who were more prisoner-focused, felt the level of control over prisoners was still too great in the open setting and this hampered the creation of a normalised environment reflective of the community. Others, however, who tended to be more prison-focused, considered prisoners had too much power and autonomy which they perceived as leaving staff vulnerable. Balancing the distinct elements of the physical and social milieu, but also the reliance at times on more traditional methods of order and control, I argue further contribute to generation of a 'spoiled identity'.

Despite the social and physical distinctness of the open prison, it still operates as part of the broader penal system in the UK, sharing recognisable similarities with closed prisons. These similarities, I argue are most evident in the way power and authority are deployed. Jones and Cornes (1977) considered the open prison did not represent a 'total institution' as described by Goffman (1961) and, whilst I would not fundamentally disagree with that, my research indicates that underpinning the more relaxed approach to imprisonment, mechanisms of control, the use of soft power techniques observed in other penal settings and the importance of time and space

to these remain intrinsically similar to those in closed conditions. I argue that similarities are especially evident at night when the environment is more reflective of a closed prison. The use of physical controls such as, signage, and, to a lesser extent, locked doors, all of which are present in closed establishments were also observed, albeit at reduced frequency.

The first half of this final chapter has reaffirmed the key arguments I make in this thesis and identified the important original contributions to knowledge that I have made. Before drawing this thesis to a conclusion, I briefly explore the potentially wider implications of acknowledging the distinctness of the open prison environment on penal policy.

9.5 Broader Implications For Penal Policy

Here, I briefly consider the broader implications of my findings for penal policy. Essentially, I argue there are three ways in which the knowledge, in relation to the distinctness of the open setting, could be used to inform penal policy. First, I consider of the question of whether the use of open prisons should be expanded. The tensions between control and resettlement evident throughout the findings of this thesis, however, generate problems for work in open prisons which might make their expansion difficult. Consequently, I question whether there is a need to separate open prisons from the prison system more extensively. Even this, however, may not be enough to resolve such tensions. My final thoughts, then, turn to explore whether a re-orientation of the prison system more broadly is necessary to enable the ethos of the open prison to influence approaches to imprisonment generally. I also discuss the further research that might be necessary to assess these questions more completely.

9.5.1 Expanding The Use Of Open Prisons

Here I establish key areas of knowledge that my thesis contributes, if the expansion of open prisons is to be considered. Historically the right to early release or being moved to open prisons, is something prisoners are required to earn (Wiener, 1990), this remains part of the modern system. Even under the current risk-based assessment of prisoners, it is recognised that there are currently too few spaces in open prisons (Home Office, 2016), meaning prisoners who could benefit from being in open conditions do not. This lack of space and calls for increased use of open prisons has been evident at various points during the twentieth century (Mountbatten 1966; Expenditure Committee 1978; Woolf, 1991; The Prison Reform White Paper, 2016). Yet, the lack of research on open prisons means we know little about which distinct elements contribute to reducing recidivism or the damage caused by imprisonment. There remains a hesitancy about expanding the use of open prisons. My research did not explicitly explore how open prisons reduce recidivism, but it is an important area for further consideration. What is clear from my research, however, is that the combined elements of the distinct social and physical milieu lead to a different type of prison environment which can create different types of outcomes for prisoners and a different type of prison work for staff.

The careful selection of who enter open prisons and the power staff have, to remove those considered unsuitable, may be a key driver behind its achievements (Jones and Cornes, 1977). This is yet to be tested more fully with a broader spectrum of the prison population. The threat of return to harsher conditions has also been seen as a key element of control within such institutions both in this research and throughout history (McGowan, 1995); therefore, if the increased use of open prisons was to occur it is likely that more punitive options would need to remain available. This research does highlight how staff perceive the importance of time to work with prisoners, leading them to conclude they could not help short sentence prisoners in the

same way. Nor could they afford the same amount of time to prisoners should there be an increase in size or numbers without the associated increase in staff. Yet, this time to work with prisoners is often needed due to the levels of support required to de-institutionalise and resettle into the community. I, then, would argue that if research identifies that open prisons are intrinsically less damaging for prisoners, short sentence prisoners could likely be held here with few issues, as the support they need will likely be different. Acknowledging that the views of prisoners were not explored here this, would need to be addressed. There may be a further suggestion that, even if expanded, open prison might not be suitable for all, although again this is yet to be tested. If only a select few are suitable for open conditions, applying the broader learning from these distinct institutions across other settings is unlikely to yield the same results. Yet, as demonstrated in other countries, the use of more liberal regimes as a form of imprisonment more broadly can be successful (Pratt, 2008; Ugelvik, 2016).

9.5.2 Separating Open Prisons From The Traditional Penal Continuum

Rather than being part of the more traditional penal continuum, open prisons could be accepted as distinct establishments focused on resettlement, reintegration and de-institutionalisation more explicitly. If the distinctness of open prisons is to be enabled and embraced, thus further separating them from the wider prison system, my research has identified key areas of change. First, a more explicit acknowledgement in broader penal policy of the distinct aims and functions of the open prison setting is necessary. Despite the differing priorities and distinct ways of working in open prisons, there is surprisingly little penal policy developed directly to support them, an area I argue needs to be addressed. This thesis highlights how staff and management in the open setting often must find ways to adapt policy to enable them to undertake their work in a meaningful way. Consideration should, therefore, be given to developing policies that embrace and enable the distinctiveness of the open prison, allowing a focus on resettlement and

reintegration in ways that lessen the conflicts highlighted throughout this research. My research supports the argument first made by Jones and Cornes (1977) that the operation and aims of an open prison are so different that specific penal policy is required.

Secondly, the selection and training of staff to work in such settings needs to be more carefully considered. Whilst occupational culture can act and as an inhibitor in more liberal regimes, my research makes clear that within this, there are officers holding more prisoner-focused values who can adapt well to the distinct environments. However, the different approaches to work in the open setting are sufficiently distinct that specific training to support them is likely to be beneficial. Such institutions would perhaps not even need to be staff by prison officers, but rather a separate group of special trained staff. Currently, officers who work in closed or open conditions in England and Wales receive the same basic prison officer training. Prison officers in Nordic countries, where prisons are more welfare-focused, undergo rigorous specialist training to allow them to support prisoners (Ugelvik, 2016). Consideration needs to be given, therefore, to selecting and training staff that are more suited to the work undertaken in an open setting. My identification of cultural orientations could be developed to help assist with this. It should be noted, however, that training of prison officers for closed conditions also presents challenges, with Arnold (2008) finding that most officers felt that, whilst the training they received was interesting, a large majority of the job was not teachable and was learnt in post. Changing the training and type of staff recruited, therefore, is not enough to overcome the challenges faced. The issue of all training, therefore, probably needs consideration.

Traditional prison establishments can learn from the relationships, opportunities, and different regimes in the open setting. Such establishments can function and have little violence, support prisoners in ways that enable them to address the broader range of issues that played a part in

their offending and equip them with skills to lead a different life after leaving prison. There would, however, need to be a broader penal shift to enable this to occur in closed prisons. The success of open prisons relies on the more intimate setting in which, relationships can develop and staff have the time and resources to act in a more supportive way. This cannot be replicated on a large scale with large numbers of prisoners and few staff in institutions where the focus is on containment and security in such a physically overt and controlled way. There would need to be a reduction in prisoners' numbers, and a shift towards large scale penal reform which is the final element of the application of this research that I touch upon.

9.5.3 A Wider Reorientation Of The Penal System

Expanding open prisons and enabling their distinctiveness, whilst beneficial, will not remove the tension between their ethos and a wider more punitive penal system. This raises the question of whether a move to a greater focus on welfare and rehabilitation rather than punishment, as evident in Nordic countries (Pratt, 2008; Ugelvik, 2016), is necessary or could be achieved. This requires consideration of whether a re-orientation of the whole penal estate to reflect more closely the ethos of open prisons is desirable. This requires recognition of my findings that it is not only the physical containment aspects of such prisons but also their size, regimes and aims, as well as the work done within them, that make up the distinct nature of open settings. This thesis identifies that the use of ROTL and providing prisoners with increased responsibility is a key part of achieving compliance and de-institutionalising prisoners which sets the open prison apart from other types of penal establishment. Consideration could, therefore, be given to utilising ROTL, or elements of it, more widely across the prison estate. Liebling (2011) argues that creating more positive prison regimes is often challenging as this has been linked with issues around corruption and perceptions of environments being too liberal; therefore, a broader move away from risk

averse approaches to imprisonment would be needed which, I consider would need to come from a broader change in the penal system.

A shift in how imprisonment is approached and viewed, what prison is used for is one way to further the work that is being undertaken in open prison establishments. Looking at how prisons operate in the Nordic cluster not only provides a greater understanding of the day-to-day functioning of distinct penal establishments; the learning is wider than that Prisons in the Nordic cluster demonstrate a welfare-focused approach across the penal continuum. Thus, demonstrating how a more liberal approach to imprisonment can be applied on a wider scale. The focus on more liberal and relaxed regimes is the cornerstone of the whole penal system (Ugelvik, 2016); therefore, rather than as in the UK, establishments like open prison being seen as the exception, they are the starting point on which prisons are based. Much of the success of Nordic prisons is attributed to the smaller prison population, more comprehensive training for prison officers and the context in which they operate (Ugelvik, 2016). Achieving broader change across the wider prison estate and how imprisonment is viewed by wider society, then, requires a shift towards a welfare approach, not only in terms of prisons, but also welfare more generally. Yet the political and public support required to achieve such a shift in focus of the penal system is not currently present in the UK. If the use of imprisonment is reduced without a shift toward a more welfare-based approach to punishment there is a risk that the use of open prisons would decline, with these being those most likely to close rather than closed establishments.

9.6 Research Limitations

Whilst this thesis makes significant and original contributions to knowledge, the limitations to this and the broader applications of the findings should be acknowledged. This research took place at one site, with a relatively static staffing group. Whilst comparisons could be made, by staff, to

experiences in the closed setting, along with the vast amounts of literature that explores such establishments, the closed setting was not something that I observed. Therefore, whilst the perceived differences between the two settings are valid in terms of officers' perceptions and experiences, which aligns with my theoretical approach to knowledge creation, the differences found were not observed directly. Whilst the rich detail contributes a great deal to these little studied establishments, prisons and prison environments do vary, therefore further research into open prisons more generally would further add to the findings of this research. Understanding whether open prisons achieve their stated goals of resettlement and reintegration in the long term needs to be explored further, especially from a prisoner's perspective. A greater understanding of the way prisoners experience the open prison is an important complement to my contribution which is primarily focused on staff. The concept of de-institutionalisation, recognised by staff as an element of their work but unacknowledged officially, is a key area for further exploration. It is widely acknowledged that reducing reoffending requires a broad range of support for prisoners on release, such as appropriate accommodation, social support and employment (Connolly & Granfield, 2017; Revold, 2015; Woodall et al., 2013). These are also important prior to release and are key areas of focus for the open prison in its resettlement work. Further research on how these can be delivered within prisons is also necessary. Finally, this research took place with prison officers alone, prison officers' perceptions are at the heart of this research. Prisoners, however, are the individuals most impacted by the prison environment, yet for reasons established throughout, their perceptions and experiences were not part of this research. Understanding how prisoners experience the open prison and the distinctness that officers observe in both the physical and social milieu and the impact of this, or not, on their resettlement and reintegration into the community, would offer valuable additional insight.

9.7 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn together elements that establish the distinct social and physical milieu of the open prison, whilst demonstrating how this research sits within prison research more broadly. I returned to my three initial areas of enquiry and drew together the findings from the three data chapters demonstrating how this research has addressed the questions posed. How this research makes contributions to discussions of the conflicting aims of imprisonment, the challenges faced by distinct penal establishments and the impact this has on prison work are collated and examined. Also provided is a discussion of the novel contribution to the understanding and influence of prison officer culture in a distinct open prison setting. Such discussion demonstrates why the understanding of occupational culture in the context of the distinct nature of the open prison is important. This chapter is concluded with a discussion on the impact of acknowledging the implications of my findings for penal policy and imprisonment, including the expansion of open prisons, the separation of them from the wider penal system, as well as a wider re-orientation of the penal and welfare systems in the UK. Consideration was also given to the limitations of this research and areas for further enquiry.

This research has made an original and important contribution to knowledge in various ways. This thesis established the distinct physical and social milieu of the open prison exploring the ways in which officers adapt to this and how officers understand and undertake prison work in such settings. I establish how officers view the open prison as a distinct setting with distinct aims, to which they are required to adapt. Elements of this adaptation include acknowledging the prominence of different elements of prison work, including the focus on resettlement and de-institutionalisation, a core element of prison officer work not explicitly acknowledged. I also establish the need for officers to adapt to relationships in the open setting and how power and authority are deployed differently. Again, elements that have not been explicitly explored in

relation to the modern open prison. The relationship between culture, adaptation and an officer's occupational identity are overarching themes of discussion. My thesis establishes the interplay between distinctness, culture and adaptation in the open setting in a way not previously seen. Whilst my findings add to the argument for expanding the use of open prisons and adjusting penal policy to support elements their distinctiveness, further research is necessary before suggesting that open prisons, in their current format, are the way forward in terms of reducing recidivism or creating a more positive and less damaging penal environment. My thesis does, however, make a case for the importance of further research into open prisons and identifies several areas on which this should focus.

Based on my findings I suggest that the wider use of open prison, whilst acknowledging their distinctness is needed to enable open prisons to better support resettlement and reintegration. A wider re-orientation of the penal system, whilst desirable, would be more far-reaching and complex, resting on changes not only within the prison system but also in society more generally. Whether this can be achieved is questionable, but my research highlights the importance of learning more about open prisons as distinct penal establishments. Furthermore, it makes a case for greater recognition and accommodation of open prisons distinctive nature within the prison system, penal policy and society. Whilst much of the recent focus in penal reform has been on the expansion of the closed prison estate, the increased use of lengthy prison sentences, including life sentences (Prison Reform Trust, 2021), means the open prison and the work undertaken in these to successfully resettle and reintegrate prisoners becomes ever more important. This thesis acknowledges the challenges faced by open prisons when operating in the current penal environment but also demonstrates that the divergent approach from a more traditional prison environment can and does function.

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Appendix A – Participant materials

A study of prison officers in an open prison setting

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

A research study is being conducted at Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) by Naomi Clemons as part of her PhD thesis. Dr Maryse Tennant, Senior Lecturer at CCCU is a co-researcher.

Background

The purpose of this study is to understand, from the perspective of prison staff, how they view their role and its contributions to achieving the overall aims of imprisonment. It will also explore prison officer culture and the nature of the work undertaken by officers and staff at Standford Hill. This study has been approved within the University by the Faculty of Criminal Justice and the Social Research Ethics Committee as well as Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

What will you be required to do?

Participants will be asked to take part in an informal interview with the researcher of up to 20 minutes. Participants will also be asked if they are willing to participate in a more formal interview at a later date. With the permission of the participant, all interviews will be recorded using an audio recording device. The researcher will also note participant observations of day-to-day activities, participants will be asked express permission before observations are noted. There is no requirement to be observed after taking part in the interview, no participants will be observed without their consent.

To participate in this research, you must:

Be a serving member of Prison Service staff working at Standford Hill prison.

Procedures

You will be asked to take part in an initial informal interview, which will later be followed up by a more formal interview. Observations of day-to-day activities will also be made. There is no requirement to complete a more formal interview or allow observations to be recorded after the initial interview.

Feedback

Participants will be able to discuss the research with the researcher in person or via email throughout the research process. The data will form part of a PhD thesis, which will be published and accessible to read via the CCCU library. Participants are also able to request copies of interview transcripts should they wish to do so.

Confidentiality

All data and personal information will be stored securely within CCCU premises in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's own data protection requirements. Data can only be accessed by Naomi Clemons and Dr Maryse Tennant. The PhD examiners may also request to look at a sample of the data, this would be made anonymous. After completion of the study, all data will be made anonymous (i.e., all personal information associated with the data

will be removed). No words or statements will be attributed to individuals; however, quotations will be used in the final thesis paper. Participants will not be identifiable by these quotations. Data will be kept in accordance with University policy and destroyed after 5 years.

Dissemination of results

The results of this study will be used to write a PhD thesis which will be publishable and may lead to subsequent book or journal publication.

Deciding whether to participate

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation do not hesitate to contact me. Should you decide to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason. You can refuse to answer any of the questions posed by the researcher. If you take part in an initial interview, there is no requirement to take any further part in the study should you not wish to do so.

Any questions?

Please contact Naomi Clemons via email at naomi.clemons@canterbury.ac.uk or Dr Maryse Tennant via email at maryse.tennant@canterbury.ac.uk if you have any queries, concerns or wish to withdraw your data from this research

Thank you very much for your participation



CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: A study of prison officer culture in an open prison

Name of Researcher: Naomi Clemons

Contact details:

Address	Glebe House, Canterbury Christ Church University, North Holmes Road, Canterbury
Email:	naomi.clemons@canterbury.ac.uk

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions
2. I consent to the interviews with the researcher being recorded using an audio recording device
3. I consent to being observed by the researcher whilst undertaking my daily routine and understand that these observations will be recorded in a field diary by the researcher
4. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
5. I understand that any personal information that I provide to the researchers will be kept strictly confidential
6. I agree to take part in the above study

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature