

## Scotland

### Station House Media Unit (shmu)

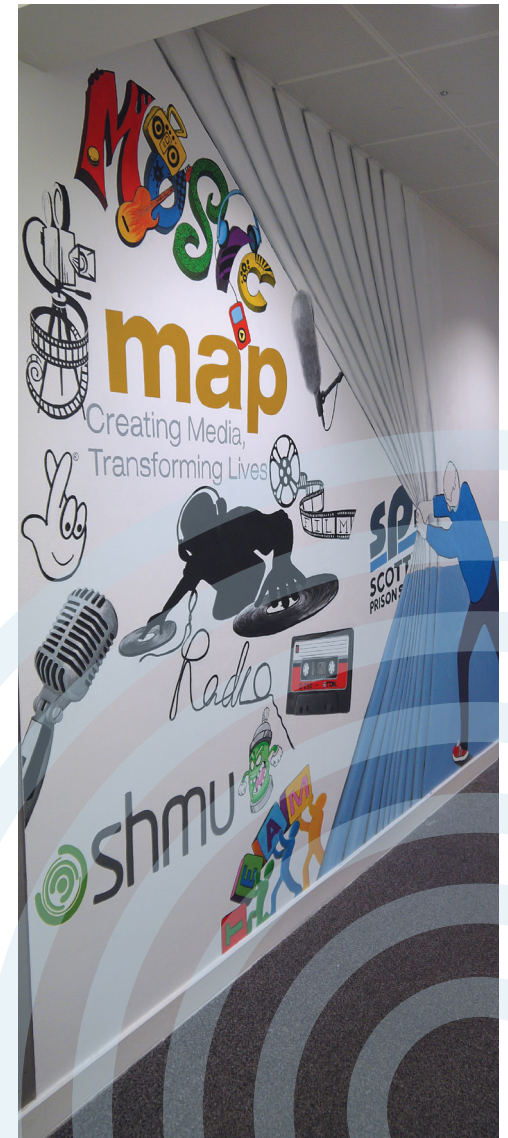
Station House Media Unit (shmu), established as a charity in 2003, is one of the core cultural organisations in Aberdeen, and is at the forefront of Community Media development in Scotland, supporting residents in the seven regeneration areas of the city in radio and video production, traditional and on-line publications, music production and digital inclusion.

The organisation also supports other disadvantaged communities, both geographic and communities of interest, with an employability and training arm and a programme for offenders, both pre- and post-release.

 **shmu**  
create • express • transform

We have been supporting programmes in prisons for over ten years and run a Creative Media Unit in HMP Grampian in North East Scotland, which includes a radio station (*Con Air*) which supports both adult male and female prisoners to produce and present their own shows which are broadcast through the prison's TV system in cells across the prison.

In addition to support within the prison, we also provide support through-the-gate and offer training and long-term volunteering opportunities within the community.



### Station House Media Unit:

- provides the first cross-platform, peer-led, Creative Media Unit (CMU) within a UK prison and is the only Scottish Prison to broadcast National Prison Radio.
- has supported 646 prisoners to take part in 2,500 sessions of radio, film, music and magazines and 143 prisoners to receive post-release support and engagement.
- has supported male prisoners, female prisoners, young offenders and protection prisoners to engage in accredited courses and have a voice through their prison radio.
- builds meaningful and sustained relationships with prisoners – allowing successful transitions back to the community and ongoing engagement and participation.
- creates employment opportunities for prisoners in the CMU as Peer Mentors and Media Assistants.
- gets the word out there – we have presented at multiple events, including social work and Scottish Prison Service conferences, and had two articles published in the *Inside Times*. Some of our prisoner films were also part of national campaigns to highlight key topics such as mental health and substance misuse.

### Some of our top achievements:

- 79 full SQA awards (level 5) & 45 partial SQAs (level 5);
- 42 Koestler Awards, including 3 platinum awards;
- 7,222 pre-release volunteering hours;
- 1,454 hours of prison radio;
- 823 original songs;
- 48 films & 10 TV shows; and
- 5 magazines producing 3000 copies.

### A case study

Ali started attending the Creative Media Unit to continue her passion for music. She quickly became involved in other media activities, taking part in film and radio training. This led to having her own weekly radio show and producing a number of films. She gained her media qualifications and two platinum Koestler Awards.

Ali worked with our support team to plan for her release and continued engaging with this support in the community. Ali worked hard with her supports from shmu and other agencies to address issues relating to her offending and to build a positive life for herself.

She faced many challenges and had setbacks, but she persevered and utilised the support she had and the creative opportunities available at shmu.

Ali took part in groups and continued to create radio shows. She took on the role of peer mentoring others on their release and is an active representative of shmu, taking part in meetings and events and working with us on the overall development of Adult Services and our prison work.

Ali is settled in her life; she engages with all her support networks and is pursuing her own business as well as continuing her peer mentoring. Ali still has issues she needs to manage and her own struggles, but she is thriving in the life she has created for herself.

