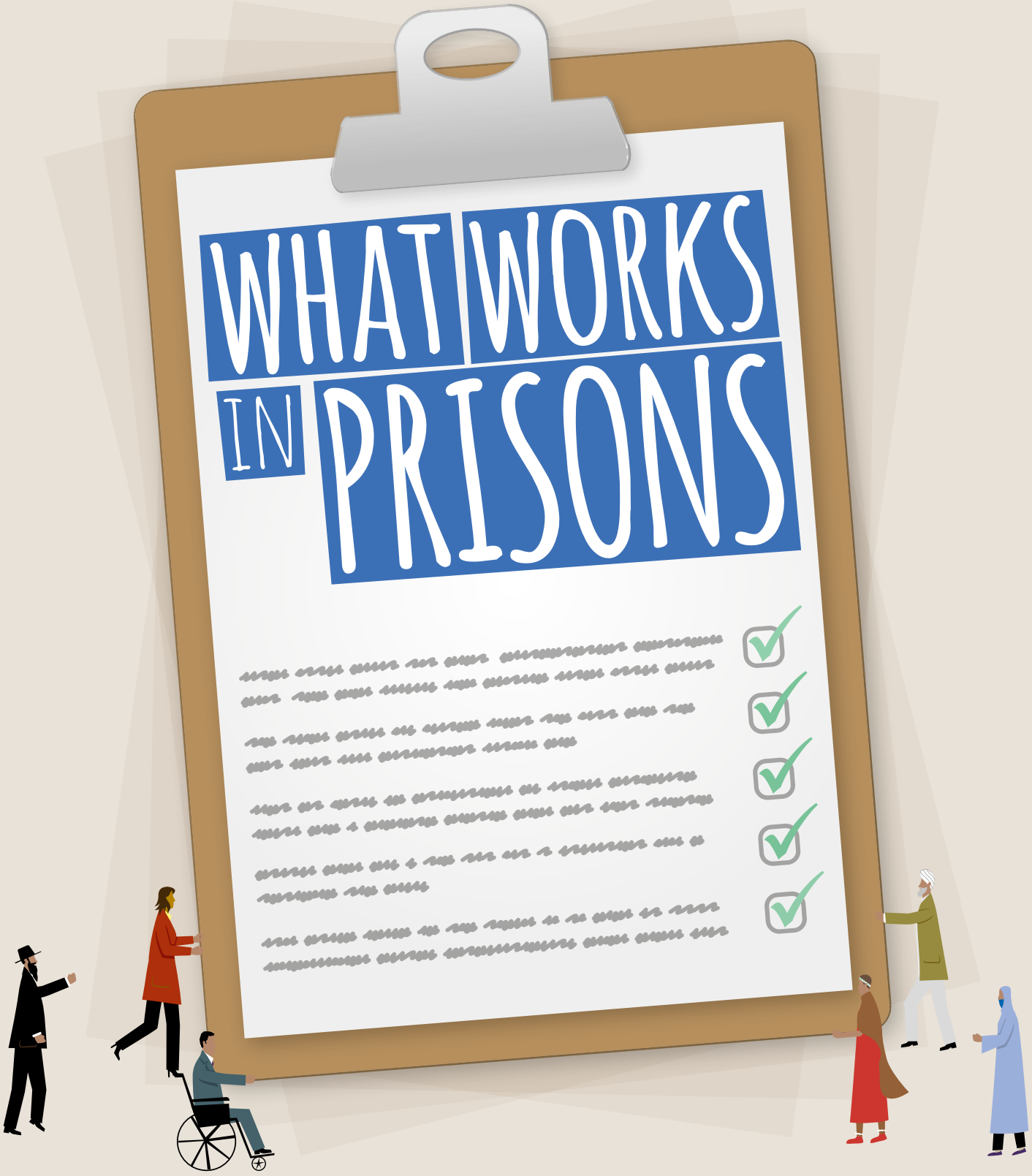
appg all-party parliamentary group faith and society

FaithAction



Contributions of the Faith and Voluntary Sector to Prisoners and their Families

FaithAction, 2018

This report was researched and funded by FaithAction.

This is not an official publication of the House of Commons or the House of Lords. It has not been approved by either House or its committees. All-Party Parliamentary Groups are informal groups of Members of both Houses with a common interest in particular issues. The views expressed in this report are those of the group.

About FaithAction

FaithAction is a national network of faith and community-based organisations involved in social action. We empower these organisations by offering support, advice and training – we help the 'doers' do. We also have a key role in facilitating partnerships, sharing good practice between organisations and between sectors, and acting as a connector between government and grassroots organisations. We work to highlight the contribution that faith-based organisations are making to communities up and down the country. We know that the extent and impact of this work, and the reach of faith-based organisations into communities that are often marginalised, mean that faith is too significant to ignore. Find out more at www.faithaction.net.

About the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society

The APPG on Faith and Society is a cross-party group of MPs and peers, chaired by the Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP, who work together to highlight the contribution to society by faith-based organisations, to identify best practice, and to promote understanding of the groups providing innovative solutions around the country. FaithAction acts as the secretariat for the group.

With the support of FaithAction, the APPG on Faith and Society has drafted the Faith Covenant, a joint commitment between faith groups and local authorities to a set of principles that guide engagement, aim to remove the mistrust faith groups can face, and promote open and practical working on all levels.

You can learn more about the APPG on Faith and Society at www.faithandsociety.org.

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Contents

Executive Summary 5

Services for Families of Offenders 9

- Current provision of faith-based organisations working with families of offenders 10
- Current provision of non-faith organisations working with families of offenders 15
- Successes in provision of services to families of offenders 17
- Limitations faced in providing services to families of offenders 19

Mentoring and Skills Courses for Offenders and Ex-Offenders 21

- Faith-based organisations providing mentoring and skills development to offenders and ex-offenders 22
- Non-faith organisations providing mentoring and skills development to offenders and ex-offenders 26
- Successes in provision of mentoring and skills to offenders 31
- Challenges faced in delivering mentoring and skills courses 33

Accommodation Support for Offenders and Ex-Offenders 35

- Faith-based organisations and their work in accommodation services 35
- Non-faith organisations and their work in accommodation services 37
- Successes of provision of accommodation services 38
- Challenges faced in the provision of accommodation services 38

Chaplaincy 39

- Faith-based organisations that deliver chaplaincy services 39
- Non-faith organisations that deliver chaplaincy services 45
- Successes of chaplaincy provision 46
- Challenges faced by prison chaplaincy services 48

Services that Support Young Offenders 51

- Faith organisations and their work with young offenders 51
- Non-faith organisations and their work with young offenders 53
- Successes in providing support to young offenders 54
- Challenges faced by organisations supporting young offenders 55

Services that Support Older People in Prison 57

- Non-faith organisations that support older people 57
- Successes of organisations working with older prisoners 60
- Challenges faced by organisations working with older prisoners 60

Conclusion 61

Executive Summary

This report identifies the following key findings about the provision of faith-based and non-faith organisations within the prison service.

Faith-based organisations often provide specific support for targeted groups of prisoners. Non-faith organisations also play a key role in ensuring the needs of these groups are addressed

Faith-based organisations often run programmes that focus on the needs of specific prisoner groups such as older prisoners, veterans, young offenders and mothers with babies. For example, the Christian organisation Reflex works with young offenders and their bespoke interventions such as music workshops have seen great success in improving young offenders' skills and confidence.

Non-faith organisations Age UK and Recoop have identified the need for major changes to systems in prisons to ensure that older prisoners receive the support services they need. The current lack of focus on older prisoners has led to some individuals falling through the gaps and being without the support they need to face life outside prison. A focus on services for younger offenders to prevent reoffending has resulted in this imbalance in the system.

Faith-based organisations offer spiritual and pastoral support to prisoners that is open to all

Chaplaincy services provide a lifeline to individuals facing issues and struggles while in prison. Faith-based organisations have a unique role in providing committed and compassionate staff and volunteers to deliver chaplaincy. The Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network has recently developed its own pastoral services in prisons and the fact that non-faith organisations are recognising the importance of chaplaincy further demonstrates its value to prisoners.

Courses such as the Alpha Course give prisoners opportunities to access spirituality in a group context that is removed from the routine of prison life. Its value is demonstrated in its popularity amongst prisoners and the fact that it is used by multiple Christian organisations in prisons nationally.

Faith-based organisations often provide a holistic approach to prisoner support

Faith-based organisations such as Spurgeons provide a wide range of services to benefit individual prisoners. Case studies illustrate that providing packages of care that include one-to-one mentoring, skills training and support with issues such as accommodation result in positive outcomes for ex-offenders.

Both faith-based and non-faith organisations are keen to share best practice and use existing models of support

Many organisations use projects that have been piloted successfully by other groups, or integrate elements of other organisations' provision into their own services. Partnership delivery is commonplace and the existence of networks to disseminate best practice demonstrates the commitment of organisations to find ways of working that most benefit prisoners.

Faith-based organisations are innovative in their approach to supporting prisoners

Many organisations are committed to finding innovative solutions to issues they see in the prison service. The Catholic organisation Pact has been committed over many years to developing child-focused visitor centres. This is an example of the willingness and drive of faith-based organisations to find better ways to support prisoners and the prison and probation services.

Non-faith organisations also use innovative approaches to support prisoners, for example, Age UK's involvement of older offenders as volunteers in prison coffee bars to enable them to gain skills and socialise.

Voluntary organisations have sustainable banks of committed volunteers

Volunteers form a willing, motivated and flexible resource to provide care and support at times and in places that are out of the reach of statutory services. Prisoners see volunteers who care in a different way from those who are paid to provide a service. Faith-based organisations are often able to recruit large numbers of volunteers due to their links to faith communities.

The support of prison governors and staff is critical in determining the success of prison-based programmes

Faith-based organisations report that the best programmes of prisoner support are delivered with the full backing of the prison governor, management and staff.

Umbrella organisation Clinks recently carried out a survey among prison staff as part of their report on *Valuing Volunteers*[1]. Staff reported that prisons experience a range of benefits as a result of volunteer involvement, additional to the extra capacity provided by volunteer roles. Respondents referred to a more positive atmosphere and the creation of a trusting environment with less of a 'them and us' feel. This demonstrates the value that many prison staff members place on organisations working within prisons.

Faith-based and non-faith organisations also play an important role in training staff in how to work with prisoners with specific needs.

Faith-based organisations also play an important role in highlighting problems within the prison system. For example, the Network of Sikh Organisations has identified that prisons often fail to communicate with the relevant organisation when a prisoner has need of Sikh chaplaincy, meaning some prisoners may fail to receive the support they are entitled to.

Faith-based organisations save the taxpayer money

It is very difficult to put a figure on the value of services being delivered by faith-based organisations. However, some work has been done to evaluate the cost-savings made by particular projects. For example, the New Economics Foundation found that Pact's Family Welfare Programme saved the taxpayer £11 for every £1 invested.[2]

Many faith-based organisations have difficulties measuring the impact of their services. This is a major obstacle in demonstrating the value of these organisations to the prison service. However, the Community Chaplaincy Association has developed a database system to help organisations record data and measure the impact of their provision. The question was raised as to whether reoffending should be the focus of impact assessment for services such as chaplaincy, when preventing further criminality is not their sole focus.

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[1] 'Valuing volunteering in prison: A review of volunteer involvement in prisons', July 2016, published by Clinks, found at http://www.clinks.org/resources-reports/valuing-volunteers-prison-review-volunteer-involvement-prisons, accessed 17/07/16

[2] 'Building Stronger Families', found at http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/our-services/relationship-and-parenting-courses/building-stronger-families, accessed on 14/08/16

The report that follows considers the following kinds of provision:

- Services for families of offenders
- Mentoring and skills courses for offenders and ex-offenders
- Accommodation support for offenders and ex-offenders
- Chaplaincy
- Services that support young offenders
- Services that support older people in prison

For each category, examples are given of services provided by both faith-based and non-faith organisations. Based on the information from these groups, features of good practice are identified, illustrated with individual case studies. Where there is evaluation evidence to support the success of the services, this is also summarised, and the main challenges faced by the organisations are highlighted. While the report does not set out to be a comprehensive survey of provision, it provides a snapshot of what is currently working to support those within the prison system.

Services for Families of Offenders

It is estimated that every year in England and Wales around 200,000 children experience having a parent in prison.[3] More than 17,000 children were separated from their mothers by imprisonment in 2010[4] and 35,000 children experienced the incarceration of a sibling.[5] Families of offenders are often left to cope with the impact of a missing family member on their own. When a family member is taken into custody, it is not just their life that is changed, but the rest of the family is left without a mother, father, partner, brother or sister. Often families of offenders feel stigmatised and isolated in the community, not able to talk to anyone about the practical problems they face due to the negative perceptions attached to having a family member in prison.

However, intervention that involves the families of offenders can be an important strategy in reducing reoffending rates. Positive family relationships often mean a strong support system is available to prisoners, vital in helping them overcome issues they will face on release. For example, the likelihood of reoffending is reduced by 39% when family ties are maintained in prison.[6] Those prisoners being visited by a partner or family member have a 52% reoffending rate as compared to 70% for those who do not.[7] These statistics have been published by the Ministry of Justice and clearly emphasise the importance of prisoners' families in the rehabilitation process.

Prison can be a difficult place to build these relationships, so families and voluntary organisations working with them want the government to recognise their importance in helping prisoners to stop reoffending. Helping offenders develop strong relationships with their families through family day initiatives and children-parent interaction can arguably make a huge difference for offenders and their families. Faith-based organisations and non-faith voluntary organisations can play a key role in providing support and services to make life easier for the families of prisoners. They are working to improve prison visits and support children who are dealing with the reality of a parent in prison.

Many children of prisoners feel isolated and alone. With the stigma attached to having a parent in prison they can often feel like they can't talk to anyone for fear of being shamed or bullied. This can lead to behaviour and attainment issues at school, mental health problems and behaviours whic, at their most extreme, can ultimately lead some children into prison if steps are not taken to support them.

[3] Ministry of Justice Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, March 2012, Kim Williams, Vea Papadopoulou and Natalie Booth, found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278837/prisoners-childhood-family-backgrounds.pdf, accessed 10/08/16

[4] Wilks-Wiffen, S. (2011) Voice of a Child, London: Howard League for Penal Reform, found at http://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/The-Voice-of-a-Child-Howard-League-UN-CRC-DGD-submission-August-2011.pdf, accessed on 16/08.16

[5] Meek, R. (2006) when big brother goes inside: the experiences of younger siblings of young men in prison, London, GB: Howard League for Penal Reform, found at: http://howardleague.org/publications/?keyword=&search=1&subject=12, accessed on 16/08/16

[6] Ministry of Justice and Department for Children, Schools and Families Children of Offenders Review. June 2007, found at http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http:/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/think_families/offenders_review_080110.pdf, accessed on 14/08/16

[7] Ibid

Current provision of faith-based organisations working with families of offenders

Pact

Pact is a Catholic organisation that supports prisoners and families to make a fresh start. They aim to minimise the struggle that prisoners face when reentering the community. They help prisoners sustain contact and develop positive relationships with their families from the courts to release. They also look to help prisoners and their families after release, so that prisoners are supported and less likely to reoffend. Pact also focuses on helping prisoners at risk of suicide and self-harm.

Current services and programmes:

Visitors' Centres and play schemes

Pact runs Visitors' Centres in several areas such as Bristol, Nottingham and Whatton. These Centres provide friendly, well-stocked play areas with resources such as books, crafts and toys. They also provide trained volunteers to work with visiting children and families and run Play Scheme projects in some prisons. Pact actively campaigns for the establishment of child-friendly Visitors' Centres in every prison.

Information for families

Pact provides useful practical information about prison visits for families on their website.

Pact Lunch

Pact Lunch is a catering service in prison visiting halls and centres. These catering services are run as a social enterprise and aim to help prisoners maintain a bond with their family through a sit down meal.

One-to-one mentoring

Pact provides a one-to-one mentoring service for children and young people aged 7-17 who are struggling with a family member's imprisonment. The system is flexible and mentoring can take place inside or outside of school hours. Mentees can also take part in group activity sessions to share experiences and support one another.

Parenting and relationship courses

Building Bridges is an evidence-based course that supports young people in prison and their parents and carers. It consists of four sessions run over four weeks and aims to strengthen the parent/carer relationship and prepare both people for the issues they may face once the young person leaves prison. Each session includes lunch together and usually runs over four hours, so that each parent and child can have time together to develop their relationship. The sessions cover themes such as communication, resolving conflict and forgiveness.

Inside Stories is a book sharing and book gifting initiative developed to encourage prisoners to share reading with their children. The programme aims to strengthen parent and child relationships and literacy skills. It also aims to establish the expectation that all prisons should have a children's book section in the prison library, to encourage prisoners to read with their children.

Time to Connect is a course focusing on the impact of prison on offenders' children and the importance of being a good parent. It can be run in a short amount of time, meaning it is accessible for prisoners serving short sentences.

Building Stronger Families is one of Pact's most successful courses. Run over six sessions, this course aims to strengthen a prisoner's relationship with their partner and reduce the risk of couples breaking up. This in turn makes prisoners less likely to reoffend once released. This course has had over 1,800 participants across the UK.[8]

[8] 'Building Stronger Families', found at https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/building-stronger-families, accessed on 14/08/16

Establishing good practice

Pact has seen success in its Visitor Centres in HMP Wandsworth and HMP Holloway and is working to advise the government on good practice.

Spurgeons

Spurgeons is a Christian charity that supports and serves disadvantaged and vulnerable children. Spurgeons estimates that children of prisoners are three times more likely to develop behavioural problems and twice more likely to develop anti-social or delinquent behaviour.[9] They aim to support families to make sure that the cycle of imprisonment doesn't continue for the offender or their family.

Current services and programmes:

Crisis support

Spurgeons works with the police, schools, social workers and offending teams to provide help and support to families in crisis over a family member entering custody. They provide one-to-one support for more than 1,350 high-need families and supervised support to over 10,000 children who are visiting a loved one in custody.[10]

Visitor Centres

Spurgeons are helping to develop child-focused Visitor Centres in London prisons, ensuring that children can have comfortable visits to family members. They offer play resources and work with prison staff to help create a friendly atmosphere for children.

One-to-one mentoring

Spurgeons has a flexible mentoring service for children of prisoners, in which the child can decide where and when they feel most comfortable receiving this support. They provide this mentoring in prison, in school or outside of school.

Prison visits booking service

Spurgeons is supporting HM Prison Service in the launch of their new prison visits booking service. This will offer a quicker, easier and more convenient online system for visitors and prison booking staff. Although this system has not yet been tested, it is likely to make visiting easier for families.

Family days

Spurgeons works with other organisations to deliver an average of 40 family days a year across the London Prison Service. Activities are provided for children and their parents to take part in together such as creative writing, reading or drawing. 'Of 398 families with children we asked during July to September 2014, 37% had previously attended a Family Day and 89% of these reported a positive impact on the family relationship as a result.'[11]

Support for young offenders

'Break the Cycle' is a specialist support programme for young offenders both inside and outside of prison. The programme helps young offenders improve the relationship they have with their families to decrease the likelihood of reoffending. The programme focuses on helping young offenders realise the impact of their crimes on their families.

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[9] 'Families and Criminal Justice', found at https://www.spurgeons.org/what-we-do/families-criminal-justice, accessed on 15/08/16

[10] 'Supporting Children with a parent in prison, A review of the London Prisons Visiting Service: 2014', found at https://www.spurgeons.org/download_file/force/127/238, accessed on 15/08/16

[11] 'Supporting Children with a parent in prison, A review of the London Prisons Visiting Service: 2014' found at https://www.spurgeons.org/download_file/force/127/238, accessed on 15/08/16

Partnership work

Spurgeons works with churches, faith-based organisations and community chaplaincy teams in prisons such as HMP Wandsworth and HMP Wormwood Scrubs to raise awareness of the impact of imprisonment on prisoners and their children and families. They signpost families to different services they may need and work alongside other organisations to improve and provide services such as family days and family support sessions.

Prison Fellowship

Prison Fellowship is a Christian charity providing practical help to prisoners and their families. They run a range of programmes to help support offenders in prison and as part of these services they focus on helping prisoners develop more positive relationships with their families.

Current services and programmes:

Angel Tree gifting programme

Prison Fellowship runs a programme called Angel Tree that provides a way for prisoners to give Christmas presents to their children. Local Prison Fellowship groups and churches raise money and collect donations to help buy and deliver the Christmas presents. The charity attach a personal message from the parent to the child and send the present to the child. This is beneficial for both the parent and child.

One parent commented on the impact the Christmas gift had on her child:

"She was at home when the parcel arrived and so was very excited. She ran around hugging the parcel shouting, 'It's from my Daddy!' The present itself was just what she wanted. However, the look on her face and sheer joy I will never forget. I had never heard of 'Angel Tree,' but you are truly wonderful people." [12]

Family days

Prison Fellowship also runs Family Days which allow parents in prison to spend a full day with their children. It involves activities for parents and children to take part in together such as creative tasks or reading a book. This programme is running across 80 prisons in the UK.

Partnership working

Prison Fellowship supports the organisation Reflex to provide education programmes for young people in prison. They recruit and train hundreds of volunteers to assist in this provision.

They also have a partnership with Mothers' Union to increase the use of the 'Angel Tree' programme in prisons. They work to provide more services for families, such as Family Days.

Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union is a faith-based organisation which works in 112 prisons including fourteen women's prisons and three mother and baby units. Mothers' Union works to improve services for children who are living in prison with their mothers. They also work with family members in both male and female prisons.

Current services and programmes:

Parent groups

Parent groups help improve prisoners' confidence in their abilities to provide care for their families. If a prisoner believes they can care for their family, it makes the prospect of family life after prison less daunting.

[12] 'Angel Tree', found at http://www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/what-we-do/angel-tree/, accessed on 09/08/16

Mothers' Union groups in prisons
Many Mothers' Union groups exist inside prisons, providing craft and other activities for prisoners to undertake with their children.

Alpha Course
Mothers' Union helps run the Alpha Course which offers prisoners the opportunity to develop faith and learn about Christian teachings on morality and taking responsibility.

Partnership working
Mothers' Union is involved in Family Days and the Angel Tree programme run by Prison Fellowship. The Family Days programme allows offenders to put their skills from the parenting workshops into action and develop relationships with their children.

Mothers' Union also works with the Prison Service to advise on how they can create better visitors centres. They donate toys and books for children to use.

Mothers' Union works in partnership with communities and churches on a local level. They train up volunteers to help provide services in prisons.

Barnardo's
Barnardo's is a faith-based charity which supports young people facing problems and issues and their families. According to research that Barnardo's carried out, children with a parent in prison are twice as likely to experience conduct and mental health problems and are less likely to do well in school. They are also three times more likely to be involved in offending. Their research also found that 65% of boys with a convicted father will go on to offend themselves.[13]

Current services and programmes:

Advocacy
In a report called 'On the Outside', Barnardo's called for the government to appoint a minister to have responsibility for the children of prisoners, identify children of prisoners and ensure that adequate childcare is in place from when the parent is sentenced.[14] Barnardo's argue that there needs to be a cross-departmental implementation by the Ministry of Justice and the education system to support children who may be vulnerable and isolated.

The Barnado's report 'Locked Out' reinforces the idea that prison visits for families need to be improved. The report suggests that visits should be viewed as a positive tool to stop prisoners reoffending.[15] The report identifies that prisons can be depressing and uncomfortable places and should be made more child. It also suggests that prisons should do more to help prisoners develop positive relationships with their children.

Information hub (I-HOP)
From April 2013 to March 2015, the Department for Education funded Barnardo's and the organisation Partners of Prisoners (POPS) to run a programme called I-HOP. I-HOP is an information hub for professionals which provides a variety of resources, training and advice to help to aid them in their work with prisoners' families. The I-HOP directory is constantly being updated and contains a range of resources, including research, best practice examples, policy frameworks, events and training programmes. All the resources for professionals on the I-HOP directory are reviewed using a Quality Assessment Tool.

[13] 'Children affected by parental imprisonment', found at http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/children_of_prisoners.htm), accessed on 21/08/16

[14] 'On the Outside: identifying and supporting children with parents in prison', found at https://www.barnardos.org.uk/on-the-outside.pdf, accessed on 21/08/16

[15] Locked Out: 'Children's experiences of visiting a parent in prison', Jane Evans, 2015, found at http://www.barnardos.org.uk/locked-out-report.pdf, accessed on 21/08/16

Training for professionals working with children of offenders

Barnardo's runs training sessions and workshops focused around children affected by parental offending in the Midlands and South West. These courses raise awareness about the impact of parental offending and provide practical skills and knowledge to professionals delivering services to the young people affected.

Parenting support and mentoring

Barnardo's provides support sessions for parents and carers of young offenders. They offer intensive mentoring and advice on how parents can provide their children with the support they need when released. A parent commented that the Barnardo's programme had made a big impact on the relationship between her and her children: "My life and that of my children changed 100%, we now work together on problems, we talk instead of shouting. The children know what is acceptable and the consequences of doing things they know are wrong."[16]

[16] 'Children affected by parental imprisonment', found at http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/children_of_prisoners.htm), accessed on 21/08/16

Current provision of non-faith organisations working with families of offenders

Partners of Prisoners

Partners of Prisoners (POPS) helps families cope with the stress and isolation that they suffer as a 'hidden group' who are often labelled as 'guilty by association'. They aim to provide appropriate support at every stage of the criminal justice system and their services are focused on a 'continuum of care'.

Current services and programmes:

'Think Family' approach

The 'Think Family' approach developed by POPS encourages adults' and children's services to work together more closely to support the needs of whole families. 'Think Family' meetings engage senior managers from across prison departments to develop a wide-ranging strategy to address the needs of families at all levels. Equality and diversity are considered in relation to every intervention or service delivered.

Visitor Centres

POPS manages eleven prison Visitor Centres across the North West. The centres help address issues faced by families both inside prison and in the community. POPS calls this the 'inside out model' as it encourages better engagement with the community outside the prison walls.

Family Forums

POPS has set up Family Forums to enable prisoners' family members to meet with senior figures within individual prisons, such as the governor and department heads. These Family Forums provide an opportunity to discuss issues surrounding the visiting experience. Forums can vary from 10 to 15 members and represent the diversity of visitors. They help families understand the prison processes and procedures. One Forum member said, "I never thought for a minute I'd meet a governor of a prison. I also wouldn't have believed that my input could have altered the information displayed on a visiting order about ID to make it consistent with the information being asked of the booking in staff."[17]

Partnership working

POPS works with Pact, Prison Fellowship and Mother's Union to help run and facilitate Family Days for prisoners and their families. POPS has relationship link workers who support prisoners in custody who require help in transitioning back into the community. These workers utilise family contact where possible.

POPS worked with Barnardo's to set up I-HOP, an information hub for professionals supporting and working with prisoners' families.

POPS works with Citizen's Advice and Homestart to ensure families can access the support they need.

[17] 'Family Forums', found at http://www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk/your-voice/family-forums/, accessed on 20/08/16

Action for Prisoners' and Offenders' Families

Action for Prisoners' and Offenders' Families (APOF) provides resources and support for families of prisoners and professionals working with them. APOF merged with the organisation Family Lives in 2014. They believe that families should be actively engaged and involved in the prisoner's progression through their sentence from induction to release.

Current services and programmes:

National Offenders' Families Helpline

The National Offenders' Families Helpline is a free service for prisoner's families, run by APOF. It provides advice and support for families on aspects of arrest, going to court and prison. It also gives information on the services available to offenders once they have been released.

There is an accompanying website providing resources for families. The information is accessible for all families of prisoners as all of the information can be translated upon request. One family member commented, "Just spent hours trying to find some answers and your site has done it all in 5 minutes. So much useful information in clear, easy to follow detail. I never thought we would be in this situation, so thank you for helping."[18]

Training courses for professionals working with families of offenders

'Hidden Sentence' is a well-known training course that has been developed for professionals working with prisoners' families, including children's centre workers, troubled family workers, school staff, play workers, health visitors and family intervention teams. The course also aims to improve the understanding of workers in the prison service about the needs of families.

Hidden Sentence training has received very positive feedback. Feedback from the most recent 60 delegates was as follows[19]:

97% rated it very successful in improving understanding of the impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families.

100% rated it very successful in improving their understanding of the prison system and its effect on families.

[18] National Offenders' Families Helpline Website, found at: http://www.offendersfamilieshelpline.org/, accessed on 19/08/16

[19] 'Hidden Sentence', found at: http://www.parentinguk.org/our-work/training/hidden-sentence/, accessed on 28/08/16

Successes in provision of services to families of offenders

The practices that are thought to work well in providing support to prisoners' families are:

- Providing friendly, child-centred visitor centres
- Family days and initiatives within prisons to strengthen relationships between parents and children
- One-to-one mentoring support for children of offenders
- Courses to strengthen prisoners' relationships with their families and improve parenting skills
- Encouraging prison services to look positively towards families as tools to prevent reoffending
- Organisations working in partnership to provide services and links to others provision

Case studies

One story[20] highlights the impact of the work that Spurgeons carries out and the importance of strengthening relationships between families and offenders. During a Family Day visit at HMP Wandsworth, Spurgeons staff noticed that 14 year old Jade*, visiting her imprisoned father Mark*, was sitting with him crying and obviously in distress. Staff mentioned to Jade's mother Carol* that she seemed upset and asked how things were going. Carol confided that the family was having a difficult time. Jade was upset and struggling to cope emotionally with her dad being in prison and her school work was really suffering. Carol had asked the school for help, but they seemed unable to do anything for them. Staff checked which school Jade attended and recognised that it was one linked to another Spurgeons service in the local community. Members of the service had been invited to assist on the Family Day as part of joint partnership work. The manager of the diversionary activities service spoke with Jade and Carol about their situation and took their details as a referral, arranging for the link worker based at Jade's school to visit them and put an appropriate support plan in place. Carol was extremely grateful for the intervention and told Spurgeons that although she had been asking for help since Mark was taken to prison, this was the first time anyone had been able to offer the family any support for their situation.

*These are cover names to protect identities.

Joseph's story[21] reveals the impact of the services Pact provides on prisoners and their families. Joseph was sentenced to fifteen years in prison because of an armed robbery he took part in. Before his arrest he failed school and joined a London gang. His mum was at a loss and felt powerless and unsure about what to do. Joseph admitted in prison that he had a drug problem and was depressed. Because of this depression, Joseph told his mum he never wanted to see her again. Sandra, his mum, didn't know what to do and came into contact with Pact. Through joining a peer support group she was connected to a Pact family engagement worker in the prison. This worker talked to Joseph about how he was feeling and how much his mum wanted to see him again. The worker helped arrange another visit for Joseph and his mum and they are now working together to strengthen their relationship. Joseph is no longer on suicide watch and his mum pays him regular visits. Sandra is coping much better with the separation now she knows her son is being cared for and she is being supported by the peer support group. Joseph is being supported and is strengthening his relationship with his mother to help him get through his sentence.

[20] 'Supporting Children with a parent in prison, A review of the London Prisons Visiting Service: 2014' found at https://www.spurgeons.org/download_file/force/127/238, accessed on 15/08/16

[21] 'Pact Impact Report 2014/15', found at https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/impact-report, accessed on 28/03/17

This quote highlights the impact and positive effect that the Angel Tree programme can have on prisoners' families.

"Today is Mothering Sunday and this morning I opened a lovely card from my 16 year-old son who is unfortunately serving six months in prison. Enclosed in the card was a gift voucher. After some investigative work I discovered that the prison fellowship had funded and enabled this card and gift to be sent to me and I would like to say how grateful and pleased I am. This is a very difficult time for us and receiving this card was just so lovely. Thank you so much." (Cara, a mother)[22]

External evaluation of provision

The Building Stronger Families course run by Pact has been rigorously evaluated. Information provided by the Ministry of Justice on a sample of 144 participants showed that reoffending rates were, on average, 10 percent lower for than a similar group of non-participants.[23] This intervention has also been approved by the National Offender Mentoring Service, ISMG.[24]

The New Economics Foundation carried out an independent economic study of Pact's family engagement work, based on a Social Return on Investment analysis of the service. The study shows that every £1 invested in keeping a family together when someone goes to prison can save the taxpayer £11.[25]

[22] 'Angel Tree', found at http://www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/what-we-do/angel-tree/, accessed on 09/08/16

[23] 'Building Stronger Families', found at https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/building-stronger-families, accessed on 14/08/16

[24] Ibid

[25] Ibid

Limitations faced in providing services to families of offenders

Incentive-based approach to family visits

The Barnardo's report *Locked Out*[26] states the need for prisons to see families as valuable resources in the resettlement of prisoners. They want prisons to identify that visits improve outcomes for prisoners and should be viewed as an intervention to reduce offending. Many prisons use family visits as rewards and earned privileges for prisoners. Barnardo's argues that this places a huge limitation on their services – they believe that family visits should not be earned privileges and family days should not be restricted to 'enhanced prisoners'. They also think that searches on children when entering prisons are not child-friendly and believe prisons need to do more to support the emotional wellbeing of children.

Limitations on volunteers

The Clinks report on the value of volunteers[27] establishes several limitations on volunteers in providing services to prisoners and their families. Firstly, lack of transport to prisons can create barriers to volunteers providing services as it can be difficult, time-consuming and costly to get to them. Furthermore, volunteering times are often inflexible and limited to daytime, when many potential volunteers have full-time or part-time jobs. This limits the positive impact of the services, as the number of volunteers may be limited and volunteers may be restricted to those who have flexible jobs or don't work.

Negative attitudes from prison management and staff

It is clear that the more prisons see families as an important part of the rehabilitation process, the more successful the programmes run by voluntary organisations will be.

The Kainos Community Trust told FaithAction that the impact and success of their services rely upon prison staff's attitudes towards the service. If a prison governor was not open or encouraging about the service then it often failed or wasn't successful. This creates a lack of consistency in prisons across the country.

However, research has proven that improving family relationships does help decrease reoffending rates and prisons are becoming more accepting of the idea of using family as a tool to stop offending.

[26] Locked Out: 'Children's experiences of visiting a parent in prison', Jane Evans, 2015, found at http://www.barnardos.org.uk/locked-out-report.pdf , accessed on 21/08/16

[27] 'The State of the Sector', Nicola Drinkwater, found at http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/basic/files-downloads/clinks_state-of-the-sector-2016_final.pdf, accessed on 19/08/16

Mentoring and Skills Courses for Offenders and Ex-Offenders

'Interventions to help offenders develop prosocial social networks, and those that increase offenders' sense of agency, self-efficiency and good problem-solving skills may be effective in reducing reoffending.'[28] This statement is from the Probation Journal and sums up the importance of mentoring and developing offenders' personal and life skills. By working with prisoners to talk through their actions and the impact of their crimes on their families and communities, many organisations are helping offenders to take responsibility and change their mindsets and behaviour.

The Ministry of Justice report *Transforming Rehabilitation*[29] states that lack of employment, lack of suitable accommodation, attitudes which support crime, lack of social networks and poor family relationships are all factors associated with reoffending. Faith and non-faith organisations see one-to-one mentoring as an important way to address many of these issues. Many organisations use mentors to help offenders develop skills such as financial and budgeting skills, how to access accommodation, employment skills and how to develop family relationships. This mentoring often works on a through-the-gate level, where a relationship is built up before the offender is released so they are prepared for release with these skills. The mentor provides support after the prisoner's release so they have someone to support them through any problems they may face. Many prisoners have lost touch with friends and family and may find themselves alone on leaving prison. A mentor aims to be a friendly face to support offenders into employment and a brighter future away from crime.

For many prisoners it is difficult to get a job once they leave prison, so faith and non-faith organisations can play a key role in supporting prisoners into employment. A 2007 report by the New Government Network states that *'Employment reduces the risk of reoffending by between a third and a half.'*[30] Faith organisations are focusing on helping develop prisoners' skills such as CV writing and practical skills so they have a better chance of accessing employment. Some organisations are going a step further and are forming relationships with employers to help ex-offenders to access employment.

For some organisations, ex-offenders play a key role in providing mentoring. Seeing someone who has overcome similar obstacles to turn their life around provides aspiration and motivation for prisoners. However, the Clinks report on *Valuing volunteers in prisons*[31] reveals that any volunteer can be valuable in providing mentoring and support as the prisoner sees the volunteer as independent from the prison service – someone who is willing to give up their time to help them.

[28] McIvor, G,. Trotter, C. and Sheehan, R. (2009) Women, resettlement and desistance, Probation Journal, 56, 4, 347-61, found at https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/PSJ%20216%20November%202014.pdf, accessed on 16/08/16

[29] Transforming Rehabilitation: A summary of evidence on reducing reoffending, Ministry of Justice, 2013, found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf , accessed on 9/08/16

[30] Research Project Reducing Re-offending: Creating the right framework, The New Local Government Network (2007), found at http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/wp-content/uploads/reducing-re-offending.pdf, accessed on 19/08/16

[31] Valuing volunteering in prison – A review of volunteer involvement in prisons, July 2016, published by Clinks, found at http://www.clinks.org/resources-reports/valuing-volunteers-prison-review-volunteer-involvement-prisons, accessed 17/07/16

Faith-based organisations providing mentoring and skills development to offenders and ex-offenders

Clean Sheet

Clean Sheet is a Christian charity which empowers local churches and employers to support ex-offenders and prisoners into the community and world of work.

Current services and programmes:

Three-step pathway from prison to employment

Clean Sheet offers a three step pathway programme from prison to employment.

1. *Ways to Work* is a session held in the prison before release. It aims to recognise the achievements of prisoners and prepares them for a different and brighter future once they leave prison. The programme is run by church-based volunteers who are trained to lead employability sessions. The session has been successful and is now also being run by Kainos due to its success in helping prisoners learn skills for employment.

2. The *Membership Module* takes place when prisoners have been released. The module discusses how prisoners can have an honest commitment to employment. Clean Sheet has set up job clubs within the community to complete the module, which discusses what prisoners will face and what they should expect when they go into the working world. This is important as it helps deal with unrealistic expectations of employment.

3. The *Employers Directory* registers organisations that actively consider employing people with previous convictions. There is a real stigma against ex-offenders and many employers would disregard anyone with a past conviction. Clean Sheet found that *'One in five employers said they either did or were likely to exclude them from the recruitment processes'*.[32] This system looks at the individual and what they can bring to the job. Clean Sheet has set up a scheme called Employer Ambassadors in partner churches to identify, support and praise local Clean Sheet employers. Employers who have taken part in the scheme include East Coast, Timpson's, Gregg's, Marks and Spencer and Virgin Trains.

Church partnerships and volunteer training

Clean Sheet offer partnerships to churches that want to engage in social action. Churches are supported with training to help prisoners and ex-offenders find jobs. As well as getting involved in the three-step pathway as Employer Ambassadors or employability trainers, church volunteers can also become Clean Sheet Prayer Leaders. Prayer Leaders take prayer requests and help the prison team with protective prayer during sessions in the prison. Volunteers can also become Clean Sheet managers and organise the work of their church in prison. This person is in charge of communicating with the local prison and job club to ensure that Clean Sheet volunteers are supported.

Clean Sheet helps train staff off site, covers security points and will help supervise three live sessions before churches are left to run sessions on their own.

Kainos Community

Kainos Community was set up in 1996 and aims to improve the lives of prisoners so that they can live crime-free on release.

Current services and programmes:

[32] Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2010) Disadvantaged Groups in the Labour Market, London: CIPD

Intensive preparation for life after prison

The *Challenge to Change* programme uses cognitive behaviour methods within a group setting to develop pro-social thinking. Participants of the six-month programme are housed together in specialist units within prisons. *Challenge to Change* is run by a small number of specialist staff supported by volunteers across England. The aim of the project is to engage participants to be active members of their unit community and raise prisoners' aspirations for life after prison to prevent reoffending. During the programme, participants are assigned a mentor who guides and supports them during the process of leaving prison. There are programme has five modules: orientation, assessment and preparation, community living, focus, inter-personal relationships and citizenship.

Challenge to Change can also be adapted to run in community settings, either as structured day sessions or residential programmes. It can be tailored to different groups of people such as women and young offenders, meaning the programme is very flexible and adaptable. It has been evaluated and is said to help reduce reconviction rates: *'84% of our graduates do not reoffend within one year of release.'*[33]

Langley House Trust

Langley House Trust is a Christian organisation that works in partnership with Kainos Community. They provide support to offenders to help prevent reoffending. They provide this support through a number of programmes in prison and through support and accommodation for ex-offenders after prison.

Current services and programmes:

Pathways to Change rehabilitation programme

Pathways to Change is a rehabilitative community programme at the Elderfield Project in Hampshire that piloted in September 2016. The programme uses cognitive behavioural therapy which challenges patterns of thinking that has previously led to criminal lifestyles. It aims to help develop life skills which will be used once the offender has left prison. Emphasis is placed on victim awareness, community enterprise, training and social value projects which serve the local community. Pathways to Change is based on the successful Kainos Community project *Challenge to Change* and is supported by Clean Sheet, who run *Ways to Work* as part of the programme. Advice service for prisoners and ex-offenders

Specialist advice for hard-to-reach prisoners

Langley House Trust also runs a CF03 programme that provides specialist advice to prisoners and ex-offenders (CF03 is a government programme to re-integrate offenders and ex-offenders back into the community). The programme is contracted to the skills-delivery organisation Ixion and Langley House Trust delivers information, training and guidance to Ixion case workers. The programme is designed to target the hardest to reach offenders who cannot access mainstream support in the system. They provide specialist accommodation advice, debt advice, gambling advice and advice for long term prisoners. The programme reaches over 9,600 people in the South East and over 8,000 in the West Midlands[34].

Pathways to Employment initiative

Langley House Trust has also launched a *Pathways to Employment* initiative which will provide training, skills and employment opportunities to residents living in their housing. The initiative will begin in Coventry and will help develop a suite of 'skills to independence'.

[33] 'Our Impact', found at http://kainoscommunity.org/impact/, accessed on 11/08/16

[34] 'CF03 advice service', found at http://www.langleyhousetrust.org/about-us/cfo3-advice-services/, accessed on 11/08/16

Prison Fellowship

Prison Fellowship is a Christian charity which supports offenders and ex-offenders and their families.

Current services and programmes:

Sycamore Tree victim awareness programme

Prison Fellowship has developed a restorative justice programme called *Sycamore Tree*. It is taught in groups of 20 and aims to help prisoners focus on the effects of crimes on victims, offenders and the community. *Sycamore Tree* aims to help prisoners make a positive change and allows prisoners to express themselves through poetry and other creative forms. The programme is running in 40 prisons across England. In 2011/12 over 2,000 prisoners took part in 113 *Sycamore Tree* programmes across 36 establishments in England and Wales.[35]

Letter writing

Prison Fellowship also has volunteers who write letters to prisoners who may be feeling isolated and lonely. They may have lost touch with family and friends on the outside. Letters can help a prisoner feel like they are not on their own and that someone on the outside cares about them. Prisoners can sign up to the scheme through chaplaincy services in prisons. Prison Fellowship has a partnership with Caring for Ex-Offenders to refer individuals in prisons to their services.

Caring for Ex-offenders

Caring for Ex-offenders is a faith-based charity based at Holy Trinity Brompton Church in London. They link offenders who are coming out of prison with church communities to help them adjust to society and the community.

Current services and programmes:

Post-release community mentoring and support

The Caring for Ex-Offenders model uses a team of three to five volunteers based within a church community who mentor and support offenders on their release. This team take on different roles including mentoring, befriending, practical support and prayer. The mentoring process starts six months before release. Individuals have to fill in referral forms themselves, which means the programme only works with people who want to change and enter the community.

Pact

Pact's through-the-gate mentoring and support to prisoners is run by volunteers who deliver 26,091 hours of support for an average of 179 ex-offenders per month.[36]

Current services and programmes:

Specialist provision for offenders

Pact runs a CF03 service which works with prisoners with complex needs in the West Midlands and South East. The service is aimed at prisoners who cannot access mainstream provision and require specialist support. This programme is co-financed by the National Offender Management Service and the European Social Fund. It will support over 5,250 participants in the West Midlands and 5,900 in the South East over five and a half years. Pact delivers support in custody while the delivery partner and prime contractor Ixion deliver in the community.

[35] 'Does Restorative Justice Work?, found at http://www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/what-we-do/sycamore-tree/does-restorative-justice-work/, accessed 10/08/16

[36] Pact Impact Report 2014/15, found at https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=89833db3-a4a5-4ff0-8bc6-f790ca988e31, accessed on 17/08/16

After Prison, What Next?

After Prison, What Next? is Christian charity that offers support to ex-offenders who are due to be released.

Current services and programmes:

Preparation for release from prison

Their through-the-gate service aims to support prisoners to prepare them for life after prison. They offer a prison-centred programme focused on the future, helping prisoners develop goals and aspirations for the future. Volunteers work with offenders in prisons and give them practical advice on housing, family, finance, debt, employment and health issues. After Prison, What Next? believe that their work helps create a safer community as more people are taught how to actively participate and create positive futures for ex-offenders.

Inside Out

Inside Out is linked to the Community Chaplaincy Association and has been developed out of the chaplaincy department at HMP Wormwood Scrubs. They are a multi-faith organisation and welcome all volunteers. They help guide prisoners who want to enter the faith community.

Current services and programmes:

One-to-one mentoring

Inside Out offers one-to-one mentoring for prisoners using a diverse and experienced range of volunteers. They have specialist mentors to provide mental health and substance abuse support to prisoners. All mentors are given two days training and are matched by Inside Out with a mentee. The relationship is continued once the prisoner has been released. Mentors are trained to act on behalf of prisoners and will chase up issues and services such as home detention curfew applications, access to support for drug and alcohol abuse, employment options within the prison, education, legal issues and borough affiliation and probation.

Psychotherapy provision for prisoners and prison staff

Inside Out also offers services for prisoners with mental health problems and for people with histories of violence and sexual offences. There is a psychotherapist on Inside Out's team who gives therapeutic sessions to offenders. The psychotherapist also works with prison staff to develop their skills in working with more complex cases. Inside Out provides extra support and training to mentors who want to work with more complex mentees.

Non-faith organisations providing mentoring and skills development to offenders and ex-offenders

Nacro

Nacro is a leading charity dedicated to making society better by limiting the number of people offending and reoffending. They want to reduce crime and work by campaigning for better support to prisoners.

Current services and programmes:

One-to-one mentoring from ex-offenders

A range of volunteers are trained to deliver support to offenders. Many are ex-offenders and Nacro believes that having ex-offenders as volunteers is really important as it gives offenders a positive example to aspire to. Mentors offer help around careers and finance, benefits and debt, resolving tenancy issues and help prisoners set up bank accounts. Mentors routinely liaise with offender supervisors, offender's managers, prison governors and healthcare teams.

Resettlement Advice Service

Nacro has a *Resettlement Advice Service* which offers tailored careers guidance to individuals that takes into account any limitations created by their previous offending.

Community payback

Nacro works with probation trusts around the country to ensure offenders on probation or serving community payback orders are able to access the services they need, including employment and training opportunities. Partners include Surrey and Sussex Probation Trust, Cambridgeshire Probation Trust, Hampshire Probation Trust

REACH sustainable employment programme

Nacro also works with the Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust to deliver the ESF-funded *REACH* programme. The programme works in prisons and communities across the East Midlands providing intensive expert advice and support to offenders to enable them to enter sustainable employment. The *REACH* programme also provides accessible housing, vocational training and mentoring and support. Since it began in 2011, it has helped over 3,000 ex-offenders move towards employment.[37]

Change, Grow, Live

Change, Grow, Live was developed in the 1970s by magistrates and former probation officers to support people leaving prison to resettle in the community.

Current services and programmes:

Peer mentoring

Change, Grow, Live offer support to offenders and ex-offenders through peer mentoring. Many of the mentors are ex-offenders who are trained to work with prisoners to show by example that recovery is achievable. They support families and provide community support networks to help people with a history of criminal behaviour to reintegrate back into society.

Substance misuse services

DART is a Change, Grow, Live service which runs in HMP Lewes. It provides a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency support for prisoners with substance misuse problems. The service includes a resettlement service for people returning to the community.

[37] 'Our work with CRCs', found at https://www.nacro.org.uk/justice/our-probation-work/, accessed 16/08/16

Pathways to Recovery is run in HMP Belmarsh, Warrington prisons, HMP Risley and HMP YOI Thorn Cross. It delivers structured treatment for people in prisons who have substance misuse problems including support to rebuild family relationships and a peer mentor training programme. The programme aims to build on recovery capital and explores offenders' reasons and motivations to change their current behaviours.

Change, Grow, Live also run an alcohol intervention programme that addresses problematic drinking and aims to reduce the levels of harm associated with this behaviour. The programme includes weekly mutual aid sessions where individuals can get support from others who share their experiences and are working to achieve common goals, such as abstinence from alcohol.

Sova

Sova is a subsidiary of Change, Grow, Live. They work in communities in England and Wales to provide support to those at risk of getting into crime or those already involved in crime. Sova currently works with around 8,200 service users a year. They deliver practical support and services through trained volunteers. Sova currently have a registered pool of volunteers of 800 and work to train, register and deploy 380 new volunteers per year.

Current services and programmes:

Community mentoring

Sova runs community mentoring sessions delivered by volunteers and paid staff, which focus on helping individuals create stable lifestyles. It is estimated that they deliver over 25,000 mentoring sessions per year.[38] Employment support is a focus of mentoring, and mentors are trained to help offenders with any behaviour issues that have stopped them from getting into employment. Mentors also help offenders into employment by setting up work experience and volunteering placements.

St Giles Trust

St Giles Trust supports prisoners to change their lives and aims to help create safer communities. St Giles Trust created the first Day Centre for homeless people in South London. They reach out to 15,000 people in the community and in prisons.[39]

Current services and programmes:

Peer advisor programme

Around one-third of the staff members on this programme are reformed ex-offenders who now support other disadvantaged people to make similar positive changes to their lives. As part of the programme, participants can gain a Level 3 Advice and Guidance qualification, increasing their employability. Mentors help mentees improve their skills, assist them in finding somewhere to live and provide positive relationships. There is no one size fits all model when dealing with prisoners as many have different needs and issues, SO St Giles try and keep their model flexible.

Advice and guidance

St Giles Trust works in 28 prisons across the UK delivering services, some within Community Rehabilitation Companies. They provide Level 3 Advice and Guidance training in HMP Send so trained prisoners can offer support to other women in prison. This addresses the significant need for support amongst women in prison as well as givings vocational experience to the women delivering the service.

[38] 'Our Impact', found at: http://www.sova.org.uk/Our%20Impact/119/, accessed on 19/08/16

[39] 'Work in prisons and with prison leavers', Found at http://site.stgilestrust.org.uk/what-we-do/Work-in-prisons-with-prison-leavers, accessed 13/08/16

Support for women with complex needs

St Giles Trust also runs a project called *WIRE*, offering resettlement support to women with complex needs in custody and in the community. Many of the women the service supports are repeat offenders with issues such as mental health needs or substance misuse driving their offending. *WIRE* aims to reduce the frequency of their offending and help the women achieve stability.

Partnership working

St Giles Trust work in partnership with other organisations such as St Mungo's. St Giles Trust work with the St Mungo's HARP programme to offer resettlement support to vulnerable prisoners leaving from HMP Brixton and Wandsworth who are returning to London boroughs. From February 2014 to March 2015, 203 clients received support from 43 peer advisors. Data collected internally showed that only 14 out of the 203 clients supported by the programme re-offended during the 13 months of the programme[40].

Peterborough Pilot

A pilot at HMP Peterborough and HMP Doncasterworks with prisoners on shorter sentences who would not have previously been subject to statutory supervision on release from custody. It focuses on providing a range of coordinated advice and support services in particular from trained mentors.

The programme was funded by a Social Impact Bond and mentoring was delivered by volunteers from faith-based and non-faith organisations.

Prison Reform Trust

The Prison Reform Trust is an independent charity that aims to create a just, humane and effective penal system. They lobby parliament and work towards reform to help prisoners back into the community. Their main objectives are to reduce unnecessary imprisonment and promote community solutions to crime and improve the treatment and conditions for prisoners and their families.

Current services and programmes:

Information and advice service

They run a small advice and information service for prisoners and their families, which is independent of the prison service and provides prisoners with information on prison rules, life in prison, prisoner's rights and how to get help within a prison.

Reducing Re-offending Partnership

This is a partnership between St Giles Trust, Ingeus and Change, Grow, Live. They work with Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Companies. This provision offers personalised, consistent offender management support from as early as possible. They provide volunteers in courts, dedicated case managers for each offender and a network of St Giles peer advisors in prisons. The programme offers a 24-hour support line for offenders in the community and works in partnership with justice agencies, local stakeholders and other partners to ensure joined up rehabilitative support for offenders in public protection.

[40] 'Reports and evaluations into St Giles Trust', found at http://site.stgilestrust.org.uk/what-we-do/reports-and-evaluations-into-st-giles-trust, accessed on 13/8/16

Samaritans

Samaritans is a charity which works in partnership with prison services to reduce the number of self-inflicted death and self-harm amongst prisoners. According to Samaritans 'prisoners are six times more likely to take their own lives than the average person in the UK'.[41]

Current services and programmes:

Listener scheme

Samaritans has developed a listener scheme where volunteers train and support prisoners to become listeners. Listeners provide confidential emotional support to their fellow inmates who are struggling to cope. The first listener scheme was introduced in HMP Swansea in 1991 and now nearly every prison in England, Scotland and Wales has one. There are over 1500 listeners in prisons across the UK and Ireland and over 74,000 requests for support from the prison population.[42] Samaritans offer intensive training courses for prisoners who want to help in the listener service. Listeners are rewarded certificates once the training is complete and agree to follow Samaritans policies and values.

Free helpline access and postal service

All prisons are required to offer prisoners the chance to access the Samaritans' helpline free of charge. If prisoners prefer they can write to Samaritans instead. They offer a free post service and these resources are usually available in communal areas of the prison. If there is not a prisoner listener scheme available, volunteers from the local Samaritans branch may visit the prison to offer face to face support. Offenders may also have access to Samaritans branches whilst on a temporary license.

Catch 22

Catch 22 is a charity working with veterans in custody to reduce re-offending. There are many veterans in the prison system and specialist support is required to support their resettlement needs. From 2014 to 2015, Catch 22 supported 33,177 people. They had 1,500 staff and volunteers at 130 locations.[43]

Ex-offender mentoring for veterans and ex-service personnel

Catch 22 consulted veterans and military personnel to design support services that provide direct routes into physical and mental health services within custody and in the community. Many of the volunteers who mentor are past service users, offering first-hand experience and help to mentees. Catch 22 also offers peer support to the veterans in prison by offering prisoners the chance to join peer support groups. Sepcialist resettlement services

Partnership working – mental health and substance misuse

Veterans in custody can have diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health and substance abuse issues. Poor decision making whilst under the influence of substances is a common contributing factor to many veterans serving custodial sentences. In partnership with the mental health in-reach team and regional NHS Veterans Outreach Therapists, Catch 22 runs health and wellbeing support groups for veterans to provide advice and guidance on how to look after their physical and mental health. Their aim is to break the cycle of relapse to alternative coping methods.

[41] 'Information resource pack 2012', found at http://www.samaritans.org/sites/default/files/kcfinder/files/2012%20information%20resource%20pack.pdf, accessed 15/08/16

[42] 'The Listener Scheme', found at http://www.samaritans.org/your-community/our-work-prisons/listener-scheme, accessed 15/08/16

[43] 'Social Business review-Catch 22', 2016, found at https://www.catch-22.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Catch22-Social-Business-Review-2016.pdf, accessed 17/08/16

Timpson's

Timpson's is a high street shoe repair and key cutting chain. They do significant work to help ex-offender's find employment and work in 22 prisons across England and Wales. Timpson was inspired to start up the programme when he was visiting a Young Offenders institute in Crewe. He came across a 'sparky' young offender and when the young offender was released trained him up in practical skills. The young offender is now a manager and has turned to employment to support his family, rather than crime.[44]

Current services and programmes:

Practical skills training

Timpson's works with prisons around the country to train offenders with practical skills to help them gain employment once released. For the past five years they have a workshop inside HMP Liverpool. Trainees earn £16 a week, a respectable prison wage, as well as a £10 bonus for every course they pass. The workshop has blinds over the bars so that trainees feel like they are out of the prison setting during the working day and can imagine what work would be like after their release.

Employment of ex-offenders

During 2015, Timpson's has taken on over forty offenders as employees with an impressive 80% retention rate. They aim to build a social and commercial enterprise that reduces reoffending and provides the company with highly trained and motivated employees.

Partners of Prisoners (POPS)

Current services and programmes:

2nd Chance catering employment programme

In Manchester, POPS has helped develop *2nd Chance,* a café and catering project which engages ex-offenders. Volunteers serve and prepare food for catering contracts. The project works closely with the prison service and probation service to facilitate the involvement of offenders on temporary license in the community. All the profits are reinvested into the service that POPS provides to families of offenders. The work experience gained through 2nd Chance is a useful step to prisoners gaining employment.

[44] 'Timpson works with prisons to turn around lives', 18/01/11, found at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/timpson-works-with-prisons-to-turn-around-lives, accessed on 18/08/16

Successes in provision of mentoring and skills to offenders

From information gathered from faith and non-faith organisations, the services that are effective in providing support to offenders are:

- through-the-gate mentoring that offers support before and after release
- one-to-one mentoring provided by ex-offenders
- developing offenders' life skills and employment skills
- developing links with employers to encourage them to work with ex-offenders
- comprehensive, personalised support in the community after a prisoner is released

One of the strengths of mentoring programmes is that they can often involve diverse volunteers. Mentoring roles do not usually require volunteers to have a high level of access to prisons, and also appear to give volunteers flexibility and control over the time commitment they are making. Because mentoring is often done on a one-to-one basis, meetings are relatively easy to arrange and can take place in the community once the prisoner is released. Moreover, because mentoring has become widespread, high quality mentoring training and materials have been produced by many organisations, meaning best practice is easily shared and utilised.

Case studies

A story from the Kainos *Challenge to Change* Programme reveals the positive impact the course has had on one participant:

"Before I came onto the course I had never been in a classroom and had never been to school. I've learnt the importance of rules and why we have them. My confidence and self-awareness have grown – how positive thoughts can lead to positive actions and the dangers of negative thoughts and influences. The course has shown me who is really important in my life and that has helped me be more motivated, when I think of my children, ex-partner and friends."[45]

A staff member from Victim Support Lancashire said of The Sycamore Tree programme, *"I do feel that both the prisoners and the victims get such a lot out of their meeting and feel that a lot of healing and understanding happens from both sides. I am a staunch believer in this programme and talk about the benefits at talks and presentations throughout the borough. We are also happy to display (with the prisoners' permission) their letters and drawings in the office so that other victims can see the results of the programme."* (Jan Stanley, Chorley Branch Manager, Victim Support Lancashire)[46]

[45] 'Peter', found at http://kainoscommunity.org/case-studies/peter, accessed on 18/08/16

[46] 'Does Restorative Justice Work?', found at http://www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/what-we-do/sycamore-tree/does-restorative-justice-work, accessed on 10/08/16

Anthony had not received any formal education and as a result of peer pressure became part of a group that had a negative influence on his life. Anthony was imprisoned aged 19. During his time in prison The Salvation Army supported him to complete and pass his Maths Level 1, English Level 2 and Business Studies BTEC Level 2. Anthony had doubts as to whether anyone would employ him with a criminal record. However, a one-to-one personal advisor worked with him to build his confidence and helped him look towards the future and finding employment. Anthony lived very close to the centre and would sometimes attend up to three times a week for job-search sessions. He was put forward for and was successful in obtaining a pre-apprenticeship role in construction. He moved from the Benefits System to a Training Allowance and was supported by the centre in his commute to work. Anthony was offered direct mentoring from centre staff who could liaise with employment engagement coordinators if needed. Anthony works full time for a company and still attends the centre on his days off as he wants to help others.[47]

Evaluation of services and programmes

Many faith organisations think that using ex-offenders as mentors has a significant impact to reduce reoffending. St Giles Trust ran an evaluation of their Peer Advisory programme which provides resettlement support to offenders. The programme ran for 13 months and supported 203 clients with 43 peer advisors (17 in custody and 26 in the community). 143 clients were placed in suitable accommodation, 112 clients received support into employment, training and education, 152 clients were registered with a GP and 7 clients successfully gained employment. Data collected internally showed that only 14 out of the 203 clients supported by the programme re-offended during the 13 months of the programme.[48] Mentoring also has a positive effect on mentors who are ex-offenders, providing new skills and motivation.

Change, Grow, Live also run similar mentoring programme using ex-offenders to give support. Their evaluation states that 'Last year, nearly nine out of 10 service users who were offending when we started working with them, had stopped offending by the time they completed their treatment programme'.[49] This again emphasises that using ex-offenders as part of the mentoring service can inspire and motivate prisoners to make a change.

St Giles Trust has evaluated the *WIRE* programme and found that the reconviction rate amongst WIRE clients was 42%. This figure was based on an evaluation of available data for 104 women who engaged with WIRE (out of a total of 342 women). The average number of offences per participant halved for 12 months after compared to the 12 months before.[50]

The Kainos *Challenge to Change* programme, which provides a special community-style section within prisons and provides intensive training and mentoring, has had a very positive response. Kainos states that '84% of our graduates do not reoffend within one year of release.'[51] This reveals the success of the mentoring aspect of their programme and how teaching offenders about community and life skills can make a huge impact on reducing re-offending. *Challenge to Change* is being used as a model for other programmes such as the Langley House programme *Pathways to Change*.

[47] 'Homelessness', found at http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/chaplains, accessed on 23/08/16

[48] 'Peer to the Future', found at http://site.stgilestrust.org.uk/project/uploads/user_files/what%20we%20do/pdf/Summary.pdf, accessed on 11/08/16

[49] 'Our work in the criminal justice system', found at http://www.changegrowlive.org/what-we-do/our-work-criminal-justice-system, accessed on 11/08/16

[50] 'Evaluation report: Women's Information and Resettlement for Ex-Offenders', found at http://site.stgilestrust.org.uk/project/uploads/user_files/files/Support%20for%20vulnerable%20women%20leaving%20prison%20summary.pdf, accessed on 13/08/16

[51] 'Our Impact', found at http://kainoscommunity.org/impact, accessed on 18/08/16

Challenges faced in delivering mentoring and skills courses

Pressure to provide evidence and statistics on reoffending

One limitation faced by organisations is the difficulty and cost associated with measuring the impact of mentoring to prove its worth and value, although the evidence above demonstrates that work is being done to measure impact. Many faith organisations cited the need to provide statistics on reoffending as a barrier to providing services, as it takes the focus away from providing high quality programmes for prisoners and leads to resources being spent on collecting evidence. The current lack of funding for mentoring and skills provision for offenders makes this issue more pressing.

Evaluation of one recent project, The Peterborough Pilots, showed that the mentoring and skills development programme had very little impact on reoffending. There was only a small reduction in the frequency of re-offending with 142 reconvictions per 100 prisoners in Peterborough, compared with 155 reconvictions per 100 prisoners in the control group.[52] Although this appears to indicate that the programme was ineffective, it could also demonstrate the difficulties associated with using reoffending rates as the only benchmark of success.

Staff shortages

A further barrier faced by mentoring services is staff shortages in prisons. The prison service has faced austerity and cuts and many prisons are dealing with a shortage of staff. Kainos told FaithAction that staff shortages can often be a barrier for Kainos in providing their services. Staff may be stressed and not release the benefit of their services. Furthermore, it can often be difficult for staff to develop relationships with the organisations if there are staff shortages. This can prevent services being run effectively as prison services are constantly having to explain to new staff how the programme works.

The Daylight Christian Prison Trust told FaithAction that the movement of prisoners from one prison to another can create barriers for them in providing services. It can be hard to form relationships and monitor what works if prisoners do not complete programmes or cannot see mentors due to distance.

Many faith organisations are concerned that individual faith communities, such as churches, are being too open and naïve in letting prisoners join their communities. There is a lack of awareness of the importance of risk assessment and strategy in how to best protect the offender and the other members of the faith community. This is particularly an issue where mentoring and befriending is being provided by faith communities. However, although there does need to be safety provision, churches and other faith communities need to be open and welcoming to ex-offenders to help them feel welcome and accepted. The Prison Journal[53] states that *'several studies have suggested that religious involvement in faith-communities post-release is linked to reduced delinquency, deviance and recidivism'*.[54] However, safety issues do need to be addressed if an offender is at risk of harming others and is not supported with the right services.

[52] 'Peterborough prison social impact bond pilot fails to hit target to trigger repayments', Susannah Birkwood, 07/08/14, found at http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/peterborough-prison-social-impact-bond-pilot-fails-hit-target-trigger-repayments/finance/article/1307031, accessed on 17/08/16

[53] 'Transforming Rehabilitation: Can faith-communities help to reduce reoffending?', Prison Service Journal No 216, November 2014, found at https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/PSJ%20216%20November%202014.pdf, accessed on 09/08/16

[54] 'One Year Out: Tracking the Experiences of Male Prisoners Returning to Houston, Texas', 2009, La Vigne et al., Urban Institute, Justice Policy Centre

Accommodation Support for Offenders and Ex-Offenders

Many prisoners leave custody with very little money and resources. Sometimes prisoners' families and friends may not want to know them, or may be part of the reason why the offender was in prison. If an offender has served a long sentence, they may have lost their housing and have limited knowledge about where to go to access services. If prisoners are supported on release to find appropriate new housing and support systems, they are less likely to turn back to crime.

Many accommodation services provided by voluntary organisations are supported by mentoring and other practical support, but some organisations focus solely on providing accommodation and signpost offenders to other services to help them with other needs.

Faith-based organisations and their work in accommodation services

Hope into Action

Hope into Action provides housing to vulnerable people including ex-offenders, and help integrate them back into the community.

Current services and programmes:

Church-funded accommodation for ex-offenders

The Hope into Action model focuses on the involvement of churches. Using the investment capacity of the church, church members buy a house in a reasonable area of the community. The house aims to support two or three people in vulnerable situations. The rent and housing benefit then pays a return to the church. The church involved in buying the house provide practical support to the residents of the house, helping them access benefits, employment and life skills. Church members also provide support through non-judgmental relationships, mentoring and befriending and practical support and prayer. The charity has had a huge positive impact in helping support ex-offenders and in 2015-16 the number of houses it supports grew from 26 to 36[55].

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army provides housing, placements and support to help ex-offenders integrate into the community and find work. They run homeless centres and work closely with local authorities, the police, the criminal justice service, local health services and chaplaincy centres in prisons.

Combined accommodation and skills provision

The Salvation Army provides prisoners who come out of prison with no accommodation or employment within a safe *Lifehouse*. They provide good quality tenancies for service users in areas of their choice. Support by the Salvation Army helps ex-offenders overcome issues and prepares them to live in the community. Within Lifehouses, the Salvation Army provides a wide range of activities to help people adjust to life outside of prison, such as staff teaching cooking skills and employability skills.

Once an ex-offender has left a *Lifehouse* and been housed, they are encouraged to attend Salvation Army centres where they can access courses on a range of subjects including: budgeting, independent living, literacy and numeracy, computer skills, lifestyle and health, anger and stress management and interview skills. They can also become involved in running events and fundraising for the centre.

[55] 'Outcomes', found at http://hopeintoaction.org.uk/about-us/aims-and-outcomes, accessed on 14/08/16

Partnership working

The Salvation Army has links with companies to facilitate the employment of their service users. Employment engagement coordinators initially work with employers to identify the help and support both sides need to enable the participant to start work. Once settled into their new role, participants and employers are supported by job life coaches to ensure the role is sustainable and help solve any problems that arise.

Langley House Trust

Langley House Trust provides a range of accommodation services to ex-offenders.

Hostel provision

Langley House provides hostel accommodation for adult male offenders and those at risk of offending around the country. The hostel provides social supervision, 24-hour staffing, extra health facilities for those who have health care needs and catering onsite. They also provide a floating support system which helps ex-offenders who are struggling after leaving prison. The hostels are situated around the country in areas such as Wakefield and Bradford with some having an emphasis on particular areas such as arson. They provide private rental schemes, community shared housing and individual flats.

Non-faith organisations and their work in accommodation services

Shelter

Shelter is a national housing charity for homeless and vulnerable people.

Prison-based housing advisors

Shelter provides specialist housing advisors based in prisons across England. These advisors are trained to give offenders advice about housing, benefits, and money worries to help support them when they are released.

Accommodation sourcing

Shelter can also help an ex-offender find accommodation after release. They provide an advice services directory to help ex-offenders find services in the area. They also provide advice to prisoners who are at risk of losing their house whilst serving a sentence. Shelter provides a tenancy checker to find out what type of tenancy the offender may have and the procedure and timescales the landlord has to follow to evict them.

St Mungo's

St Mungo's is a charity that supports the homeless and 45% of their clients are ex-offenders. St Mungo's work in eight prisons across London and provide a number of services to ex-offenders. They also work in the South West in areas such as Bath and Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Offenders at risk of homelessness

One of the services they provide is called *HARP (Housing Advice, Resettlement and Prevention)*. This service is solely aimed at offenders at risk of homelessness on release. It includes a peer-led community recovery network to help people sustain accommodation. They also provide offenders with hostels and semi-independent housing.

St Mungo's have also set up a floating support services which help ex-offenders sustain their tenancy and deal with problems they face on their release. The Floating Support service for High Risk Offenders in the South West (team of four) worked with 150 people during 2012-13, 83% of who did not reoffend.[56]

Faith-sensitive supported housing

The Date Palm Project is a partnership between St Mungo's, The National Zakat Foundation and the Better Community Business Network to provide faith-sensitive supported housing for young male Muslim prison leavers. This partnership means ex-offenders can access a wide range of services while based in these hared houses.

[56] 'Offender services', found at http://www.mungos.org/services/preventing_homelessness/offender_services, accessed on 22/08/16

Successes of provision of accommodation services

Accommodation services are very important in preventing reoffending, as many ex-offenders may find themselves without accommodation or resources on their release from prison. Faith-based and non-faith organisations are providing a wide variety of programmes to meet this need.

Evaluation of services and programmes

In Peterborough, churches are providing a home and community care to over thirty homeless adults in the city through Hope into Action. They have housed 39 people who have previously been in custody. Only four returned to custody and one has returned to a charity house and the community are continuing to work with him. Such a low rate of reoffending is evidence that Faith into Action's model works, and demonstrates that faith communities can play a vital role in improving outcomes for ex-offenders.

The Prison Journal highlights the importance of helping prisoners feel like they belong and can live in society. It has carried out research suggesting that prisoners who are made to feel like they belong will be less isolated and less likely to commit crime once they are released from prison.[57]

Challenges faced in the provision of accommodation services

Providing the right support framework in which to house ex-offenders together

Voluntary organisations face many issues in providing accommodation for ex-offenders. Support systems and supervision need to be in place to help those with behaviour problems or issues with violence. Additionally, ex-offenders housed in the same building may clash or be a bad influence on each other. Although this is not necessarily a limitation to their work, organisations need to have robust strategies in place to deal with these challenges.

Lack of robust risk assessment in faith communities

The CEO of Daylight Christian Prison Trust identified the worry that churches and communities were not taking the right steps in accepting ex-offenders into their community. He argued that churches were not carrying out the right safety and risk assessments and were being too naïve and open armed which could be dangerous for their community. If the right risk assessments are taken then ex-offenders can become valuable members of the community, however supervision and risk assessments need to be taken in accommodation services and in services for ex-offenders.

[57] 'Transforming Rehabilitation: Can faith-communities help to reduce reoffending?', 4, Prison Service Journal No 216, November 2014, found at https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/PSJ%20216%20November%202014.pdf, accessed on 09/08/16

Chaplaincy

Faith-based organisations that deliver chaplaincy services

Faith-based organisations play an important role in prisons through the chaplaincy support and pastoral care they provide to prisoners who are in custody. Many believe that they can make social change by teaching the moral values of their faith. Religious chaplaincy provides a space for exploring key moral issues such as forgiveness and responsibility, which can help prisoners understand the impact of their crimes and look to the future.

The government recognises that every prisoner should be entitled to access a chaplain during their time in prison, and it is a legal requirement that someone of faith serving a sentence must be able to access a chaplain. Most prisons have a chaplaincy service consisting of chaplains from many different denominations, depending on the makeup of the prison. Chaplaincies not only support prisoners, but can often play an important role in providing services to the whole prison. Many prison staff benefit from spiritual ministries which offer support in the face of the stress that working in a prison can cause.

Chaplaincy services are not just for prisoners who have religious beliefs before entering prison. They are available to any offender who shows an interest in the chaplaincy. Often offenders who are new to faith find stability and hope through religion as the teachings and messages of religion can be a support system while in prison.

Community Chaplaincy Association

The Community Chaplaincy Association (CCA) is a network of independent voluntary organisations who are working towards a vision where everyone who serves a sentence can access chaplaincy. They are a multi-faith association and provide support to prisoners, ex-prisoners and prisoners' families of all faiths. They have twenty one operational member projects and provided mentoring and support services to 2,228 people in 2015.[58]

Current services and programmes:

Training resources

Community chaplaincies work with 1,400 offenders a year providing mentoring and advocacy.[59] Chaplaincy and mentoring can be effective when linked, as offenders who have received support through the teachings of faith can then develop a trusting relationship with a mentor of that faith. CCA have a six-module training programme to train up new mentors working within the community. They draw on the best aspects of mentor training from their member organisations.

Impact measurement

CCA has developed an impact measurement database system through which member organisations can record data and more easily measure the impact of their services. This is important as it will enable organisations to more easily demonstrate the effectiveness of their provision, share best practice and build up more reliable data to assist with funding applications.

Additionally, CCA is working with the University of Cambridge to develop a study looking at how community chaplaincies contribute to desistance from crime.

[58] 'About us' webpage, found at http://www.communitychaplaincy.org.uk/about.html, accessed on 11/08/2016

[59] 'Community Chaplaincy Theory of Change', found at http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/Community%20Chaplaincy%20ToC.pdf, accessed on 11/08/2016

Chaplaincy group forums

To create a united network, the CCA run peer groups and forums for chaplaincy groups so that members can discuss their experiences and difficulties. There are forums on different issues such as the needs of women and young offenders. In these forums, organisations can support and help each other to develop effective chaplaincy.

Alpha Course

The Alpha Course is a 13-week programme developed in 1990 by Holy Trinity Brompton Church that explores the Christian faith. The course uses videos and discussion questions to enable course participants to explore Christian values and develop their own faith. It also encourages the development of positive friendships and conversations.

Current services and programmes:

The Alpha Course in prisons

Caring for Ex-Offenders, the Prison Outreach Network and Kainos Community are among the Christian organisations that offer The Alpha Course to offenders in prison settings. The course is a useful tool that runs alongside their other services to help support prisoners of faith, or who are interested in the Christian faith. Delivery of the course varies between prisons, but the course structure provides a framework for chaplains or Christian volunteers. The course has also been adapted for prisoners with low levels of education.

David Spademan, National Chaplaincy representative for Assemblies of God (AOG), is employed full-time as a managing chaplain in a public sector prison. He said of the Alpha course: "I've personally been involved in Alpha for a few years now and I've run Alpha on the outside of prison as well. Within the prison environment it allows people, as part of their religious training, to come to that place of discovery and it's really useful tool for prisoners to explore their faith, especially when we can utilize volunteers to help facilitate this. I'm very passionate about the world of prison being part of the wider community, not to be seen as silent where we just lock people up so the public feel that they're safe because they're out of sight."[60]

The Prison Outreach Network

The Prison Outreach Network (PON) is a Christian network of volunteers who work in prisons and young offenders institutions. It has been running since 1986 and their volunteers work in 21 institutions across England and Wales delivering Christian ministry.

Current services and programmes:

Bible study and prayer groups

PON runs weekly Bible study sessions in prisons and occasional workshops and concerts about the Christian faith. They believe these sessions help offenders who may be finding it difficult to adapt to prison life by enabling them to access the Christian faith. The sessions also give the prisoners an opportunity to engage in activities that are not part of the typical prison structure. PON engages churches and volunteers to deliver their services.

Mentoring and life skills courses

PON also delivers courses to help develop offenders' skills in prison. They train volunteers to deliver self-control and conduct courses to help prisoners with behaviour problems and provide mentoring schemes.

Volunteer training

All PON volunteers are required to attend two free training sessions per year. PON aims to recruit volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds.

[60] 'David's story', 1/06/2016, found at http://pmc16.alpha.org/blogs/, accessed 12/08/2016

Daylight Christian Prison Trust

Daylight Christian Prison Trust is a Christian charity that supports offenders during and after their prison sentences. They use the Christian faith as a tool to support prisoners to turn away from crime, improve their skills and develop more positive relationships with family members.

Current services and programmes:

Sunday services and weekday study groups

On Sundays Daylight runs structured, traditional services and throughout the week they run chapel services and Bible study groups. They aim to help prisoners develop an understanding of the bible and they key values that it promotes so that they can look towards a better future for themselves.

Letter writing

Daylight volunteers also write to individual prisoners who have need of additional support, offering help and guidance on a more personal level.

Diocese of Worcester Catholic Chaplaincy

The Diocese of Worcester provides a wide range of support services to prisoners in the local area.

Current services and programmes:

Salaried chaplains

The Diocese of Worcester provides salaried chaplains to go into prisons and deliver religious ministry. These chaplains provide emotional and spiritual support to prisoners and prison staff. They provide chaplaincy to those who identify with the Catholic faith and those who do not have a clear faith identity. The chaplains lead worship and arrange Bible study groups and religious courses. They also visit prisoners in the healthcare and segregation units. The chaplains are a link between the prison service and the community and work with volunteers to help provide services to prisoners. The Diocese also helps train volunteers to deliver chaplaincy services.

Criminal Justice Affairs Group

The Diocese of Worcester created a Criminal Justice Affairs Group in 2015. It has two main aims:

1. to offer a Christian perspective and provide expert advice on criminal justice matters
2. to raise public awareness and advocate for criminal justice-related social action.

The group is linked to a range of prisons and Catholic organisations and plays a key role in Prison Week, which raises awareness of the role of faith organisations in prisons and other projects in advocating for change.

Quaker Chaplaincy

The Quakers have been involved in supporting prisoners for hundreds of years. There are over ninety prisons in the UK which have Quaker prison chaplains. They believe that people can always change and focus on restorative justice in the work they do in prisons.

Current services and programmes:

Multi-faith partnerships

Quaker chaplains often work within multi-faith prison chaplaincy teams to offer spiritual support and friendship.

Early prisoner visits

Quaker chaplains try and provide new or transferred prisoners a visit within 24 hours of a prisoner arriving at prison.

Chaplaincy training

The Quakers run training sessions for chaplains, equipping them with skills, such relationship-building with prisoners and staff. There is also an annual conference for Quaker chaplains to share experiences and best practice.

Muslim Chaplaincy Association

The Muslim Chaplaincy Association (MCA) supports Muslim chaplains and acts as a network to them share experiences and best practice. They also work with communities to help them more effectively contribute towards the vision of rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders.

Current services and programmes:

Teaching materials

The network facilitates the creation and dissemination of high quality teaching materials to help chaplains improve the services they provide.

Chaplaincy support after prison

MCA signposts prisoners to existing local chaplaincies once they leave prison. They link ex-offenders with mentors who can give them support once released to help prisoners reintegrate into the community and prevent reoffending. They work closely with Muslim Aid in providing post-release support.

Muslim Aid

Muslim Aid reached out to 9364 prisoners across London, the West Midlands and Wales in 2015[61].

Current services and programmes:

Ramadan Prisoners' Project

The Ramadan Prisoners' project was launched in 2012 to help ease a prisoner's journey to reform. Ramadan is a key time of reflection for Muslims and a good time to engage prisoners in progressing towards change. The programme helps provide prisoners with tools to practise and explore their faith with ease. The project has helped prisoners to develop self-discipline around prayer and the recitation the Qur'an, and to display less aggression.

Resources for Muslim prisoners

Muslim Aid provides resources such as prayer mats and Islamic literature to Muslim prisoners. They distributed 9,000 prisoner packs in 2015.

Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy

The Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy works with Home Office chaplaincy officials to deliver chaplaincy to prisoners when it is requested. As soon as a prisoner registers their desire for a Buddhist chaplain, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy will arrange for their needs to be met.

Current services and programmes:

Pastoral support

Buddhist chaplains offer pastoral ministry to anyone that would like it within the prison service. Chaplains are often volunteers. They focus on the theme of morality in their chaplaincy work and teach about aspiration. They also focus on wisdom and meditation as tools to help prisoners change.

Volunteer training

The Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy provides training sessions for Buddhist volunteers, giving them support and ideas about how they can affectively provide pastoral and religious support. Volunteers are asked to produce reports on the prisoners they work with to help the chaplaincy service see what methods work well and how they can improve their services.

[61] 'Ramadan Prisoners Project' webpage, found at https://www.muslimaid.org/what-we-do/uk-programmes/ramadan-prisoners-project, accessed on 15/08/16

Network of Sikh Organisations

There are currently 50 Sikh prison chaplains working in prisons across England, Scotland and Wales. Only three of these are full-time paid chaplains, with the rest being either part-time or volunteers.

Current services and programmes:

Guidance for the Prison Service on Sikh faith instructions

The Network of Sikh Organisations has compiled guidance for prisons that gives an outline of the Sikh faith and its requirements. The organisation has worked to ensure that the instructions contain accurate information on the dietary requirements laid out in Sikh teachings. There can often be confusion about what faith instructions Sikhs follow in prison, so the chaplains try and help communicate the rules that Sikhs follow, which helps prison staff and Sikh prisoners.

Mentoring after release

Sikh chaplains play an important mentoring role once a Sikh prisoner is released. They help the ex-offender reintegrate into the community and carry on with day-to-day life.

Jewish Prison Chaplaincy

Jewish Prison Chaplaincy meets the religious needs of Jewish people in prison. Prisoners are referred to the Jewish Prison Chaplaincy on a case-by-case basis.

Free Churches Group

The Free Churches Group comprises 24 denominations. Their chaplains provide full-time ministry support as part of multi-faith chaplaincy teams within prisons.

Non-faith organisations that deliver chaplaincy services

Most people associate the term 'chaplaincy' with organised religion, and indeed, 49.1% of the prison population categorise themselves as 'Christian.'[62] Although prisoners of different faiths may receive chaplaincy support from their own religious group, many people who don't identify with any religion have historically lacked pastoral care.

The Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network

The Non-Religious Pastoral Network (NRPSN) is a network of trained and accredited humanist pastoral support volunteers who provide care to non-religious offenders. They have a thorough recruitment programme for those wanting to provide pastoral care, with a number of interviews. They aim to ensure that every prisoner is given the pastoral care they need, whether they identify with a particular religion or not. NRPSN was set up by the British Humanist Association in 2016.

Current services and programmes:

HMP Winchester pilot

NRPSN piloted their services in HMP Winchester. They held discussion groups and provided pastoral support to prisoners. The project was received well by those who didn't have a religion and by prison management and has been made a permanent aspect of pastoral care at the prison. Since the pilot, the British Humanist association have hired a team of pastoral staff to extend their services to more prisons

Through-the-gate care

NRPSN aims to develop through-the-gate care to support non-religious offenders once released from prison. They recognise a gap in provision of non-faith provision in supporting ex-offenders to reintegrate into communities.

[62] Prison population figures, 4th July 2016, Grahame Allen and Noel Dempsey, House of Commons library, found at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2016, accessed on 01/09/16

Successes of chaplaincy provision

Prison chaplaincy can have many positive effects on prisons and prisoners, such as providing prisoners with support and friendship when they may be feeling isolated. However, organisations have highlighted the difficulty in providing evidence on the impact of chaplaincy. Evidence is often anecdotal and based around case studies, as was confirmed in the research for this report.

In the government's Prison Population Statistics Report conducted in March 2016, only 31.4% of prisoners stated that they had no religion.[63] Clearly, then, prisoners often have a religious belief when they enter prison, or develop their beliefs whilst in prison. There is therefore a strong need for religious chaplaincy to accommodate the 68.6% of prisoners who state that they have a religious belief. Religious support can be important in strengthening hope, promoting a moral outlook, and giving offenders the opportunity to discuss values in a group setting.

From the information collected on the different forms of chaplaincy and pastoral support provided, the following services can offer effective support to prisoners:

- group support sessions and faith study groups
- one-to-one chaplaincy and pastoral support work
- religious services in prisons
- forming relationships with chaplains that can be carried on after release
- making resources available to prisoners so they can practise their religion
- communication between prison services and chaplains to inform prison staff on the religious needs of offenders.

Case studies

Daylight Christian Trust CEO Steven St John stated in an interview that many visitors were shocked at how well prisoners listened and paid attention to Daylight's Sunday structured service. This confirms that many prisoners appreciate and value the services. St John also identified the benefits of using faith in reaching out to prisoners. He stated that many prisoners had turned to Christianity and had stopped offending. He gave an example of someone he had met through Daylight's services who had been out of prison for six years, turned away from crime and converted his whole family to Christianity.

A further example is the story of Stephen, which demonstrates that being introduced to faith can help turn a prisoner's life around. *'Stephen was a prisoner who had been sentenced for drug possession and dealing in heroin. He faced a four year sentence and thought that life had lost all hope. It was during his time in prison that he first heard about Daylight's services and Jesus Christ. Stephen became a Christian and saw his life transformed as he tackled his drug addiction and its social, physical and psychological effects. After being released from prison, Stephen wanted to share with other prisoners the great news about Jesus. He is now working for Christianity Explored and Daylight to tell offenders how they too can see their lives transformed.'*[64]

[63] Ibid

[64] 'Stories from the inside', found at http://www.daylightcpt.org/about/stories-from-the-inside, accessed on 22/08/16

The collective group worship offered by chaplaincy services plays a significant role in increasing wellbeing and helping offenders make positive choices. In the Prison Journal[65] Lim and Putnam found that collective experiences of religion in a congregation, including making friends, are more closely linked to life satisfaction than private practices and individual experiences of religion. They concluded that for life satisfaction, 'praying together seems to be better than either bowling together or praying alone'. [66] The success and national use of The Alpha Course also demonstrates the appeal and effectiveness of group sessions and discussions, which can reduce isolation and loneliness.

The importance of attending religious services is also reflected in the views of prisoners who responded to a survey run in a report run by Lemos and Crane in partnership with the Catholic Bishops Conference.[67] 76 per cent of 288 respondents stated they try to attend Mass regularly in prison. Attending Mass is seen as important, because it makes people feel more positive, brings feelings of calm and peace, brings people closer to God and/or their faith and helps them to cope. Other benefits cited by prisoners include fellowship with other Catholics and a sense of comfort and acceptance.

Volunteers play a huge role in helping deliver chaplaincy services. The Clinks report on the Value of Volunteers[68] states that many prisoners appreciate volunteers from an independent source above support linked to the prison as they felt external volunteers were giving their time because they cared. HMP Send's chaplaincy has adopted a proactive approach to recruiting volunteers, which includes outreach work in the local community. This has led to the involvement of over 100 chaplaincy volunteers. This example demonstrates that it is possible for a chaplaincy department to recruit large numbers of volunteers to take on a range of roles and add capacity to the prison as a whole.[69]

[65] 'Transforming Rehabilitation: Can faith-communities help to reduce reoffending?', Prison Service Journal No 216, November 2014, found at https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/PSJ%20216%20November%202014.pdf, accessed on 09/08/16

[66] 'Religion, Social Networks and Life Satisfaction', 2010, American Sociological Review, 75, p. 927

[67] 'Belief and Belonging', Lemos and Crane, 2016, found at https://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk/resources/Belief%20and%20Belonging%20final%20070416.pdf, accessed on 16/08/16

[68] 'Valuing volunteering in prison: A review of volunteer involvement in prisons', July 2016, Clinks, found at http://www.clinks.org/resources-reports/valuing-volunteers-prison-review-volunteer-involvement-prisons, accessed 17/07/16

[69] Ibid

Challenges faced by prison chaplaincy services

Staff shortages

A problem facing prison chaplaincies that emerged from FaithAction's research is lack of staff, in part due to the nature of the work. Staff shortages mean that chaplains are spread more thinly and may have less opportunity to spend time with prisoners on an individual basis.

Difficulties in measuring impact

Daylight Christian Prison Trust told FaithAction that the difficulty of assessing the impact of their services is a major limitation. The movement of prisoners between prisons makes it difficult to assess which services are most effective. Movement of prisoners also limits the ability of chaplains and volunteers to establish strong relationships with prisoners.

Non-faith organisations also recognise difficulties associated with impact assessment. The Head of the NRPN, Simon O'Donoghue, told FaithAction that it can often be difficult to evaluate the work of pastoral support and chaplaincy as most of the evidence is anecdotal and based on case studies. However, he recognised the importance of collecting evidence to underpin the value of services, especially if services are partially funded by tax-payers. He believes that by working with universities and the Ministry of Justice, better practice in evaluation and evidence-based approaches can be established. He also advocates looking to countries such as the Netherlands, which has a unique and successful form of pastoral support and chaplaincy in prisons.

Prisoners using chaplaincy services to benefit their sentence

A further limitation faced by faith-based organisations is the inability to assess whether prisoners are accessing chaplaincy because of genuine spiritual interest, or to benefit their sentence and position in the system. Daylight Christian Prison Trust CEO Steven St John told FaithAction that sometimes prisoners use chaplaincy services to help their parole status, as having attended Bible classes and religious services can improve their chance of parole.

Furthermore, St John stated that offenders had labelled themselves as Christians and committed to Christian ideas but still committed crime once they were released. These offenders still labelled themselves as Christians, showing that engagement in religious activity in prison does not necessarily prevent offenders committing further crime.

Inequalities in accessing faith-specific chaplaincy

The Network of Sikh Organisations told FaithAction of several limitations they face in providing prison chaplaincy. One issue is that some non-Sikh managing chaplains try to pressurise Sikh ministers to forgo their statutory weekly visit and come once a fortnight, in order to save money. This is unequitable and the Sikh Prison Chaplaincy Network is pressing for Sikh chaplains to be accorded the same time for religious teaching and prison duties as is given to people of other faiths.

Furthermore, Lord Singh of Wimbledon highlighted other problems Sikh chaplains face in a recent All Party-Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society meeting.[70] He stated that prison chaplaincy occasionally fails if prison authorities do not contact a chaplain when a Sikh prisoner enters a prison. Often it is the prisoner's family that ends up notifying the prison service, rather than the prison picking up the need for Sikh chaplaincy. It is up to individual prison governors to decide what happens in prison chaplaincy, and this lack of consistency across the prison service could be putting the statutory right of prisoners to access chaplaincy under threat.

[70] Minutes of Annual General meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society, 7th June 2016, found at http://www.faithandsociety.org/minutes/2016-06-07/, accessed on 23/08/16

Negative attitudes from prison staff and management

This is a wider issue, as chaplaincy teams are reliant on how much the prison management values their role within the prison. Kainos told FaithAction that the positive impact of their services relied on whether the governor and prison management accepted and wanted to allow the organisation to work in the prison. If the management wasn't interested or didn't have a positive attitude towards the service then it didn't work very well and usually didn't last very long. This means that where negative attitudes to chaplaincy do exist, the effectiveness of the service is limited.

Services that Support Young Offenders

According to Prison Fellowship, 75% of young people sentenced to youth custody re-offend within one year.[71] This statistic highlights the need to identify why so many young people re-offend, so that they can be supported to live a future away from crime.

Many young offenders have faced many difficulties in childhood, such as a lack of education or being influenced by gangs. Around a half of young people in custody have been in local authority care at some point in their lives and 20 per cent are still subject to care orders.[72] Faith-based and non-faith organisations play a vital role in supporting young people to gain education and develop positive relationships with parents and carers. Young offenders often have families that are struggling and require support to help stop their children from offending.

By trying to prevent young people re-offending and supporting them towards a brighter future, the number of adult offenders in prison with serious needs may be reduced in the future.

Faith organisations and their work with young offenders

Reflex

Reflex is a faith-based charity that works in eleven prisons across five regions of the UK. They work with young people to break the chain of re-offending. Reflex identifies that many young offenders who are in prison do not have good levels of education. They aim to provide accredited education to provide young people with the skills they need to gain employment and to improve their self-confidence.

Current services and programmes:

Non-formal education programmes

Reflex gives young people the opportunity to receive 60 hours of accredited engagement through non-formal education.

Urban Skillz is a course focused on teaching young people music skills. Workshops are based on music technology and song writing to develop young people's creativity. They encourage young people to be proud of what they create and help them develop the confidence to share their work. There have been many positive outcomes of this programme, with young people saying they have developed self-esteem, learned to support peers, developed social skills and found positive role models.

"Since I started this whole thing, even the music thing, I didn't have any confidence at all, I didn't want to do anything, I didn't want to spit my bars or anything like that, didn't want to perform. Now I've found my confidence and I've found my feet." Participant in Werrington[73]

MyLife is another Reflex programme develops disengaged young people's social skills and helps those at risk of reoffending. The course teaches young people skills to live independently and to be positive contributors to society. It combines accredited courses and one-to-one mentoring sessions.

In HMP and YOI Low Newton, Reflex runs a project to engage young women in work placements and short term projects. Participants have the opportunity to complete a level 1 OCN Creative arts qualification with embedded key skills.

[71] 'Partners' webpage, found at http://www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/who-we-are/how-we-work, accessed on 15/08/16

[72] 'About us' webpage, found at http://www.reflex.org/post/about-us, accessed on 11/08/16

[73] 'Urban Skillz project research report', 2010, Dr Roz Hall, found at http://www.reflex.org/wp-content/uploads/External-Evaluation.pdf, accessed on 10/08/16

Resettlement mentoring

Reflex delivers through-the-gate, a resettlement mentoring programme for young people serving custodial sentences. They use a tried and tested methodology called 'creative reflection' which helps young people reflect creatively on their futures, focusing on five areas: social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and physical. Reflex has an outreach team that works in regional areas to run the programme in secure establishments.

Community groups

'Connect' is a supportive community in Newcastle that enables young people to meet to share life and faith by discussing relevant issues over a meal. It provides a safe and supportive environment for ex-offenders released from North East prisons where they can form supportive relationships in the community and with each other.

Barnardo's

Barnardo's offers support to young offenders and their families. They recognise that young offenders are predominantly drawn from the most disadvantaged families, and many have a lack of education or have suffered abuse.

Current services and programmes:

Family support for challenging behaviour

Barnardo's provide intensive support for families with children who display challenging behaviour. They support the young offenders with mentoring and equip families to support their children.

Specialist courses and education

Barnardo's runs educational activities and courses to prevent young people offending. They focus especially on excluded children or those with substance abuse problems.

Non-faith organisations and their work with young offenders

Nacro

Nacro train up and use ex-offenders to give mentoring to young-offenders. They believe ex-offenders can inspire and motivate offenders to change their behaviour.

Current services and programmes:

Avoiding gangs

Nacro has created a programme called 'Staying in Touch' which teaches young people about how to avoid being drawn into gangs and how they can change their behaviour patterns. They also help offenders develop the skills, motivation and attitude they need to get into education, employment or training. By focusing on deterring young people from joining gangs, they are less likely to get involved in crime and the gang culture that exists in prisons.

Through the gate resettlement contract

Nacro delivers a through the gate resettlement contract in 22 London boroughs for 14-17 year olds in custody. The contract delivers an individualized learning programme which raises young people's aspirations, improves their social and practical skills and aims to prevent them from turning to crime and re-offending. The aim is to help young offenders make successful transitions from prison into education, training or employment. To participate, a young offender signs up to the service in custody and is met at the gate as they leave prison. They receive expert help and guidance from community resettlement brokers and an individual mentor to help them through any issues.

Dissemination of best practice

Nacro runs a national programme called 'Beyond Youth Custody' which examines and promotes best practice in the resettlement of young people and adults leaving custody. The programme tries to establish an evidence base of effective practice through analysis of the impact of a range of approaches.

St Giles Trust

St Giles Trust is based in London and aims to support prisoners to change their lives and create safer communities.

Current services and programmes:

Work with young people at risk of exploitation

'The SOS project' works with young people exposed to or at risk of violence, exploitation or vulnerability. The work they carry out includes family support and they deal with issues such as exploitation and human trafficking. The project works with young people who are at risk of getting involved in the criminal justice system. It is delivered through small teams based in London and works in partnership with statutory agencies such as local authorities. The team also works in partnership with Redthread and the clinical team at The Royal London Hospital to work with young people who are admitted due to serious youth or sexual violence. The SOS project also sends ex-offender volunteers into schools to inform students of the dangers of getting involved with gang crime.

Successes in providing support to young offenders

Information gathered from faith and non-faith groups indicates that the best ways of supporting young offenders are through:

- education which can develop confidence and lead to employment
- support to help young offenders build positive relationships with their parents
- informing young people about the effects of crime on themselves and others
- anti-gang education and programmes

Case studies

When Mark was 15, he had anti-social behaviour issues and this meant his whole family were in danger of being evicted.[74] His mother and step-father faced a parenting order and he was awaiting the outcome of an assault charge. Barnardo's did an assessment and put together a plan to work with the whole family, including Mark's brother and sister, as well as other agencies including education, police, youth services and housing. After 11 months Mark had no further incidents of anti-social behaviour and his name was removed from the anti-social behaviour case conference. Mark stopped hanging around his previous gang. He received student of the year at his alternative education provider and now has an apprenticeship in Bricklaying.

One of Mark's parents said, *"My life and that of my children changed 100%, we now work together on problems, we talk instead of shouting, the children know what is acceptable and the consequences of doing things they know are wrong."*

A professional working with the family said of the programme, *"The youth justice system is not geared up to meet the needs of these young children. What is required is an intensive approach that works with the child and their family to challenge and support them to change."*

[74] 'Mark's story', found at http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/youth_justice/youth_justice_marks_story.htm, accessed on 22/08/16

Challenges faced by organisations supporting young offenders

Pervasive gang culture

One of the issues that organisations struggle with when providing services is gang culture. This issue was highlighted in the BBC documentary *Life Inside Wandsworth Prison*[75], in which many prisoners spoke about how gang culture continues inside prison. Gangs can follow each other into prison, making it very hard for individuals to escape from the culture and associated loyalties, both in prison and after release. This remains a major challenge for prison services and organisations trying to provide support to young offenders, and underlines the need for support in the community that helps young people to avoid becoming involved in gangs in the first place.

Furthermore, a member of Kainos Community told FaithAction that staff shortages can be a problem for prisons trying to stop gang culture from thriving. If there are staff shortages and violence in prisons, prison staff will be focused on preventing violence on a day-to-day basis rather than trying to come up with rehabilitation methods to help stop young people from re-offending.

[75] For details, see http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07prjfm, accessed 28/03/17

Services that Support Older People in Prison

Age UK has found that prisoners in their 50s and older have a physical health status ten years greater than their contemporaries in the community. [76] This means that in prisons, older people are vulnerable and require greater support to sustain their health and well-being. Age UK argue that the physical environment in prisons is often inadequate and that offending behaviour programmes and release and resettlement programmes are designed to meet the needs of younger people. It could be argued that this means that older people suffer age discrimination in prisons. Voluntary organisations such as Age UK and Recoop are calling for reform in the prison service in order to make sure services cater for the needs of older prisoners.

For older prisoners, release can create many problems. If an older prisoner is released after being in custody for many years, the community they enter can be a very different place to the one they left; for example, technology may have changed significantly. Some will have difficulty reading and writing. Services need to focus on areas such as health and social care, housing, pensions, and education and training. Support services need to work with older prisoners both before and after release so they can be prepared for life after prison.

Non-faith organisations that support older people

Age UK

Age UK works closely with the Prison Service and other voluntary organisations such as NACRO, Action for Prisoners' Families and the Prison Reform Trust. They also work with health and social services in order to help support older people in prison. They perform a practical role delivering services to older people and campaign and advocate for change in how prison systems care for and help older prisoners.

Day programmes

Age UK's day programmes provide practical activities for older people in prison to break up their days and allow them to socialise and feel less isolated. This helps promote older prisoners' sense of wellbeing and benefits their mental health. In HMP Sudbury, Age UK has promoted the use of older prisoners as volunteers in a tea-bar service in the visitors' room, giving these individuals a productive and sociable role within the prison.

Tailored advice

Age UK gives older people tailored advice on benefits, pensions, housing and health and other specialist areas.

Healthcare services

Age UK also help provide healthcare services in prisons such as nail-cutting or providing advice on health and exercise. They advocate on behalf of individual prisoners who may find it difficult to raise concerns.

Staff training

Age UK trains prison staff and volunteers about older prisoners' needs. Some local Age UK branches support prisoners after their release in the community.

[76] 'Supporting older people in prison: ideas for practice', June 2011, found at http://www.ageuk.org.uk/documents/en-gb/for-professionals/government-and-society/older%20prisoners%20guide_pro.pdf?dtrk=true, accessed on 29/08/16

Recoop

Recoop is a charity focused on the care, resettlement and rehabilitation of older offenders. They work with families, carers, prison staff and voluntary organisations to support older people. They develop forums, provide advice, offer low level social care and act as advocates for older prisoners.

Services in the community

Recoop works with key voluntary partners in the community to support the rehabilitation of older people. They work towards a better understanding of the needs of older offenders' families, carers and supporters. They also support older people with non-custodial sentences and aim to develop opportunities for volunteering, training and employment.

Advocacy

In prisons, Recoop works to promote older people's health and improve prison and support staff's awareness on the issues older people face. They also do national advocacy work and contribute to policy and practice regarding older offenders through learning, research and publications. They aim to raise awareness of the issues older offenders face in prison and examine how the prison service can help improve the quality of provision for older people to help them stop re-offending.

Education and training

Recoop is working with the Shaw Trust to deliver education and training services funded by the European Social Fund. They plan to support over 500 offenders over six years across a number of prisons in the South West. Their core objective is to improve social inclusion. Many of the clients will have had difficulty in accessing education and training which means their employment opportunities are limited when they are released. The programme will provide workshops and targeted support for individuals in a community setting and a case manager will work with each individual to guide them and provide access and support.

Adaptations for older offenders within prisons

In July 2015, Recoop was successful in an application for grant funding to assess the need and ability of prisons to adapt their regimes to meet the needs of older offenders. Lack of support for older people can cause deteriorating mental health problems and lead to social isolation or a sense of hopelessness about the future. Over a year, Recoop aims to test a series of adaptations in prisons and a range of approved premises, providing a number of model options which can replicated across prisons.

Day care centres

Recoop has developed two day care centre models:

Lobster Pot is run by Recoop staff and is open five days a week to the older population of the prison. Its primary function is to facilitate the resettlement of older people. The programme has age-specific personal plans and support is delivered in conjunction with personal officers. This increases a sense of personal responsibility and confidence of older people.

The Devon Cluster covers three prisons in the South West region. It provides a mental health and well-being clinic as well as a forum for older people, buddy training and resettlement fairs.

Nacro

Nacro is a leading charity dedicated to making society better by limiting the number of people offending and reoffending. They want to reduce crime and work by campaigning for better support to prisoners.

Current services and programmes:

Training for prison staff:

Nacro has published a resource pack called 'Working with Older Prisoners' and has created a 'Working with Older Prisoners' workshop. Both contain information on the needs of older people in prison, guidance on activities and training materials for prison staff.

Research

Nacro has recently published a detailed analysis of the mental health needs of older prisoners.[77] It provides evidence that older prisoners:

- are accommodated in a regime designed for and largely inhabited by young and able-bodied people;
- are a largely compliant population;
- experience poor levels of engagement between prisons and local agencies, especially local authority social services departments;
- lack any explicit policy or guidance that supports effective commissioning for their needs, resulting in confusion across the system as to who is responsible for what;
- are supported by prison staff who are untrained in the needs of older people;
- suffer high levels of chronic health problems that affect their ability to cope in prison and in the community, particularly mental health problems such as depression.

[77] 'A Critical Analysis of the Mental Health Needs of Older Prisoners, Staffordshire University & South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust', 2010, N. Le Mesurier et al., found at www.nicklemesurier.org/old-age-inprison.html, accessed on 10/08/16

Successes of organisations working with older prisoners

Often older people have spent a long time in prison and have had time to reflect on their crimes. Arguably this makes it easier for organisations to help them back into the community, as long as they are given the right support to overcome the many challenges they will face.

From the information gathered on how to help older offenders in prison, best practice in helping older people in prison includes:

- trying to prevent the isolation and loneliness that older people face both in prison and on resettlement in the community
- developing programmes centred on the needs of older people
- raising awareness of the specific needs of older prisoners at a national level
- training prison staff on the needs of older prisoners

Challenges faced by organisations working with older prisoners

Services are designed for younger offenders

According to prison population statistics produced by parliament, in March 2016 33% of the prison population was over the age of 39. Services should therefore take into account this significant older population present in prisons in the UK.[78] Voluntary organisations highlight that services are largely geared towards younger offenders, and there are significant barriers to seeing a change in this situation.

It can often be hard for organisations to offer support to older people in prison as the systems in place often disadvantage older prisoners. Age UK and Recoop therefore argue that the system needs to be reformed, but this will be a slow process. The Government is placing great emphasis on programmes that naturally support younger people in order to reduce reoffending, which means prisons are perhaps more reluctant to engage in programmes that specifically support the older prison population. That said, by reporting on the inequalities in the system and creating replicable models such as the Lobster Pot and Devon Cluster day care centres, organisations such as Recoop are making progress in providing better services for older prisoners.

Older offenders require more support on release

Older people who have served long prison sentences require more support from voluntary organisations on release as they face more barriers to reintegration in the community. The physical neighbourhood, local services and technology may have undergone significant changes while they were in prison. Often the community can feel like a completely different place for older people, leading to isolation and mental health issues. They may also have lost contact with friends and family, and so may have no support network. Organisations therefore need to invest more resources to prevent such individuals from being tempted to reoffend in order to return to the familiar prison environment.

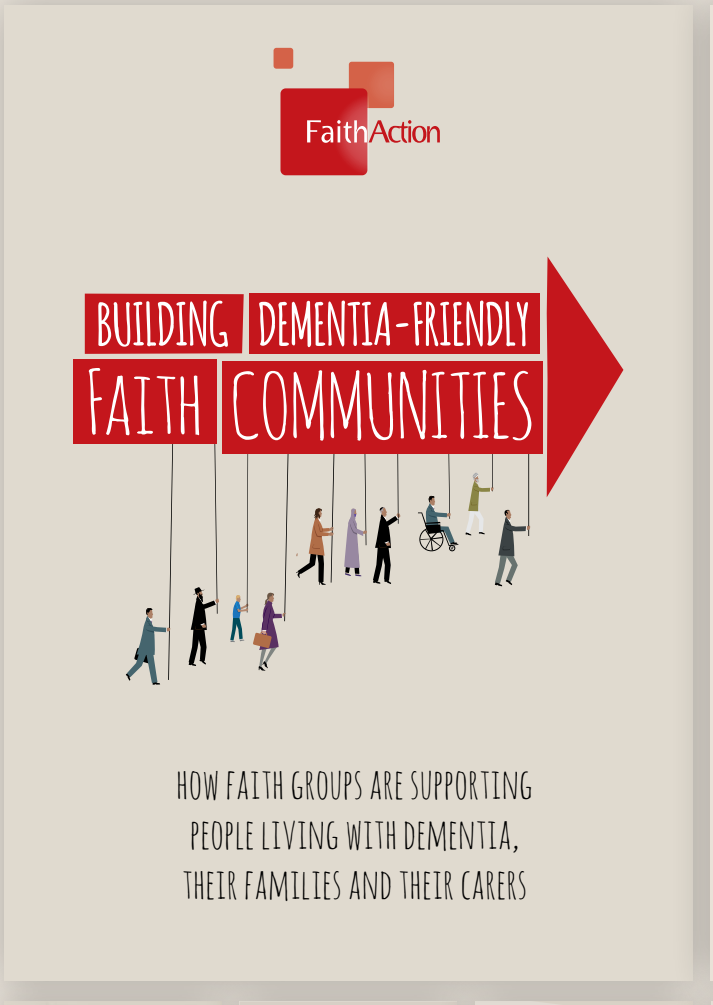
[78] Prison population figures, 4th July 2016, Grahame Allen and Noel Dempsey, House of Commons library, found at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2016, accessed on 01/09/16

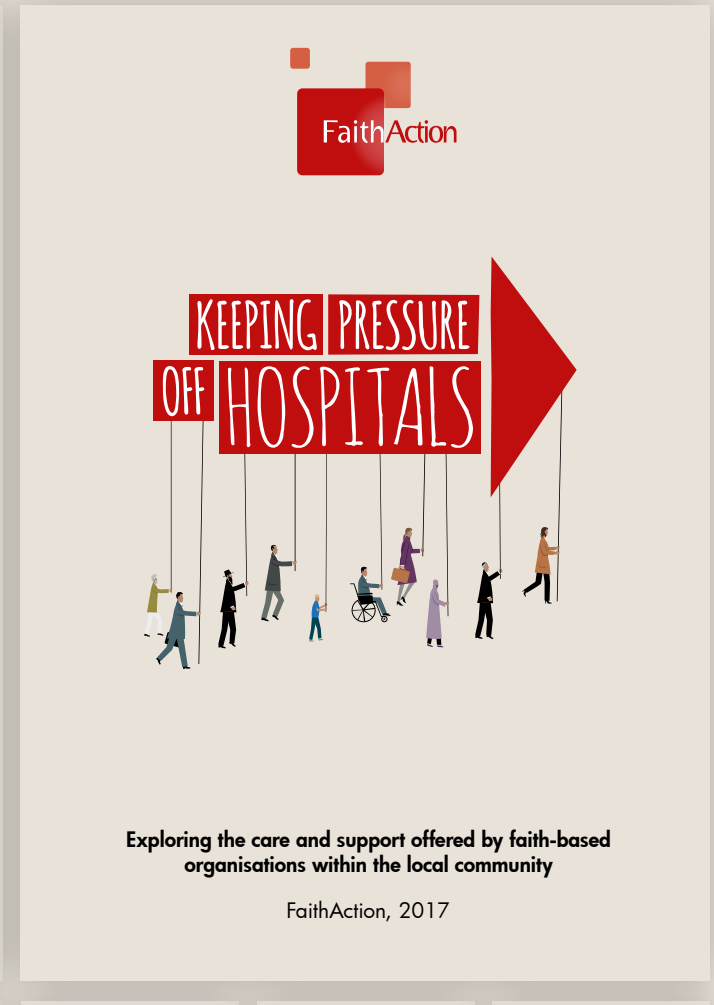
Conclusion

The prison service is under scrutiny like never before. With illegal strikes, prison escapes and stories of rioting in the autumn of 2016, there is a need to restore public confidence and trust among those running the service. Voluntary organisations already play a significant role in improving wellbeing and life chances for prisoners and their families, and could be a valuable part of this rebuilding process. These organisations choose to engage with offenders because they care. Faith-based organisations in particular have an unshakeable belief in the value of each person and the benefit of rehabilitation.

With prison governors likely to acquire new powers in coming years, this is an excellent time for voluntary organisations to demonstrate and declare their commitment to prisoners and ex-offenders. Faith-based organisations have a unique part to play; more than just a subset of the voluntary sector, they exist and sustain themselves independently, bringing a different dimension and additional expertise to the care and support of prisoners. As demonstrated in this report, they are usually happy to share learning and form partnerships with other organisations to improve services for those who need them most.

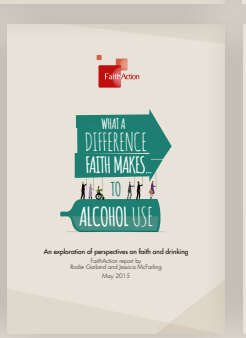
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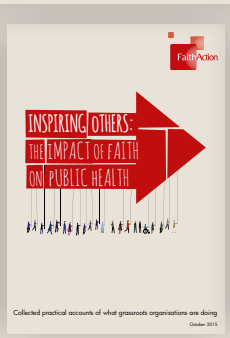


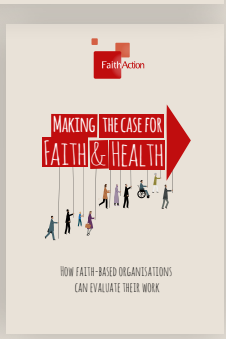












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