

For immediate release – 23 February, 2015

Mark Johnson to be Awarded Member of British Empire

Mark Johnson is honoured in the New Year Honours List 2015 for his services to Vulnerable People through User Voice; receiving a Member of the British Empire, Civil Member (MBE) on the 24th of February 2015 at Buckingham Palace.

Mark endured severe mental and physical abuse from his father, which led to a lifestyle of crime, drugs and alcohol. Mark overcame this lifestyle and went on to write a best-selling memoir, *Wasted* and is considered to be a prominent social commentator. In 2009 he founded the charity User Voice, which now has regional offices across England and reaches 1/3 of the people involved in the criminal justice system.

In 2011, the London Probation Trust commissioned User Voice Community Councils in four London Boroughs. Today, they have councils covering the whole of London and have also set up the first ever Women's Council. In addition to this they have had representatives speak at the Home Affairs Committee and London Assembly. Recently,

This passion to provide a voice for prisoners and former offenders through his charity User Voice, now realised as the User Voice Prison Councils and User Voice Probation Councils, has led to aiding prisons and probation agencies across the country work with other former offenders to reduce re-offending.

When asked about this Honour, Mark went on to say, "I see this MBE as a big deal, it shows that somebody like me can be seen as a contributor to society rather than a drain."

Mark's movement inspires these offender groups and the Criminal Justice staff that work with them, to come together for a safer Britain.

[New Year Honours List 2015](#)

Ends

For more information, please contact:

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Notes for editors

1. <http://www.uservoice.org/about-us/our-services/> - What we do, what Prison and Probation councils are.
2. <https://www.littlebrown.co.uk/books/detail.page?isbn=9780751539738> – *Wasted* Publisher

3. <http://www.uservice.org/about-us/our-services/councils/lpt-council-pilot/> - London probation Community Councils
4. <http://www.uservice.org/about-us/no-6/> - A new prison-leavers' drop-in centre by Pentonville Prison.

ONLY OFFENDERS CAN STOP RE-OFFENDING