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Prison Advice & Care Trust

Family Futures

A review of pact's
resettlement pilot scheme
at HMP Wormwood Scrubs

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[The Prison Advice and Care Trust \(pact\)](#) is a charity dedicated to supporting prisoners and their families. We run visitors' centres, children's play services, first night in custody services and resettlement schemes at prisons across England and Wales.

Registered charity number 219278

Executive summary

This review focuses on a pilot project initiated by pact in partnership with London Probation and HMP Wormwood Scrubs, which ran from 2005 to 2007.

As part of the London Resettlement Strategy¹, HMP Wormwood Scrubs was designated as a resettlement pilot prison, which was “seeking to adopt a ‘closer to home’ approach, transferring prisoners who [were] planning on resettling in North West London but serving their sentences in other prisons... back to Wormwood Scrubs prior to release.”

The prison set aside an entire wing, E Wing, to be used as a resettlement wing for prisoners who were shortly going to be released into the local community. Specifically, the project was for prisoners due to be released into the following eight London boroughs:

- Barnet
- Brent
- Ealing
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Harrow
- Hillingdon
- Hounslow
- Kensington and Chelsea

Children and Families ‘Pathway’

The London Resettlement Strategy made a series of recommendations aimed at enabling offenders to maintain and develop relationships with their family whilst in custody. The following issues were identified:

- Insufficient awareness of the needs of the families of offenders and the services that already exist to meet those needs in London
- Crisis intervention support for prisoners and their families needs to be improved
- Families are not routinely involved in prison sentence planning
- Providing effective support and information to the families and children of offenders
- Better facilities are needed to ensure family contact can be maintained to reduce re-offending whilst protecting the rights / needs of the family / children
- The release of an offender impacts on their family, particularly if returning to the family home
- Difficulties facing families continue after the offender is released

Whilst the strategy made a series of London-wide recommendations, pact took the view that the resettlement wing at Wormwood Scrubs offered a unique opportunity to pilot and evaluate a model of working which focused on family relationships and the vital role they play in achieving positive resettlement outcomes.

Following discussions between pact and London Probation, we were commissioned to develop ‘Family Futures’, our pilot resettlement scheme at Wormwood Scrubs. The intention was to demonstrate an approach that worked, that represented good value for money, and that NOMS would wish to roll out to many more prisons in the future.

1. London Resettlement Strategy, Phase One of the London Reducing Re-offending Action Plan (September 2005), London Resettlement Board, Government Office for London

Recommendations

1. Resettlement plans should engage with families as a source of support and motivation to prisoners (emotional, practical, accommodation, education training and employment)

The 'Children and Families Pathway' to reduce re-offending has lacked any coherent policy or strategy within NOMS² and HMPS, and there has to date been no commissioning activity of note. Whilst the London Resettlement Strategy and the work of HMP Wormwood Scrubs has been admirable in some respects, the omission at the planning stage of a programme of work to engage with prisoners' families in terms of the resettlement process is difficult to understand. This project was initiated by pact, and was made possible through some short term funding, but was, in effect, an 'add-on'. As a result, the project was inadequately funded and had a short life. It seems self-evident that future local or area-based resettlement programmes and strategies must include adequately planned and funded programmes of work such as this to engage with families and other social networks of support.

2. 'Think family': time and space for 'real' communication

Work with prisoners' children and families, and programmes for prisoners which focus on relationships and parenting, have been designed and developed by third sector (voluntary sector) organisations, including pact, and other members of the national Action for Prisoners' Families network. Some activity has taken the form of courses, focused on prisoners, such as the Family Man course developed by Safeground, and the 'Time for Families' programme. Like the Family Futures project, these programmes seek to engage with and 'recruit' family members, to a process of shared communication and learning designed to improve prospects for successful resettlement. There is behind all such schemes a common understanding that in order to fully exploit the potential of family relationships in terms of resettlement outcomes and reducing re-offending, we need to listen to, and work directly with, family members ('Think Family').

Whilst some prisoners lack any form of social or familial support, there is ample evidence that where this does exist, there can be clear benefits in terms of accommodation and education, training and employment (ETE) outcomes. As this project found however, 'real' communication between prisoners and the person from whom they have the most significant relationship does not always take place during a prison sentence, for a range of reasons. Prisoners may lack empathy or listening skills. Families may avoid giving difficult messages. A brief phone call from prison, or a short visit in a noisy and open plan visits hall, often with tired children present, is for many families, not conducive to honest and open communication, or to dealing with the real challenges that may be facing them after release.

We recommend that prisons build into their resettlement planning the facilities and support needed to facilitate and encourage honest and real communications, in order to enable prisoners and their families to better prepare for life after release. This may take the form of 'family work' spaces, and family support workers with the appropriate skills and training.

3. Visitors' centres and resettlement

The role of the visitors' centre at HMP Wormwood Scrubs in this project was clearly critical. It provided a safe and welcoming environment, where families could be listened to, and engaged with, by a trusted non-uniformed intermediary (the pact workers). We recommend that all prisons be equipped with suitable accessible premises, to ensure that prisoners' families are provided with a warm welcome, refreshments, toilets, baby changing and locker facilities, and access to information, advice and guidance and emotional support. The 'Recognising Quality' Self-Assessment Tool should be the benchmark.

2. National Offender Management Service

Where such facilities exist, we recommend that they be overseen by the member of the prison's senior management team responsible for resettlement, and be linked into the prison's resettlement planning, in order to fully maximise the potential benefits of engaging with families as a source of support for prisoners during custody and upon release. In some cases, visitors' centres fall within the remit of Security or Operations. Whilst security will always be the paramount concern of prisons, and minimising the taking in of illegal items is essential, this can sometimes mean that visitors' centres, and therefore families, are perceived by prison staff as primarily a security issue, and their positive potential to support the resettlement process can be overlooked.

4. Learning for pact

The short-term nature of this project was frustrating for us, particularly as the early indications were so positive. Nevertheless, it has informed our thinking about how to engage successfully with prisoners and their families. Work is now in development in partnership with Safeground to revise the 'Family Man' course and to develop a 'Family Action Plan' model of working which engages with families, optimises the use of visitors' centres, and facilitates 'real' communication. Another programme of work is focusing on encouraging more frequent visiting, and more positive visits, by families with older children, many of whom find standard social visits upsetting or negative experiences. We continue to enjoy a positive working partnership with our colleagues in HM Prison Service at Wormwood Scrubs and other establishments, and we will continue to encourage, support, promote, and where possible, deliver a 'Think Family' approach to reducing re-offending.

About the Prison Advice and Care Trust (pact)

The Prison Advice & Care Trust (pact) is an independent charity that works to support prisoners and their families to make a fresh start. We work with children and families of prisoners, and with prisoners inside and on release. pact provides services at prisons across Greater London, in the South West of England, and at HMP Woodhill in Milton Keynes.

Our mission

To support prisoners and their families to make a fresh start and to minimise the harm that can be caused by imprisonment on offenders, families and communities

Our goals

- To ensure that the children, their carers, and families of prisoners have access to appropriate advice, care and support to meet their needs
- To facilitate opportunities for positive contact between prisoners and their families from the courts to release
- To support families and prisoners in the resettlement process
- To respond to the needs of prisoners at risk of suicide and self-harm
- To support the development of restorative justice and promote community involvement in supporting people affected by imprisonment

Our values

- To respect the innate dignity and worth of every human being, and in the possibility of their rehabilitation and redemption, no matter what they have done
- To consult and involve users of our services to ensure that we remain responsive and sensitive to their needs
- To respect and value diversity and promote equality of opportunity
- To be a collaborative organisation, working co-operatively and in a spirit of partnership with the Prison Service, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), and organisations with whom we share objectives and where this may result in improved outcomes
- To be a learning organisation, committed to developing our people, and to learning from others and from each other
- To provide quality services, and to monitor and evaluate our work
- To encourage and facilitate the involvement of volunteers and community and faith-based organisations to harness the goodwill, skills and energies of individuals who share our goals and values

-
- To break down barriers between the prison system and communities
 - To be innovative and develop models of working and best practice which may be mainstreamed by Her Majesty's Prison Service and others

pact runs visitors' centres outside the prison gates, offering advice and support to people coming to visit a loved one in prison. Our children's play services operate inside prisons, providing toys and activities for children visiting a relative inside. In many prison visits halls and visitors' centres, pact runs catering services for prisoners and their families – selling drinks and snacks, providing healthy options, and giving people the chance to eat together as a family.

For prisoners arriving in prison, pact has pioneered 'First Night in Custody' services. Our aim is reduce the very high levels of anxiety felt by some prisoners on their first night in jail, and reduce the possibility of self-harm and suicide.

We also run a range of special projects, including resettlement work helping newly released prisoners integrate back into society.

Role of the service

Context of service

HMP Wormwood Scrubs is a Category “B” prison, meaning it has the second highest level of security. It had an operational capacity of 1,256 prisoners as of August 2007. The pact Resettlement Service was created to meet the resettlement needs of prisoners and their families taking part in the resettlement pilot that was launched at the prison in 2005. This pilot scheme grew out of Government Office for London’s resettlement strategy (now re-branded as the re-offending strategy) which identified key re-offending ‘pathways’ where provision of vital services was necessary to support prisoners in ensuring that they were able to minimise the risk of re-offending upon release from prison. pact was contracted to assess the needs of prisoners and families in accordance with the ‘children and families re-offending pathway’. Following our initial needs analysis, which was conducted from August – November 2006, pact had responsibility for devising and implementing the strategy to meet those needs at HMP Wormwood Scrubs. The pact service was restricted to those prisoners taking part in the pilot scheme. These prisoners were to be released into one of eight West London boroughs³ and were housed together on one wing of the prison where they received services from a range of agency staff designed to meet their specific resettlement needs.

The wing where the resettlement project is housed holds approximately 146 prisoners. The number of prisoners on the resettlement project has fluctuated over time depending on a number of factors. To be accepted as resettlement prisoners, individuals have to be willing to engage with the process, commit to active participation and agree to information sharing between the agencies involved in the scheme. The number of prisoners involved in the scheme is therefore dependant upon the success of recruiting individuals willing to participate, as well as various operational factors governing the regime on the wing itself. At the time of writing there were approximately 90 resettlement prisoners on the wing.

The predominant resettlement issues faced by prisoners may be expressed in terms of the offending pathways expressed in Government Office for London’s re-offending strategy:

- 1) Accommodation
- 2) Employment, training and education
- 3) Health (including alcohol)
- 4) Attitudes, thinking and behaviour
- 5) Drugs
- 6) Finance, debt and benefit
- 7) Children and families

3. Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Kensington and Chelsea

Staffing of project

The project had two permanent members of staff:

- The Resettlement Development Worker was responsible for the strategic aspects of the service, as well as for working directly with the prisoners. They were based in their office housed on the resettlement wing inside the prison
- The Resettlement Family Support Worker was responsible primarily for providing support to the families of resettlement prisoners. They are based outside the prison in the visitors' centre. The visitors' centre is run by pact and provides advice and support to people visiting the prison.

In addition the project used volunteers to assist in administration and the facilitating of workshops.

Aims and objectives of the service

- 1) To assess the resettlement needs of prisoners and families in accordance with the children and families re-offending pathway. Prior to pact commencing work there was no support of this nature throughout the prison.
- 2) To devise and implement a strategy to meet these needs.
- 3) To provide separate and confidential support services designed to meet the needs of prisoners and families separately.
- 4) To provide effective support to clients both prior to release and also 'through the gate' in the period after imprisonment.
- 5) To engage in a multi-agency approach to our clients' resettlement, sharing information and building links with prison, probation and other agency staff working on resettlement within the prison and with relevant services and agencies within the eight boroughs.
- 6) To monitor the success of the service through feedback from clients, partners, and through monitoring the re-offending rates amongst clients making use of the service.

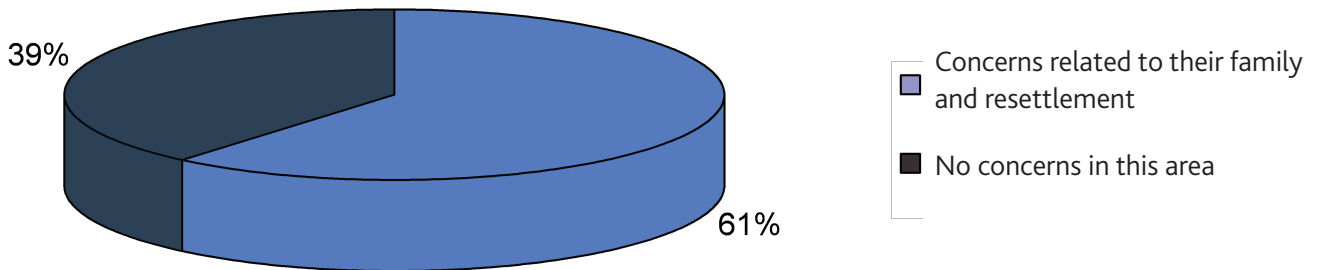
Project Intervention

Needs Analysis

pact staff conducted an initial needs analysis between August – November 2006 in order to assess the extent of the need amongst the client group and the specific forms of support needed. We completed questionnaires with a random sample of 20 prisoners due for release⁵. Questionnaires were then sent to the families of this group of men to assess the need amongst prisoners' families.⁶

The needs analysis revealed the following:

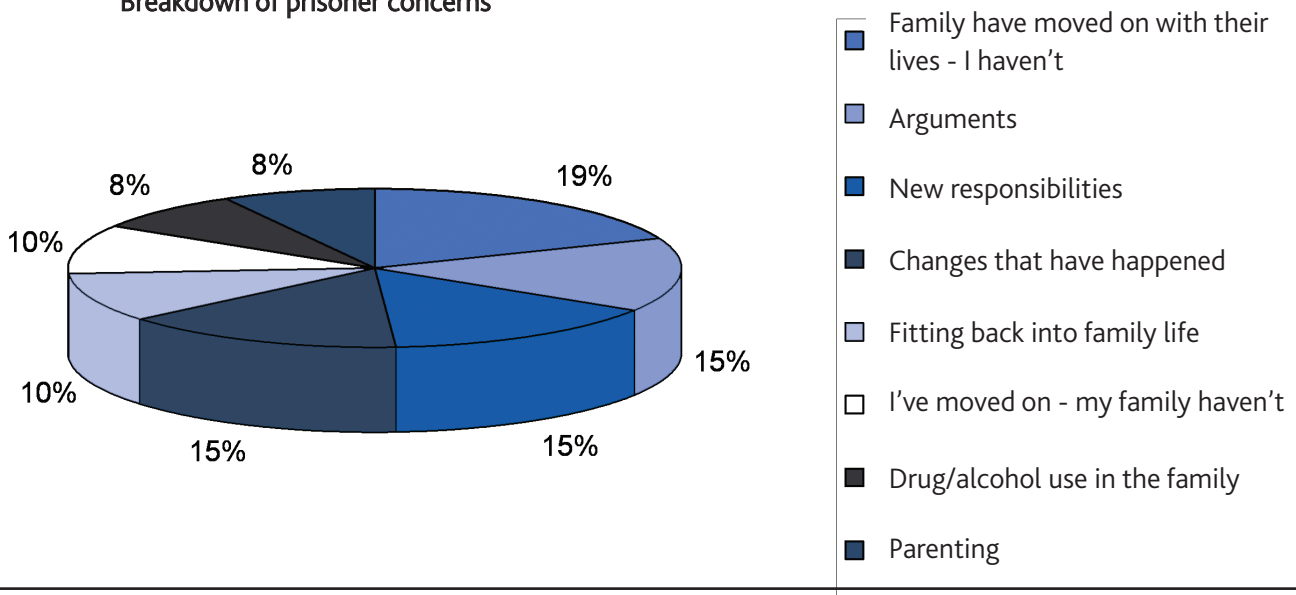
Prisoner resettlement concerns



As the diagram shows, a large proportion (61%) of the resettlement prisoners surveyed in our initial needs analysis felt some form of concern about their resettlement relating specifically to issues to do with their families.

Below is a breakdown of the areas of concern felt by those prisoners who expressed resettlement concerns relating to children and families:

Breakdown of prisoner concerns



5. See appendix A for the initial needs analysis questionnaire distributed to prisoners

6. See appendix B for the initial needs analysis questionnaire sent to families

These results are based on a scoring system which asked prisoners to rate various potential areas of concern with a score indicating how concerned they were about that particular area. Based on the information provided we were able to calculate the percentage of the total number of points awarded that each category rated.

Whilst these results were extremely helpful to us in developing the service it should be noted that they were gleaned from surveying a relatively small group of prisoners (20 respondents completed the questionnaires). We have found that the results are not entirely indicative of the true state of need across the client group. For example, the level of interest in parenting support amongst the prisoners on the wing has been far greater than the 8% which that particular area of concern rated in the survey. Note that the category of 'drug/alcohol use in the family' relates to the drug or alcohol use of family members other than the prisoner. A number of prisoners surveyed (13%) did say that they were concerned about their own drug use but the findings do not indicate whether this concern is linked to their families or merely concern about the drug use in isolation. This is probably a flaw in the needs analysis, as we know from discussion with our clients that for many of them concern over their drug use is often linked to concern over the impact on their families and can be an important motivation to change. Again it is worth noting that the figure of 13% who expressed concern regarding their own drug use was far lower than the number of prisoners on the wing who were imprisoned as a result of committing drug-related offences.

Sample quotes from prisoners who completed the questionnaires about the kind of concerns they felt about release in relation to their families:

"My girlfriend's just given birth to our first child. When all my other kids were growing up I was homeless and on drugs. So was their mother. I want to be different this time but I need to learn how to be a father and a partner."

"I split up with my girlfriend two months ago while I was in here. I still like her but she denies she has a drink problem... I've done courses and can talk openly now about my drink problem... They are organizing an AA sponsor for when I get out. I thought it was for the best I move on from her as I have changed, but she hasn't".

"It is a big thing in Asian families when someone does drugs. They gave up on me, said it was my own fault... I kept my life secret from my family for a long time... My mum and dad split up while I was in jail ...my dad blames me for mum leaving".

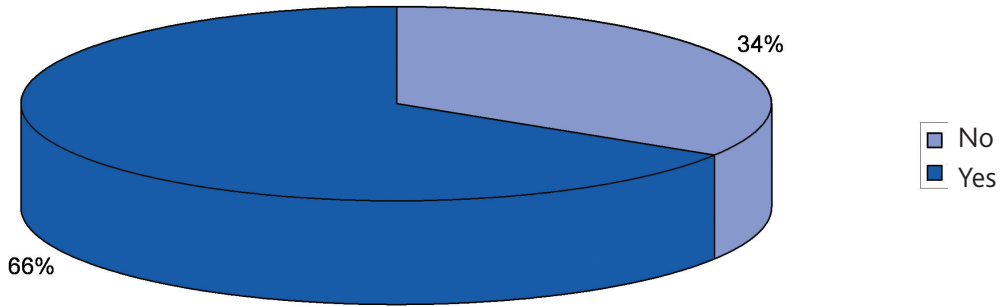
"I don't want my son coming here. I send him letters and cards all the time but I don't get any reply. His mum and me are not together. When I'm released I want to start putting him first in my life. I need to be a daddy again – take him to school, do other stuff with him like gardening together. He doesn't know I'm here but I want to tell him when I get out".

"When I came out last time I felt like a stranger with the family at home. I couldn't cope with all the arguments. It sounds sad but in the end I couldn't wait to come back to prison."

The needs analysis questionnaires we distributed asked “do your family have any concerns regarding your release?”

The results are displayed below:

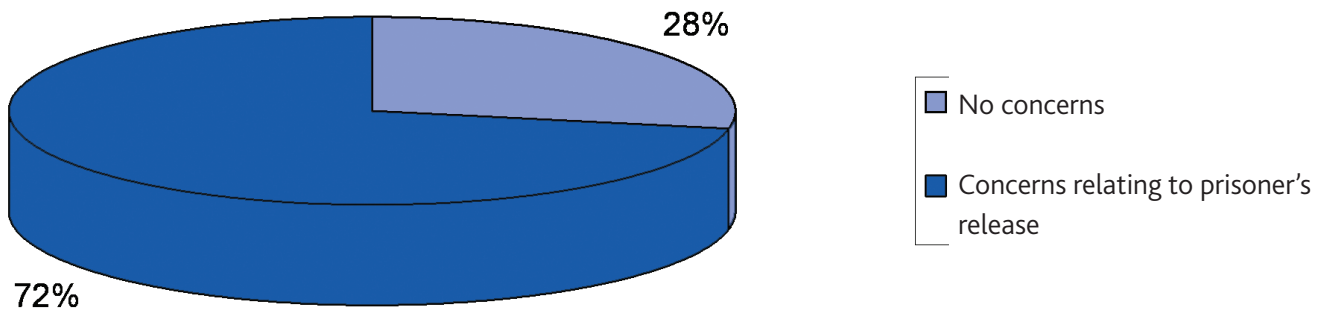
Do your family have any concerns regarding your release?



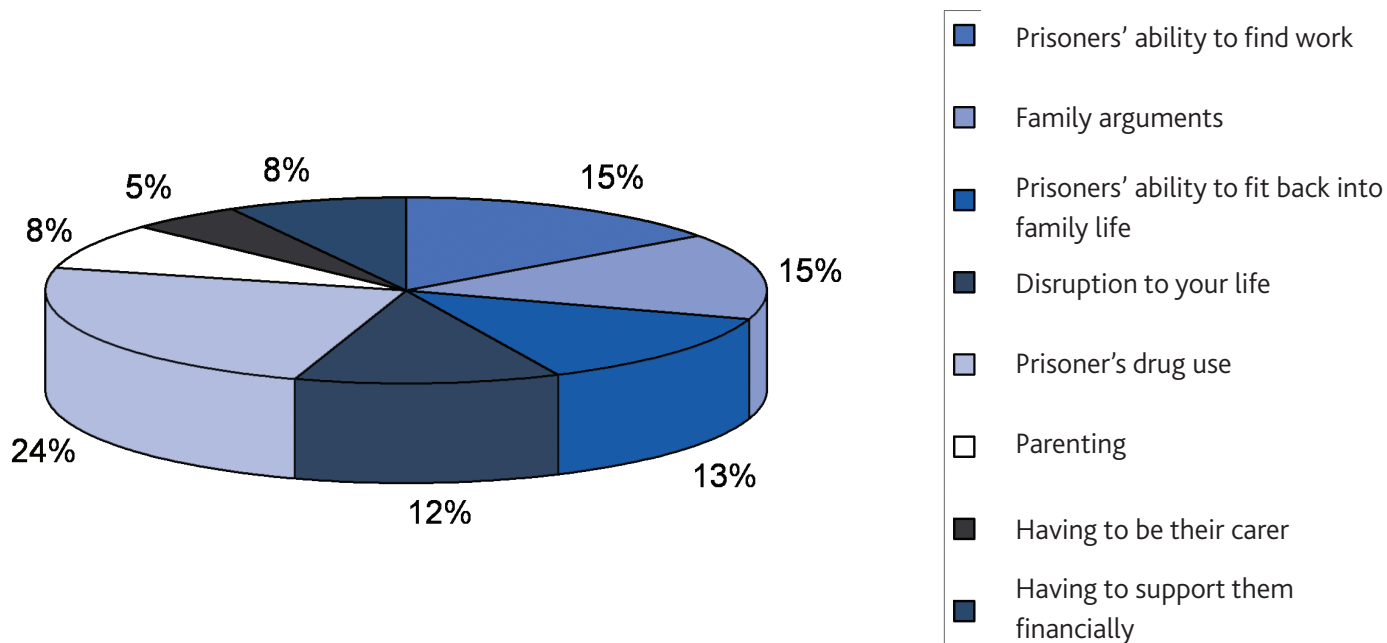
Having completed the needs analysis of prisoners on the wing we asked them to provide us with the contact details of family members. We then contacted these families and asked them to complete corresponding questionnaires to provide us with information on the needs of the families.

The response to the question “do you have any concerns around your family member’s release from prison?” is pictured below:

Families’ concerns



The breakdown of concerns expressed by the family:



Note: these results were produced through questionnaires returned by a relatively small number of respondents (14 family members returned the questionnaires). However the findings remain of interest and have been largely substantiated by the work we have subsequently carried out with families.

Sample quotes from family members who returned the questionnaires:

"I want to help him with his drug addiction but all I seem to be able to do is turn a blind eye or let him take advantage of me."

"I'm worn out. He always breaks his promises to me and the kids about changing. It feels like I'll be visiting prisons for ever."

"When my husband's out of prison he picks fights and uses them as an excuse to go out and take drugs. I must admit that I sometimes quite like it when he's not at home, even if he is in jail, because that gives me independence and peace. When he gets out I often find it difficult having him back in the house and I can be very critical towards him."

"I used to have an honest open relationship with my children but my son's heroin addiction led to lies and him committing crime."

When asked about the forms of support they would most like to use to address these concerns, both prisoners and families indicated a strong interest in one-to-one support and group workshops around a range of family issues such as family relationships and parenting.

Actions following the needs analysis

Separate one-to-one support services for prisoners and families were launched in November 2006. pact staff commenced work on devising workshop programs and other resources to address the needs and concerns of the client group. Particular emphasis was placed on providing services that would empower clients and enable them to communicate more effectively with each other.

The needs analysis had revealed a gulf of understanding and communication between prisoners and their families. For example, when asked, 34% of prisoners thought their families had no concerns regarding their release as opposed to 72% of family members who responded that they did have concerns about the release of that same group of prisoners. There may have been a certain amount of bravado on the part of the prisoners in responding or a refusal to acknowledge to themselves or to us the pain they had often put their families through, but this gap in communication is certainly very real in many cases and can be a real obstacle to successful resettlement. The philosophy of the pact service was that encouraging families and prisoners to communicate honestly and explore their anxieties regarding release in the build up to a prisoner's release increases the likelihood of successful resettlement.

Partnership work/multi-agency approach

All prisoner interventions were carried out in accordance with the multi-agency approach of the resettlement project. This necessitated effective information-sharing about prisoner participation and/or suitability for particular interventions. Using this approach, pact staff worked closely with their partners in the Prison Service, Probation Service and voluntary sector at all times. This approach was designed to ensure a seamless resettlement service for prisoners from all the agencies involved.

The pact service worked to develop strong partnership work with services in the community and within the prison in order to ensure we were able to signpost services and refer clients effectively to appropriate services. Through building these strong partnerships we had access to expert professional advice in key areas that could inform our own work (for example the impact of drug use on our clients). We were also able to utilise these partnerships to provide specific forms of support such as workshops and counselling⁷. These services were facilitated in partnership with Marriage Care, an organisation that provides professional relationship counselling, and the family support service at Ealing Drug Intervention Programme.

Interventions

Assessment process

All prisoners referred to the service were required to complete the assessment process. The initial assessment forms⁸ were completed by the Resettlement Development Worker during an initial one-to-one interview between the worker and the prisoner in question. Based on the information provided the Resettlement Development Worker would decide on the type of appropriate support (see below). Prisoners were also required to read and sign pact's service confidentiality agreement.⁹

Family members referred to the service were not required to complete the assessment process. However, they were read the confidentiality agreement and were required to sign it if they received support in person at the visitors' centre.

One-to-one support

After the service was launched, prisoners were referred to the Resettlement Development Worker by the Probation Service, Prison Service, other agency staff or self-referral by prisoners themselves. The one-to-one sessions provided support and advice

7. Details of the partnership work is below in "Interventions"

8. See appendix C

9. See appendix D

to prisoners around any issue relating to children and families. Where necessary the pact Resettlement Development Worker would signpost and refer service users to other suitable services in the prison and the community (e.g. support services for drug users, housing support, Citizens' Advice Bureau etc). 63 prisoners went through the assessment process necessary for one-to-one sessions during the service's lifetime.

Prisoners were able to refer family members to the pact Resettlement Family Support Worker who would contact the families and offer them the same one-to-one support service on offer to the prisoners. This service was entirely confidential and a support service aimed at meeting the needs of the families rather than the prisoners. 52 family members were referred to the family support service.

Workshops

Pilot workshops

Acting on the results of the needs analysis, the pact staff set about devising a pilot series of workshops which would best meet the resettlement needs of both prisoners and families.

The focus of the workshops

It was decided that the workshops should focus on the following key areas:

Note that this was not exhaustive of the issues that the needs analysis revealed as being of importance to our client group. It was decided to restrict the remit of the initial workshops to this group of issues because they were some of the most commonly expressed areas of concern by the client group and because of the strong partnerships we had begun to build with professionals in relevant fields (see below).

- Relationship building
- Communication and conflict resolution skills
- Children issues, including child law and parenting from prison
- Impact of drug use on the family
- Preparing for release back into family life: expectations, potential HDC¹⁰ pitfalls

Workshop format

It was decided to pilot a workshop format involving seven workshops for prisoners, to be held in the prison, and four for families of prisoners, to be held in the visitors' centre. These respective courses were to run more or less concurrently.

The workshops were open to all resettlement prisoners and their families. Participating prisoners were required to commit to attending all sessions. Family members participating were free to attend whichever sessions they wished to as we appreciated the constraints that often prevent the client group accessing services when they wish to. Additionally the sessions on drug use would not be relevant to a family without a drug user in it.

*OCN accreditation:*¹¹

Following the group course for prisoners the men participating were given the chance to gain a recognised level one OCN accreditation in 'family relationships'.

10. Home Detention Curfew

11. Open College Network

Session breakdowns:

Workshops for prisoners

1. 'Families' – Introduction to the course and group contract. Discussion of different types of family. pact aims for the course and participants' aims.
2. 'Relationships and resettlement' (in partnership with Marriage Care) – Examining the ways relationships change and the impact of imprisonment on relationships.
3. 'Drugs and the impact on the Family' (in partnership with Ealing DIP) – Discussion of different stages and coping strategies families may go through in response to having a drug user in the family.
4. 'Relationship skills' (in partnership with Marriage Care) – Introducing the transactional analysis model of communication and looking at communication skills.
5. 'Fatherhood' – Looking at the roles and responsibilities of parents, particularly fathers. Ideas on parenting from prison and the impact of a parent's imprisonment on a child.
6. 'Family roles' (in partnership with Ealing DIP) – the different roles family members may play in the context of drug use.
7. Final recap workshop – overview of the course.

Workshops for families

In partnership with Marriage Care – relationships:

1. 'Relationships and resettlement' - Examining the ways relationships change and the impact of imprisonment on relationships.
2. 'Relationship skills' - Introducing the transactional analysis model of communication and looking at communication skills.

In Partnership with Ealing DIP – coping with a drug user in the family:

3. 'Drugs and the impact on the family' - Discussion of different stages and coping strategies families may go through in response to having a drug user in the family
4. 'Family roles' – The different roles family members may play in the context of drug use.

Programme of workshops

Following the success of the pilot workshops, pact staff continued to provide the group workshop service to support both prisoners and families. Throughout the remainder of the project's operation, workshops were held every Monday evening in the visitors' centre. These workshops covered the same topics as those worked on in the pilot (see above), but with an expanded program on coping with a drug user in the family. The decision to expand this section of the programme was taken because it is the single biggest issue that our clients requested help with.

Additional topics covered were:

1. 'Boundaries' – setting and maintaining healthy boundaries within the context of drug use / criminal behaviour
2. 'The cycle of change' – understanding the stages drug users may pass through in attempting to go clean

The pact service also continued to provide a workshop support service to prisoners. When doing so the decision was taken to run a shortened version of the original seven session programme and concentrate on the two sessions on family relationships co-facilitated with Marriage Care. This decision was taken on the basis of logistical considerations (see challenges – below). Also the work on family relationships was an excellent grounding for relationship counselling (see below) which it became clear there was a great need for amongst the client group.

23 prisoners made use of our workshops. 28 family members attended the workshops in the visitors' centre.

Relationship counselling

In instances where clients expressed having difficulties in a family relationship we were able to offer them relationship counselling through Marriage Care. In the case of the family members of prisoners they were able to visit a counsellor at the Marriage Care head office in Hammersmith. Prisoners were able to receive counselling from a Marriage Care counsellor within the prison, the counsellor's entry to the prison being facilitated by pact staff. Where both parties were willing to engage in the process, joint counselling sessions were held in a legal visits room in the prison. Please note that the relationship counselling techniques utilised in these instances were applicable to all manner of family relationships, not just those of marriage or partnership. Those participating have the option to continue the counselling process upon release from prison, working with the same counsellor. The sessions were free of charge and our clients have been able to skip the normal waiting procedure to be seen as Marriage Care were convinced of the value of the work in providing support to this exceptionally hard to reach group who would not normally access their relationship education or counselling services.

Seven clients have received counselling, either separately or in a joint session.

Through-the-gate support

Once a prisoner had been released they and their family were still able to receive one-to-one support from the pact resettlement staff. Family members were also able to continue attending the group workshops we operated. Ex-prisoners and their families also had the option of counselling sessions with Marriage Care, either together or separately. Clients could also contact pact for information on services in the community post-release (e.g. housing services, support with drug problems etc).

pact staff routinely contacted prisoners and families in the build up to release and at periodic intervals after release to ask them about any concerns or problems they were experiencing and to see what forms of support the service might be able to offer.

Sixteen clients (both ex-prisoners and family members) made use of the post-release support services.

Other services

After the project was launched, pact provided a number of other services to prisoners on an ad hoc basis.

For example, pact staff ran a Christmas card workshop one afternoon on the resettlement wing shortly before Christmas to give prisoners an opportunity to make their own cards to send to children and families. This was a very popular event with the prisoners, some of whom had not sent cards or letters to their families because of problems with reading and writing, which pact staff were on hand to help them with. Over 100 Christmas cards were made by prisoners for their loved ones. It was a very enjoyable and relaxing afternoon at what can be a stressful and upsetting time.

Feedback from prisoners at Christmas card making workshop:

"I couldn't afford to buy Christmas Cards to send to my family without this."

"I can't write so I don't usually send cards. It'll be a nice surprise for my kids to get one."

"It's good. Something different."

"We should have more workshops like this. Like on Valentine's Day."

"This shows you really care about us".

pact have also provided training on the resettlement issues faced by children, families and prisoners to prison staff and other agency staff on a number of occasions. The training sessions were aimed at raising awareness of the difficulties faced by prisoners and their families in preparing for release and coping with the aftermath of imprisonment. Participants were asked to think about how the training could inform their own work with prisoners and the families of prisoners. Feedback from participants was recorded.

Feedback from participants in a training session for the Community Chaplaincy Mentoring Scheme, the Probation Service, Prison Service and Ealing DIP:

What have you learnt from the training?

"We need to increase awareness of the challenges both of prisoner and family."

"Prisoners need help to understand the challenges families are facing."

"I was already aware of issues facing families as I work in this field - but the workshop was a fantastic opportunity to meet other professionals working in that area. Also, the workshop was really well put together and delivered - I really liked the use of the video and enjoyed watching the pact team facilitate it so competently. I also learned much more about the resettlement wing."

What things are you going to do as a result of the training?

"Make offender more aware that it takes time to settle back into the family."

"Encourage families to participate more in programmes."

"Have more empathy with the families of prisoners."

"See how we can support pact."

"Talk to the prisoners about their family empathy / apathy."

"To take the impact of the film and issues discussed into account in my work."

"I have made a valuable connection with pact, which has already resulted in us working together (the three workshops, pact coming to our team meeting). I am going to buy the "Homeward Bound" video to use in my own training work as I think it is a brilliant training aid. I hope to maintain working in partnership with pact as it really makes sense for pact and DIP to communicate and exchange knowledge and experience."

Feedback from a training session for staff from the Probation Service, Prison Service and voluntary sector:

What have you learnt from the training?

"Insight into the gulf of understanding and expectations between prisoners and their families."

"Views from the family – how things impact on them."

"More about the network of help in resettlement building up."

"The feelings of families, like the mother who gave the talk as part of the training."

"Family relationships, stress on families when fathers are away."

"What pact is about, what their aims are and how pact work on E wing."

"That pact run a play group for children during visits."

"Indication of how I may use pact to help prisoners I am working with."

"Who the staff in the pact visitor's centre at the prison are and what they do."

"I think it is beneficial for the resettlement project."

What things are you going to do as a result of the training?

"Think more about our work with clients and how this impacts on their families."

"Advise my clients of the service."

"Spend more time to visit staff in the visitors' centre and see what information I can provide from my service."

"Consider how it may be useful to the prisoners I work with."

"Find out more about how the offending pathways can work together."

Outcomes - Effectiveness of the service

Feedback from prisoners

Feedback from the prisoners we worked with was gathered throughout the lifetime of the service. All prisoners receiving specific forms of support such as counselling or participating in workshops were asked to complete evaluation forms¹². Prior to release all clients were asked to complete an exit survey evaluating the service they received from pact and discussing any anxieties they had about release and any further help they wanted from the service¹³. All prisoners making use of the service were also contacted after release and asked how they were coping with life in the community, whether the resettlement work with pact had proved helpful and whether they required further assistance. This contact was normally a telephone call.

"I learnt to listen more attentively and to also see things from another angle which at times is something we often do not consider."

- *Workshop participant*

"The exercises helped break down the different aspects of resettling back into family life. The course gave me a lot of ideas about things that can go wrong upon release. I will continue to think about these – my main concern is how the family will pick up where we left off and what our emotions will be like."

- *Workshop participant*

"It made me realise what I want to do about my kids and my missus and stopping my drug use and offending."

- *Workshop participant*

"When I came out last time I felt like a stranger with the family at home. I couldn't cope with all the arguments. It sounds sad but in the end I couldn't wait to come back to prison..." "After my dad started working with pact he was like a different person. He said that he was going to give me the time and space to get myself sorted this time and give me the time to go to him if I have any problems. He said this time when I get out we have to talk through things calmly. We have a history of explosive arguments, but I think it will be different this time. I was shocked, but feel happier now about leaving. I think it is going to work out."

- *pact client prior to release. He has now been released for nine months (as of August 2007)*

"It was very good and helped put my wife's mind at rest – I would like to continue seeing the counsellor after release – I need good sources of support for when I'm going to go off the rails."

- *Prisoner having received relationship counselling*

Feedback from families

Feedback from the families we worked with was gathered throughout the lifetime of the service. All family members receiving specific forms of support such as counselling or participating in workshops were asked to complete evaluation forms. Prior to the release of the prisoners, their families were asked to complete an exit survey evaluating the service they received from pact and discussing any anxieties they had about the prisoner's release and any further help they wanted from the service. All families making use of the service were also contacted after release and asked how they were coping following their relative's release, whether the resettlement work with pact had proved helpful and whether they required further assistance. This contact

12. Evaluation forms contained in the appendices E & F

13. Exit surveys contained in appendix G

was normally a telephone call.

"Everybody has a role to play in his life. It took something like this for them to discover what their roles are and to realise that they weren't playing them."

- *Sister of pact client after participating in pact workshop*

"I used to have an honest open relationship with my children but his heroin addiction led to lies and him committing crime... After these workshops I feel like we can get some of the honesty back."

- *pact client and mother of prisoner who also used the pact service*

"I feel like I've got him back. He's happier than I've seen him for years".

- *Mother of pact client after his release*

"It gives us an opportunity to sort things out as we go along, rather than trying to find help when we are in the middle of a crisis, which might be too late because by then we'll have gone back to our old destructive behaviours."

- *Client following relationship counselling*

Feedback from project partners

Staff from all agencies and organisations that worked in partnership with the pact service were asked to complete evaluation forms regarding the impact of the service as they saw it .

Prison Service feedback - feedback from prison staff – their perception of the service

"Coming close to release there are always worries and concerns about being re-introduced into the family circuit. pact helps to ease the concerns and agree on coping mechanisms for this. Regular access to families will help to ease the related anxiety."

"Without the pact service prisoners will be missing out and I think it is unfair to remove the service. Many of the adults in here are fathers, especially younger ones. pact helps and assists with reintegrating back into family life."

"I think that considering the Children and Families Pathway is one of the main re-offending pathways pact's service has been vital at the establishment as the only service providing support around this area."

"It seems incredible there is no further funding in this area."

Probation Service feedback

"pact are excellent. Sensitive, perceptive and adept at avoiding any of the potential traps inherent in such a service. The pact workers have, too, documented fully the work that they have done with individuals, have always been willing to attend case reviews and have been willing to try to work with every prisoner."

"Relationships" may be a difficult concept to grasp/measure, but in my opinion they are at the heart of a prisoner's future stability (and that includes their accommodation). The work done by pact has helped understanding from both sides – it has encouraged offenders to consider the effects of their behaviour on those close to them, and helped and supported those in the community through the disruption and distress caused by the offending and incarceration of partners, children etc."

"A particular value of the service is that it has helped prisoners to place their offending and related behaviour in a broader context – both to contemplate the harm done to those they would least wish to hurt, and to consider what they have to lose if they cannot build bridges."

"I cannot speak highly enough of the energy, warmth and commitment of the pact team. They have achieved an unbelievable amount in a short space of time. Their group work has been more popular, I think, than any other programme. pact is not even an expensive resource. I consider its withdrawal deplorable."

"The contact I had with pact was very positive. Their work with offenders on the wing made a big difference to some prisoner. As a multi agency organisation it is very important for families to be consulted and helped with the rehabilitation of their family members."

"pact was very beneficial, from what I saw they had been able to help prisoners settle more easily into prison regime and supported them and their families where there was possible conflict."

"I personally am very sad about pact not being included further into the resettlement project as family contact has a lot to do with prisoners being able to settle back into the community. The prisoners will undoubtedly be the ones losing out."

"I have been involved with the resettlement pilot on E Wing for some time and it was nice to speak to the pact staff at the case conferences and reviews, and it helped with all sorts of issues that arise out of these meetings, it also gives the prisoner someone else to speak to if they feel that they cannot speak to Probation staff or wing staff."

Voluntary sector feedback

"The pact service was a valuable, unique service that offered support to prisoners and their families."

"pact was very beneficial. Many of the prisoners saw their lack of family support as the start of their problems and by engaging with pact staff and the workshops they offered, they were able to share these problems discreetly while finding new ways of dealing with them."

"The prisoners will be missing out when pact leave because the prison have no alternative service to offer. pact offered a very unique service as they were able to offer support on both sides of the fence. You need to gain the trust of the prisoner on the inside rather than outside for positive change to happen."

"I feel pact did a great job while they were here, many prisoners commented on how helpful the workshops had been for them."

"I am very disappointed that the pact service is ending, particularly for the prisoners who thrived on their one to one appointments with pact. I hope we will have them back on e-wing again in the future."

"Absolutely terrific – I hope it rolls out nationally."

"I think it is a unique project. I really admire the way in which you work with both prisoners and families on relationship issues and preparing for release. It is an excellent idea to co-ordinate the sessions so that the topics raised with the offenders are addressed with the families simultaneously - it promotes communication within the family and ensures that the family members are moving in the right direction at more or less the same time".

"It was great – such a lot of progress and energy and enthusiasm. It was an invaluable service."

"It is vital to the goal of reducing re-offending."

"Inspiring and lots of new work and research."

“pact’s work preserving valuable family relationships can have significant effect on the individuals behaviour and focus away from crime.”

“Without the intervention of pact, I can foresee future residents becoming more frustrated on their sentences and in turn, probably less engaging with other ‘agencies’ as family is of paramount importance to them.”

“The pact service has set a precedent in a service that must be regarded as essential to those incarcerated. I am astonished that their work has not been deemed important enough to warrant continuation of funding. As we worked closely with pact their insight on an individual aided our work immensely. pact will be sorely missed by staff and clients as now we have a detrimental void that cannot be filled.”

“It is a comprehensive service offered to prisoners and their families in an effort to reduce the impact of imprisonment on them and to lessen the risk of re-offending. pact works actively with both prisoners and their family members, helping them to feel connected and to begin planning for the impact of release.”

“Families are officially recognised as significant in enabling the successful resettlement of prisoners, but family relationships can become fragmented and destabilised following conviction and during imprisonment. There is no doubt that pact provided a vital link between prisoners and their families, and the resettlement project offered both groups a safe place to express their concerns and their expectations for their relationships on release, and offered them time to reflect and plan for this. My experience of the project was mainly through my facilitation of relationship workshops with prisoners and their families. Both groups engaged with the work and verbal feedback from the groups was extremely positive. Prisoners commented that they gained insights into their own relationships with others, both within the prison and in their families. One comment from a family member (wife) was that this was the best service the couple had been offered during all her partner’s years in prison.”

“On several occasions I witnessed the relationship between the prisoners and the pact workers where both parties treated each other with warmth and respect. I’m sure that the quality of prisoners’ lives on E wing will be diminished when the pact team leave.”

“Given that more children are affected by incarceration than by divorce in this country, it is a shame that a vital service for children and families like this one cannot continue due to lack of funding.”

Case studies

The following case studies have been compiled to illustrate how the resettlement service responded to a variety of situations in which clients asked for support. Details are provided of the kind of support provided and recorded outcomes of these interventions.

Case Study 1

Client A is a prolific offender who has been in and out of the criminal justice system for thirty years as a result of his addictions to heroin and crack cocaine. His wife is an ex-user who was arrested on a number of occasions for acts of petty theft. She has now been clean of drugs and crime for a number of years. They have been together for twenty years and have two adult children together and a third in her teens.

Client A referred himself to pact and then referred his partner to the service. When pact became involved the relationship was on rocky ground and it was unclear whether it would survive A's prison sentence. The principle causes of conflict were A's repeated broken promises to clean up and go straight, his continued drug use and regular lengthy spells in prison.

A told us that he wanted to stay off drugs and stay out of prison so that he could be a good father and husband but that he found it very hard to do so. He attributed this largely to his own dysfunctional childhood and the absence of his father from an early age. He also said that he found it very difficult to be back in the family home after release and that his response to his wife's "nagging" was often to "go AWOL" which meant a return to drug use and resulting criminality. He admitted that he did sometimes use difficulties at home as an excuse to go out and use drugs. He told us that the problems he had with relationships and his wife's demands on him were heightened by the experience of being freshly released from a prison environment where he had no authority or autonomy of any real kind. Although he wanted the relationship with his wife to work he said that he intended to live alone upon release to "re-establish my independence". He said, "I have been away since 2000. Going home will be like walking on egg-shells. She keeps going on about my past behaviour. We have been together for 20 years but it is on very shaky ground. It fluctuates. She has fears and insecurities. It can drive me mad. I don't want to cause her stress. I don't want to see her deteriorate."

His wife told us that when he was out he would pick fights and use them as an excuse to go out and take drugs. She admitted that she had often enjoyed her partner's lengthy absences from the family home as they gave her independence and peace. She also said that she found it difficult having him back in the house following these absences and that she could behave quite critically towards him at these times.

Both partners attended the pact 'Family Futures' workshops separately. These were a series of workshops on family relationships, communication skills and how family dynamics can affect a drug user's behaviour. These workshops were co-facilitated by relationship counsellors from Marriage Care and by the family support service co-ordinator from the Ealing Drug Intervention Programme (DIP). Client A said, "I learnt to listen more attentively and to also see things from another angle which at times is something we often do not consider. I was a provider to the wife and kids but I now realise there's more to being a partner than that. Rowing is not the way to go about things. I had no other responsibilities. I realise now it ain't all about me. The truth of the matter is that it's about her and the kids. In order to keep the family I know I need to be the husband and father I can be. I want to continue to keep engaging in programmes like drugs and relationship courses to prevent me from slipping back to my old behaviours and keep on the ball. It will keep my brain ticking on the positive side. I gave my all to the group – I dug deep and shared. It was serious to me. Not about me, it was for my wife and kids. I was glad I put in – I was determined to give it my all and hear others' experiences."

Following the workshops both partners received a counselling session with a counsellor from Marriage Care. They then had a joint session with the same counsellor inside the prison. The couple found it very beneficial to have a chance to discuss their expectations of each other after release, and expressed their gratitude that they could continue to see same counsellor upon A's release. A's wife said, "It gives us an opportunity to sort things out as we go along, rather than trying to find help when we are in

the middle of a crisis, which might be too late because by then we'll have gone back to our old destructive behaviours." A said, "It was very good and helped put my wife's mind at rest – I would like to continue seeing the counsellor after release – I need good sources of support for when I'm going to go off the rails. In the session we agreed I would go home every night when I'm released (something I've never done before) which will be a safe environment for me with wife and the kids. I know change is possible, but it's scary. I'm screaming for positive change. I've taken my wife for granted, she always patches me up, I need to start being there for her. This sentence has been the hardest, she tries to do too much and burns out. I'm going to work with the experiences and dig deep – no pain, no gain. I have to be open and honest to get better at communication. I have to work on my relationship with her – when family is alright – I'm alright."

Client A was released in July 2007. He and his wife are in regular contact with pact and received ongoing one-to-one support. His wife also continued to attend pact family workshops and the couple have attended relationship counselling with Marriage Care. Client A has not re-offended and is enrolled in a day care drug programme. He is seeking full time employment.

Case Study 2

Client B was released from HMP Wormwood Scrubs after serving his first custodial sentence. In his early twenties, his offending began as a result of his heroin addiction. He contacted pact soon after being brought onto E wing. He hadn't spoken to his mother or siblings since the day he was taken to prison. His mother had become tired of him lying and stealing from her and had been very upset by discovering the extent of his offending when he finally went to prison. She had been worried about the possible negative influence he might have on her younger children and had severed all contact and not responded to his letters. He began working with the pact resettlement worker and attended the "Family Futures" workshops on family relationships. The workshops included sessions on understanding the impact of drug use on families and on how family dynamics can affect a drug user's behaviour. The pact resettlement family support worker contacted his mother and she decided to attend a corresponding set of workshops for family members in the visitors' centre. These covered the same materials on drug use and family relationships. pact worked with Client B's family on how to set and maintain boundaries, look after their own needs and give healthy support to Client B.

After participating in the workshops his mother said, "Everybody has a role to play in his life. It took something like this for them to discover what their roles are and to realise that they weren't playing them. I used to have an honest open relationship with my children but his heroin addiction led to lies and him committing crime. After these workshops I feel like we can get some of the honesty back".

Prisoner B was released in May 2007 and is working in full time employment. He has not re-offended. His mother says, "I feel like I've got him back. He's happier than I've seen him for years."

Case Study 3

Client C is 31 and was released in February 2007 after serving a long sentence for armed robbery. He had a very rocky relationship with his family particularly his father who he had physically come to blows with on a number of occasions. He had previously been released on licence but had been recalled following a number of positive drug tests. He made contact with the pact Resettlement Worker having been recalled. He told us that when he came out on licence he "felt like a stranger" in the family home and that he couldn't cope with the arguments. In the end he said he "couldn't wait to come back to prison". He began receiving one to one support from the pact worker around issues to do with family relationships and communication skills. He referred his father and step-mother to the pact Resettlement Family Support Worker who began working with them. After some time working with pact, Client C gave this feedback: "After my dad started working with pact he was like a different person. He said that he was going to give me the time and space to get myself sorted this time and give me the time to go to him if I have any problems. He said this time when I get out we have to talk through things calmly. He said we shouldn't involve my step-mum as a referee. We have a history of explosive arguments, but I think it will be different this time. I was shocked, but feel happier now about leaving. I think it is going to work out."

Since being released in February 2007 Client C has not re-offended and is in full-time employment.

Case Study 4

Client D is in his early thirties. A long-term heroin user, he has been involved in the criminal justice system for over ten years. He has a habit of falling back in with his younger brother on release who is also a drug addict. In addition he has also “taken the rap” for his brother on a number of occasions and taken responsibility for crimes committed by his sibling. We discussed the importance of making a break from his brother and setting and maintaining healthy boundaries between them.

He was released from prison in March 2007 and has continued to receive one-to-one support from pact staff. He is in full-time employment. He has not re-offended.

Re-offending

Re-offending rates over time

(This analysis was produced in June 2007. Although further pact clients were later released, no updated analysis has been produced as the project came to an end.)

Most analysis of re-offending by ex-prisoners is based on two years post-release. This makes it extremely difficult to ‘prove’ that innovative projects which have been operating for less than 24 months have made an impact on re-offending. As the pact resettlement project was only in operation for nine months, assessing our contribution to reducing re-offending as part of the overall strategy at HMP Wormwood Scrubs is therefore problematic.

In order to get some indicative comparisons, we can at least look at the reported rates of offending provided to us by the Probation Service for men who have been released from HMP Wormwood Scrubs, and compare this with national statistics.

According to the Home Office Reconviction Analysis Team (RDS-NOMS) study of re-offending of adults from the 2004 cohort, of those men who go on to be reconvicted within 24 months of release, between 20 – 30% will have re-offended at one month post release, 60 – 70% will have re-offended six months after release, and 80% will have re-offended one year after release. The incidence of re-offending falls with time.

Re-offending factors

The same analysis tells us that the probability of re-offending is also strongly influenced by (a) the nature of the offence committed, and (b) the length of sentence. So for a thorough and detailed analysis, we would want to compare the results for men participating in the pact Resettlement Service against the statistical averages for men who have similar characteristics in terms of type of offence and length of sentence. The small sample, and the range of sentence lengths, makes this difficult. However we do know that of the 13 men who have participated in the programme and then been released into the community:

1. The majority have committed types of offences which are at the top of the scale of re-offending probability (burglary or theft being most common), with actual re-offending rates for these types of offences exceeding 70%.
2. Sentence lengths varied from nine months to five years, but the majority had shorter sentences, which would also predict higher rates of re-offending. Of the 13 men, nine had sentences of between nine months and one year, two were under two years. Only two had been on sentences longer than two years.
3. Our information is that of the 13 men, two have been proven to have re-offended since release, one at two months and one at four months post release.

4. Of the 13 men, one had been out for only one month and one for two months, and one for three months. The others had been out for periods of between four months and eight months.

Statistical Comparisons (Against the Home Office Reconviction Analysis Team (RDS-NOMS) study of re-offending of adults from the 2004 cohort)

On the basis of excluding the prisoner who has only been out for one month as being too short a time to monitor, and taking the other 12 who have been released for periods between 3-8 months as our sample, and taking into account the nature of the offences committed, our information is that two of the 12 have re-offended (a re-offending rate of 17%).

If we were to compare this with prisoners who have been sentenced to less than two years for similar offences, we might expect a re-offending rate of between 54 – 74% at two years based on the length of the sentence.

On the basis of 65% of those offenders who will offend within two years offending within 6 months of release, we would expect therefore to see a re-offending rate at 6 months post release of around 35 – 47% at six months.

Statistically, of those who go on to offend within two years of release, at 3 - 4 months post release, 45 - 50% are likely to have already re-offended. Given the nature of the offences committed and lengths of sentence, the lowest re-offending rate, based on men with longer sentences (who are less likely to re-offend) having been out for only 3 - 4 months would still be around 25%. The 17% recorded includes nine men (three-quarters of the group) who had sentences of one year or less, the majority for acquisitive crimes which would predict a higher probability of re-offending.

Conclusions

A statistician would of course say that our sample size is too small for comparison, and the period under review is too short. We would have to agree. Caution should also be shown about the information feedback on re-offending as there may be a time lag before we receive information about offences or convictions. We might also wish to show caution in that the men participating in the programme may have characteristics which mean that they are more likely to avoid re-offending than their counterparts in other prisons.

Nevertheless, it is interesting and very encouraging to compare a 17% reported re-offending rate for the 12 recorded participants in this project.

Challenges

The service faced many challenges during its period in operation. These were often logistical problems posed by limited resources within the working environment of HMP Wormwood Scrubs.

Workshops

The initial workshop programme for prisoners covered a wide range of topics such as family relationships, parenting and the impact of drug abuse. However, not all participating prisoners felt that all of these issues were relevant to their own situations. This resulted in some drop out of participants and a decreased level of participation amongst others. It was also difficult to reserve adequate classroom space and equipment for a seven-session course. The decision was therefore taken to run a shorter version of the course over two sessions and focus of the work regarding family relationships that was facilitated in partnership with Marriage Care as this was the work the prisoners seemed to respond to best and that also offered the strongest possibilities for improving prisoners' family life, also acting as the basis for the relationship counselling we offered.

Relationship counselling

Convincing prison security staff of the merits of joint relationship counselling sessions within the prison and allaying their concerns regarding potential security risks was a major obstacle. Finally we were given permission to use a legal visits room for the sessions but told that it might be taken away from us at a moment's notice if it was needed for a legal visit. This was clearly far from ideal when trying to facilitate a process needing participants to have confidence in the process and feel secure within it. This fragile situation and the fact that there were only two counsellors involved who had other commitments with Marriage Care meant we were not able to offer nearly as many joint sessions as we would have liked to. Additionally, the counsellor and family member were compelled to sit on the same side of the table opposite the prisoner to meet security requirements. One prisoner remarked that this unequal balance led to him feeling "slightly ganged up on". Again this was not ideal.

Conclusion

Learning from the above findings: the impact of the service

The feedback from partner organisations and staff and, above all, our service users, indicates that the pact Resettlement Service at HMP Wormwood Scrubs was highly regarded and valued by our partners in the resettlement project and by our clients.

However, a true assessment of the effectiveness of the service in contributing to the overall aim of the resettlement project at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, namely reducing re-offending within the group of prisoners passing through the project, is at this stage much harder to gauge. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. There has not been an extensive evaluation of the success of the resettlement project at HMP Wormwood Scrubs as a whole, or of the re-offending rates of those prisoners who have participated.
2. The pact service began working with prisoners in November 2006, giving the service a total period in operation of just nine months. This is far too short a space of time to evaluate the contribution of the service to reducing re-offending.
3. The majority of pact's clients had not yet been released at the time of the report being written, and of those who have been released most have been in the community for a relatively short space of time – again this prevents us forming a true picture of our eventual impact on re-offending within our client group.

Despite these difficulties, the results from the small group of our clients that have been released into the community remain encouraging.

The anecdotal evidence of our successes remains very encouraging, as demonstrated in the case studies listed above which clearly reinforce the well-documented links between support around family issues and a prisoner's ability to successfully re-integrate into society.

Acknowledgments

pact is very grateful to Marriage Care, an organisation providing professional relationship counselling, for their vital assistance in devising and facilitating the two workshops on family relationships for prisoners, and the two for families.

We would also like to express our thanks to the Ealing DIP Family Support Service for their collaboration in facilitating the sessions around the impact of drug use on the family for both prisoners and families.

pact would also like to thank the Learning and Skills Department at HMP Wormwood Scrubs for their assistance in developing the resources that allowed prisoners participating to gain an OCN accreditation.

The pact team would also like to thank all our partners in the resettlement pilot at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, particularly the Prison Service, the Probation Service, Stepping Stones, OLASS, the CARATS team, all other agency staff and the resettlement operational groups in the relevant boroughs.

Resources used

Aside from resources devised by pact and their partners the following resources were also used:

'Homeward Bound' – DVD produced by Action for Prisoners' Families. The film explores the anxieties felt by a prisoner and his family as his release date approaches.

'His Story' and *'Turning it Around'* – DVD and video resources produced by ADFAM. These films explore the experiences of families dealing with the drug use and criminality of family members.

Appendices

Appendix A – Initial Needs Analysis – Questionnaire distributed to resettlement prisoners

Prisoner Resettlement Needs Questionnaire
(Children and Families Pathway)
2006

We are pact (Prison Advice and Care Trust). We currently run the visitors' centre and children's play area in the visits hall. We are now starting an exciting new service for resettlement prisoners as part of the London Resettlement Pilot.

We will be focusing on issues relating to families and children. We will be offering support to both yourselves and your families. In order to help us find out what your needs are, we would be very grateful if you can please take some time to complete this survey with one of our pact workers.

1. **Name and prison number:**

2. **Ethnicity:**

3. **Sentence length:**

4. **Expected Date of Release:**

5. **Which borough are you being released to? (Please circle)**

Harrow Ealing Barnet Brent Harrow
Kensington and Chelsea Hillingdon Hammersmith and Fulham

6. **Prior to imprisonment who were you living with? (Please tick)**

Wife
Ex - Wife
Partner
Ex – Partner
Parent
Other family member
Child/ren
Friend
Alone
Other
No fixed Abode (NFA)

7. **If you have children, please can you answer the following questions:**

Number of children: _____
Ages: _____
Who do they live with now? _____

8. Since imprisonment have you kept in contact with your partner?

Yes, Regular contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

Yes, Occasional contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

Yes, Rare contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

No, Never had any contact

No, Used to have contact, but no longer do

If you answered No or Rare contact, please can you explain the reasons for this?

9. Since imprisonment have you kept in contact with other family members?

Yes, Regular contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

Yes, Occasional contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

Yes, Rare contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

No, Never had any contact

No, Used to have contact, but no longer do

If you answered No or Rare contact, please can you explain the reasons for this?

10. Since imprisonment have you kept in contact with your children?

Yes, Regular contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters / Family Days / Homework Club / Child only visits

Yes, Occasional contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters / Family Days / Homework Club / Child only visits

Yes, Rare contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters

No, Never had any contact

No, Used to have contact, but no longer do

If you answered No or Rare contact, please can you explain the reasons for this?

11. What is your preferred method of contact with your family and why?

12. On release, who do you hope to live with?

- Alone
- Friend
- Wife
- Partner
- Other family member
- Child/ren
- Other
- Don't Know

13. What concerns do you have about your family life after you are released?

(3 = very concerned, 2 = quite concerned, 1 = Not concerned)

I am concerned

- ___ About fitting back in to family life
- ___ About family arguments / fights
- ___ About the drug / alcohol use of family members
- ___ That family have "moved on" with their lives, but you haven't
- ___ That you have "moved on" with life, but they haven't
- ___ About new or increased responsibilities
- ___ About parenting
- ___ About changes that have happened since you have been away

It would be really helpful if you could give us any additional **details or thoughts** on your feelings about the above answers to help us provide a service that can address these issues.

Also have you discussed these concerns with your family?

If so, what was their response?

Did you discuss the issues on visits, by phone or by letter?

14. Do your family have any concerns about your release? YES / NO (Please Circle)

15. Do you have any other concerns regarding your release? (Please tick as appropriate)

- Accommodation _____
- You drug use _____
- Financial Worries _____
- Health Problems _____
- Your ability to find work / access training or education _____
- Other (Please specify) _____

16. Please let us know if these potential services interest you?

(3 = Very Interested, 2 = Quite Interested, 1 = Not interested)

- ___ Some to talk to (1 to 1) about family and relationship issues
- ___ Some one to talk to (1 to 1) about parenting and child development
- ___ Group workshops on relationships (just prisoners)
- ___ Group workshops on relationships (with your partner)
- ___ Someone to talk to and support your family / partner
- ___ Workshops exploring the issues around resettling back into family life
- ___ Opportunities to improve ties with your children i.e. through a) dad and child only visits, b) dad and child activities and / or c) homework club visits
- ___ Family Days (e.g. at Christmas and Easter)
- ___ Ex-prisoner support group after release (at visitors centre / in local community)
- ___ Support group for your family during your sentence
- ___ Support group for your family after release
- ___ Mentor from local community
- ___ Chance for family, partner or friend to be involved with your resettlement planning
- ___ Couples only visits with mediators / relationship advisors available?

17. Have you received support from any public sector or voluntary organisations in your local community either before or during your sentence? If so, please can you give details of who they are, what support they offered and whether that support was helpful:

18. If you have any additional comments you wish to make about any of the issues raised or any further suggestions for how pact can help you and your family, please use the space below:

Resettlement Family Support

Our Resettlement Family Support Worker, based in the Visitors Centre, will also be working with the families of prisoners where they wish to receive support and advice in the lead up to your release.

We would therefore like to contact a family member of your choice to find out what their resettlement support needs are by way of a questionnaire. This will help us plan our service so we can meet the needs highlighted by families.

If you would like to refer a family member, please can you give us the following information:

Name:

Relationship to you:

Address (include Borough):

Telephone Number:

Mobile:

Is the person already aware of where you are? Yes / No

Are they aware you are taking part in the Resettlement Project on E-wing? Yes / No

What needs do you think they may have?

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

We will be starting work on E wing and in the Visitor's Centre very soon.

Please tick here if you would like to receive information on our service when we start accepting referrals ___

Appendix B – Initial Needs Analysis sent to families

Family Resettlement Needs Questionnaire
2006

We are part (Prison Advice and Care Trust). We currently run the visitors' centre and children's play area in the visits hall. We are now starting an exciting new service for resettlement prisoners and their families as part of the London Resettlement Pilot.

We will be focusing on issues relating to prisoners, families and children and offering support and advice to both prisoners and their families. In order to help us find out what your needs are, we would be very grateful if you can please take some time to complete this survey with one of our part workers.

- 1) **What is your name?**
- 2) **What is your ethnicity? (Optional)**
- 3) **Which borough do you live in?**
- 4) **What is your relationship to the prisoner?**
- 5) **Do you and the prisoner have any children? YES/NO**
Number:
Ages:
- 6) **Prior to imprisonment was the prisoner living with you: YES/NO**
- 7) **If not was he living with his: (tick where appropriate using more than one category if necessary)**
 - a) Wife
 - b) Partner
 - c) Ex-partner
 - d) Children
 - e) Parent(s)
 - f) Other family member
 - g) Friend
 - h) Alone
 - i) No fixed address
- 8) **Where do you think the prisoner will live on release? (Tick as appropriate)**
 - a) With you
 - b) Wife
 - c) Partner
 - d) Ex-partner
 - e) Children
 - f) Parent(s)
 - g) Other family member
 - h) Friend
 - i) Alone
 - j) No fixed address

9) What concerns do you have about the prisoner's release?

(Write "3" if very concerned, "2" if quite concerned and "1" if not at all concerned)

- a) Their ability to fit back into family life _____
- b) Having to readjust your own life to fit them back in _____
- c) Their drug/alcohol use _____
- d) Family arguments/fights _____
- e) Having to be their carer _____
- f) Having to support them financially _____
- g) Their ability to find work _____
- h) Parenting _____
- i) Other (Please give details)

It would be really helpful if you could give us any additional **details or thoughts** on your feelings about the above answers to help us provide a service that can address these issues.

Also have you discussed these concerns with the person involved?

If so, what was their response?

Did you discuss the issues on visits, by phone or by letter?

10) Do you have any other issues that are of concern to you? (Please tick as appropriate)

- Housing _____
- You drug use _____
- Financial Worries _____
- Health Problems _____
- Your ability to find work / access training or education _____
- Other (Please specify) _____

11) Since imprisonment have you kept in contact with the prisoner?

- Yes, Regular contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters
- Yes, Occasional contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters
- Yes, Rare contact by: Phone Calls / Visits / Letters
- No, Never had any contact
- No, Used to have contact, but no longer do

If you answered No or Rare contact, please can you explain the reasons for this?

12) What is your preferred method of communicating with the prisoner whilst he is in prison? (e.g. letters, phone, visits)
Please tell us why.

13) Please state which of the following forms of support would interest you.

(Write "3" if very interested, "2" if quite interested and "1" if not at all interested)

- Someone to talk to (one-to-one) about family issues ___
- Group workshops on relationships with the families of other prisoners ___
- Someone to talk to the prisoner about family issues ___
- Workshops exploring issues about resettling back into family life ___
- One-to-one advice on parenting/child development ___
- Group workshops on parenting/child development ___
- Leaflets/other resources on parenting/child development ___
- Support groups for families after release ___
- Support groups for families during sentence ___
- Relationship courses after release ___
- Mentor from local community for family ___

• Mentor from local community for prisoner _____

• Opportunities to explore issues as a family through:

1) Relationship courses _____

2) Couples only visits _____

3) Homework club/dad and child only activities e.g. music/art/sport/games etc. _____

4) Other (Please give details)

14) Please tell us what days and times you think would be most convenient for you to attend our support services:

15) Would you consider attending a support service on a day you didn't have a visit planned? YES/NO
If not please give reasons why not.

16) What childcare provisions would you need in order to make use of our services?

17) Have you received support from any public sector or voluntary organisations in your local community? If so, please can you give details of who they are, what support they offered and whether that support was helpful:

18) If you have any additional comments you wish to make about any of the issues raised or any further suggestions for how pact can help you and your family, please use the space below:

Please tick here if you would like us to contact you with details once we launch our service _____

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

We will be starting work on E wing and in the visitors' centre very soon.

pact Resettlement Project Initial Assessment

Name and Number:

Borough:

Location (wing, floor, cell):

Sentence length:

Offence:

EDR:

Ethnicity:

Age and DOB:

Referred by and date of referral:

Other agencies involved:

Who did you live with prior to imprisonment?

Who do you hope to live with after release?

Relationship status:

Single Married Divorced/Separated Widowed
Previously co-habiting Other

Partner's Name:

Borough partner lives in:

Length of relationship:

How often do you have contact with your partner?

Phone Calls:

Visits:

Letters (sent and received):

How would you rank your relationship on a scale of 1 – 10?

(1 being problematic or terrible and 10 being perfect, no problems)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why did you rank it with that number?

Do you have any children?

Name

Age/DOB

Where living

Who with

Contact? (V/L/T)

How often do you have contact with your children?

Phone Calls:

Visits (inc. homework club, family days, children only visits and normal visits):

Letters (sent and received):

How would you rank your relationship with your children on a scale of 1 – 10?

(1 being problematic or terrible and 10 being perfect, no problems)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why did you rank it with that number?

Do you have contact with any other family members? Yes / No.

If so who and how often?

| Name | Relationship | Where live |
|------|--------------|------------|
|------|--------------|------------|

How often do you have contact with other family members?

Phone Calls:

Visits:

Letters (sent and received):

How would you rank your relationship with a family member _____ on a scale of 1 – 10?
(1 being problematic or terrible and 10 being perfect, no problems)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How would you rank your relationship with a family member _____ on a scale of 1 – 10?
(1 being problematic or terrible and 10 being perfect, no problems)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How would you rank your relationship with a family member _____ on a scale of 1 – 10?
(1 being problematic or terrible and 10 being perfect, no problems)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What support would you like from pact in relation to children and families issues?

Would you like us to contact a family member with information about our family support services?

Contact details:

| Name | Address | Phone / Mobile |
|------|---------|----------------|
|------|---------|----------------|

Do they know where you are?

Do they know you are taking part in the e wing resettlement pilot?

Can they read English?

What needs do you think they may have?

Action:

Appendix D – Confidentiality Agreement

pact Prisoner Confidentiality Policy

Why do I need to know about my right to confidentiality?

In order that we can build good relationships with prisoners and their families, we need trust. We want you to feel able to talk freely about anything that is on your mind. That way we can give you the best possible advice and support.

It is therefore important you understand about your right to confidentiality and how far that right goes, as there may be occasions where we are under a duty to share information.

Who knows about me at the service?

The pact Resettlement Family Support Worker and pact Resettlement Development Worker will have seen your wing resettlement file and will share between them any information you disclose.

Both pact Resettlement Workers are line managed by the pact Services Coordinator, who supports them in their work for you and other families. pact workers have regular meetings with their managers so they can discuss things that arise in their work. Their line manager may therefore need to know about you.

If the pact worker has a meeting or conversation with you, they will note details of information shared in their pact file which is a secure paper and / or electronic file. They will also record this information in your resettlement case management file which can be viewed by other agencies involved in the resettlement pilot.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Some statistical data will be collected for monitoring and evaluation purposes, however this will be recorded in an anonymous manner.

Sharing information with your consent

Please sign the attached consent form allowing pact to disclose information to any partnership agency or third party as appropriate to act in your best interests for your safe and secure resettlement back into the community.

Confidential Family Support

Any support your family receive from pact will be given on a confidential basis. Therefore you will not be informed of any support being offered to your family, unless they consent to you being told or unless they inform you themselves. Likewise, your family will not be informed of any information you disclose to pact workers or about any support you receive from pact.

Would you ever break confidentiality without my consent?

pact workers in some circumstances, listed below, are under a duty to share certain information without your consent. As far as possible we will keep you informed about who the information is passed to and why.

- If there was evidence that failing to do so might endanger yours or someone else's personal safety.
- Where child protection issues are involved.
- Where information indicates a threat to prison security.

-
- Where information indicates a threat to maintenance of prison order.
 - Where urgent medical treatment is needed.
 - Where serious criminal offences are involved.

Prisoner Consent Form

I _____ have read, or been read, the pact Prisoner Confidentiality Policy.

I understand and accept the contents of that policy.

I understand that any information provided may be disclosed to third parties as appropriate for my resettlement.

I give consent for any information about me to be disclosed.

This information may be disclosed either verbally or in writing.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Appendix E – Counselling Feedback Form

Participant User Evaluation – Relationship Counselling

Tick the appropriate box to indicate how you feel about each of the following statements.

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| The individual session was necessary | | | | | |
| The individual session was useful | | | | | |
| The joint session was necessary | | | | | |
| The joint session was useful | | | | | |
| I feel more prepared for the release | | | | | |

Additional comments:

pact – “Family Futures” – Final Evaluation Form

How useful did you find the course? (Please tick)

- A) Very useful ___
- B) Quite useful ___
- C) Not at all useful ___

Which sessions did you find most useful?

What did you learn on the course?

Comments and suggestions about the course:

Appendix G – Exit Survey – Prisoners

pact Pre-release Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a chance for you to tell pact of any impending issues you may have regarding your family and your release. It also enables you to give feedback/comments on the support you have already received from pact.

Full Name:

Number:

1. Do you have any concerns about your release? What are these concerns?

2. Do you have any concerns relating to your family and/or children? What are these concerns?

3. Would you like any support from pact? Anything specific?

4. If you have received any support from pact has this been helpful? Add any comments or feedback.

Contact Information

Please indicate whether you would like to receive information and/or support after release by providing us with contact details.

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Mobile: _____

Home phone: _____

Email: _____

Appendix H – Exit Survey - Families

pact Pre-release Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a chance for you to tell pact of any impending issues you may have regarding the release of your family member. It also enables you to give feedback/comments on the support you may have already received from pact.

Name: _____

1. Do you have any concerns about the release of your relative? What are these concerns?

2. Would you like any support from pact? Anything specific?

3. If you have received any support from pact has this been helpful? Add any comments or feedback.

pact Evaluation Feedback Form

As you may be aware the pact resettlement service will cease to continue after the end of August 2007. As part of the exit strategy we are completing a thorough evaluation of the service. This form is intended for you to give any feedback regarding the service as you knew it and possibilities for the future. Thank you for your co-operation.

Name:

Position:

Agency / Organisation:

1. How would you describe the pact resettlement service?

2. Did you feel pact was beneficial to the prisoners on E wing? In what way?

3. Without pact on E wing, do you think the prisoners will be missing out? If so in what way?

4. Are you aware of any services of a similar nature, or any agency who address the children and families pathway?

5. If the service were to continue is there anything you could suggest to improve it?

6. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding pact and the withdrawal of the service from the establishment.

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