



# **Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'?**

## **Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Invisible Walls Wales (IWW) is a Big Lottery funded project based in HMP Parc, South Wales, aimed at maintaining and improving relationships between male prisoners and their children and families, improving the quality of life of all participants, reducing re-offending by the prisoners, and reducing the risk of ‘intergenerational’ offending. It adopts a ‘whole family’ approach, providing support to prisoners, partners and children for up to 12 months pre-release and six months post-release via three integrated ‘hubs’ of activity (prison, transitional and community). Key elements of the project are the Family Interventions Unit (FIU – the first of its kind in a male prison in the UK), interventions-led visits in family-friendly facilities, through-the-gate casework by Family Integration Mentors (FIMs), and partnership with community-based agencies. While the initial funding for the project ended in 2017, IWW has evolved into an ongoing (albeit reduced) service with joint funding from G4S and Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service. This report presents the results of an evaluation conducted between 2012 and 2017, to assess IWW in terms of the quality and effectiveness of its organisational processes and practices, and its impact on all participants (including children). The research therefore had two main elements, a process and an impact evaluation, whose aims were as follows:

## **Process evaluation**

- To assess the quality of contact between IWW prisoners and their families during the custodial phase of the project.
- To explore the views and perspectives of IWW participants regarding their experiences of the project.
- To assess the efficacy of the individual components of the IWW delivery model in practice.
- To examine the extent to which the three ‘hubs’ of the service collaborate to deliver a coherent, multi-agency service which meets the needs of prisoners and their families.

## **Impact evaluation**

- To evaluate the extent to which Invisible Walls improves the quality of life and personal relationships of prisoners and their families.
- To examine the impact on re-offending of prisoner participants (within the constraints of the IWW sample size).
- To evaluate the impact upon factors likely to be associated with intergenerational offending.
- To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the project.
- To explore issues of sustainability and the potential for replication of the project

## **Process Evaluation: Findings**

***To assess the quality of contact between IWW prisoners and their families during the custodial phase of the project:***

Prisoners located in the Family Interventions Unit and participating in the IWW project undoubtedly received an enhanced quality and greater frequency of family contact than those located elsewhere in the prison. Residence in the FIU enabled prisoners to attend a wide range of parenting courses and family-focused interventions, some jointly with their partners and children in a child-friendly environment. The location of the IWW office on the wing, the close relationships developed by the IWW team (particularly the FIMs) with participants in prison and the community, and the use of tools such as Family Diaries facilitated communication and improved the quality of contact between prisoners and their families.

***To explore the views and perspectives of IWW participants regarding their experiences of the project:***

Participants were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences of the IWW project both within prison and in the community. The vast majority reported that contacts with staff had been positive and productive, with particular value attached to the emotional support provided. Many of the interventions were experienced as both enjoyable and helpful. A small minority of participants expressed some disappointment with what they perceived as a reduced level of face-to-face contact with IWW staff in the community after the prisoner had been released.

***To assess the efficacy of the individual components of the IWW delivery model in practice:***

Individually, all three 'hubs' of the project worked effectively to provide services to participants. Moreover, the roles of individual staff members were developed creatively to respond to perceived gaps or newly identified needs. In the 'prison hub', the location of IWW participants on the family wing and their co-location with the IWW team, encouraged frequent informal contact between staff and participants. In the 'transitional hub', the Family Integration Mentors worked effectively with prisoners and family participants (including children) both separately and together, as well as facilitating communication between them. Work in the community was carried out both by the FIMs and by agencies sub-contracted to provide specific services. Their work with children was particularly highly valued by participants.

***To examine the extent to which the three 'hubs' of the service collaborate to deliver a coherent, multi-agency service which meets the needs of prisoners and their families:***

At a frontline operational level, partnership working was generally collaborative and effective across the prison and community hubs, and participants experienced the IWW service as coherent and 'joined up'. Central to this success was the integrating role of the FIMs, who provided overarching case-management for all participants as they progressed through the various elements of the service. However, there were intermittent problems of communication between partners, some unnecessary duplication of record-keeping, and some concerns were raised about split responsibilities for management and the supervision of staff. There were also some indications of 'clashes of culture' between partners, caused by differences in policies and working practices. These problems were addressed as time went on, but provide useful lessons for any replication of the project elsewhere. It was widely agreed that it would be more effective to bring all staff under the umbrella supervision of one project manager, while some wanted to go one step further by adopting a co-located 'MASH' approach. Suggestions were also made to streamline and co-ordinate the IWW paperwork to reduce duplication across partners.

At times, especially towards the end of phase one, capacity was an issue for all partners in the project. This was due to a combination of the geographical spread of families across South Wales and the need to take on the full complement of final year referrals within the first quarter of that year (2015/16).

Finally, one of the key (and largely unexpected) successes of the project, spanning both prison and community hubs, was the engagement of schools. This was exemplified by the mutually supportive working relationships achieved with schools attended by the IWW child participants (including direct links with individual teachers), the success of parent/teacher school showcase events held in the prison, and the popularity of the Invisible Walls Accord, now a Big Lottery funded project in its own right. One of the main aims of the latter, led by Barnardo's Cymru, is to increase awareness in schools across South Wales of the impact of parental imprisonment and to train teachers to identify and work with affected children and their families. Wider links to expand such work were also made with Church of England schools in England facilitated by the Bishop of Prisons, and with a school in Uganda.

## **Impact and Outcomes: findings**

### ***To evaluate the extent to which Invisible Walls improves the quality of life and personal relationships of prisoners and their families:***

The majority of participants reported that their family had become closer, their children seemed happier and they had become better parents as a result of participating in the project. Pictorial data gathered from the children also support these perceptions; their drawings highlight how positively they viewed the IWW project, which gave them a sense of 'togetherness' during the custodial sentence and helped them emotionally.

A comparison of pre- and post IWW scores on the Family Star tool for both prisoners and their partners/adult family member(s) – providing a measure of change in parenting skills and family functioning - is similarly encouraging, with statistically significant positive change achieved in scores across all participants following completion of IWW.

Marked improvements were also seen in the accommodation and employment status of adult family members, with a rise in the numbers living in permanent accommodation, and increases in the numbers employed or in education. Moreover, of the thirteen individuals actively misusing substances when starting the project, only five reported still using on completion.

### ***To examine the impact on re-offending of prisoner participants:***

While it is too early to determine the proven re-offending rates of IWW participants and the comparison group (although evidence about participants from IWW staff is very positive), a number of interim outcome measures known to be related to the risk of reoffending have been analysed, with some promising results. Considerable improvements were found in the accommodation and employment/education status of prisoner participants following their completion of IWW and there was a substantial reduction in the number misusing substances. Analysis of measures of their attitudes towards crime shows statistically significant levels of improvement and suggests that changes occurring during the prison sentence were sustained during the post release period.

### ***To evaluate the impact upon factors likely to be associated with intergenerational offending:***

Statistically significant positive change was achieved on parental and teacher Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores, indicating an improvement in children's emotional well-

being, attention levels, behaviour and peer relationships at home and in school. There was a substantial fall in the number of children receiving support from Social Services and a corresponding rise in the number not requiring any agency support at all. Improvements were found in children's levels of school attendance and attainment, the proportion assessed with such problems falling from 43% to 12%. Average recorded attendance rates among a sample of IWW children also rose from 86% to 93%.

***To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the project***

It is not possible to undertake an accurate analysis of cost-effectiveness until re-offending data are available. A supplementary report will be produced at this time. However, some preliminary work has been done (by Andrew Rix and Richard Gaunt, external consultants) which indicates that, even if it emerges that there was zero reduction in re-offending by the prisoner participants, the project would still be shown to be cost-effective.

***To explore issues of sustainability and the potential for replication of the project.***

All replication milestones for the project were exceeded, with partnerships established, and elements of the project adopted, in several private and public sector prisons in the UK, Europe and beyond. In addition to direct replicability of the project, the sustainability of the model that underpins it is evident in the growing influence it has had on awareness, thinking and attitudes about prisoners' children among politicians, policy-makers and professionals in other fields of service provision. In Wales, the mutually beneficial working relationships that IWW has developed with many devolved agencies, including its high level of engagement with schools, suggests that its influence on practice will last. At an England and Wales level, the project strongly influenced the Farmer Review on strengthening prisoners' family ties (Farmer, 2017), which is likely to result in reforms in prisons policy.

A summary of findings from the evaluation, in the context of the broader academic literature on the children and families of prisoners, will be published shortly in the *European Journal of Probation* (Clancy and Maguire, 2017).

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# 1. Introduction and background

This report presents the results of an evaluation of the Invisible Walls Wales (IWW) project in HMP/YOI Parc, South Wales, conducted between September 2012 and May 2017. IWW is a comprehensive multi-agency intervention, funded during the above period by the Big Lottery, in which prisoners and their families are intensively supported for a period of 12 months during the custodial part of the sentence and up to six months post release. The key aims of the project are to reduce re-offending, improve the quality of family life and community inclusion, and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational offending. While the initial funding for the project has come to an end, IWW has now evolved into an ongoing service – albeit reduced in scale - with joint funding from G4S and Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). Aspects of the model have also been adopted in several other prisons in the UK and overseas.

The shape of the report is as follows. In this chapter we briefly review previous research on the problems caused by prisoners’ separation from their children and families and the benefits of overcoming them. We then set out the aims of the evaluation, and provide an overview of the background to IWW and its main elements. Chapter 2 summarises the research methods used in the evaluation. Chapter 3 gives an overview of numbers and characteristics of the prisoners and family members who participated over the four and a half years. Chapter 4 presents the results of the process evaluation. Here we assess the quality of contacts between IWW and participants, the efficacy of individual components of the project, and how well its three hubs (prison, transitional and community) were integrated to provide a holistic ‘through the gate’ service for prisoners and their families. We also identify a number of implementation and organisational issues affecting the project. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the impact and outcome of the project, beginning with qualitative data from interviews and case studies. This is followed by quantitative data on changes in prisoners’ self-assessed problems and attitudes to crime; in employment and accommodation status; in self-reported levels of drug use; in family functioning and parenting; and in children’s behavioural and emotional well-being in school and at home (findings on reoffending rates will be added when sufficient time has elapsed to allow them to be determined). The chapter concludes with evidence of the wider impact of IWW on thinking, policy and practice relating to prisoners’ families, and of replication of the model in other establishments in the UK and elsewhere. Finally, Chapter 6 summarises our findings for each of the stated research aims.

## 1.1 Background: the children and families of prisoners

England and Wales has the highest rate of imprisonment in Western Europe, imprisoning 147 people per 100,000 of the population (Prison Reform Trust 2016; Allen and Dempsey 2016). In June 2016, the prison population stood at 84,405, having almost doubled since the early 1990s, albeit lower than the peak of 88,167 reached in November 2011 (Williams et al. 2012). Of course, as the prisoner population rises, so too does the number of children with a parent or significant family member in prison.

There are now an estimated 200,000 children in the UK<sup>1</sup> affected by parental imprisonment in any one year (Condry et al. 2016). This represents more than three times the number of children in the care of the state and five times those on the Child Protection Register (Prison Reform Trust 2013.) Yet despite the scale of the problem, no official count of these children exists, as the UK Government does not routinely collect data on the parental status of prisoners. Perhaps of more concern is that, although six articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are relevant to the rights, safeguarding and wellbeing of children with a parent in prison<sup>2</sup>, as is the recent Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2016), there is no duty on local authorities or other bodies to identify which children in their area are affected by imprisonment, nor is there any statutory responsibility for providing services to those families. Consequently, the needs of this vulnerable group are often not assessed, little support is put in place and the effects of parental imprisonment are not mitigated. It is for these reasons that this group of children have been referred to as the 'forgotten victims' of imprisonment (Codd 1998).

Previous research has identified parental imprisonment as a risk factor in the development of children.<sup>3</sup> A number of studies have demonstrated that it is associated with poorer outcomes and life consequences: children of prisoners are more likely to experience social isolation, stigma and bullying (Boswell and Wedge 2002; Arditti, 2012). They also have less stable care arrangements: the remaining parent or guardian (if there is one) will likely be experiencing considerable stress (Murray and Farrington 2005) and be dependent on extended family for childcare support (Arditti et al., 2003). A UK government Justice Review in 2007 (Ministry of Justice 2007)

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<sup>1</sup> Across the whole of Europe, it has been estimated that 2.1 million children have a parent in prison on any given day (EJPI, 2017), while it has been further calculated that over five million American children have experienced parental imprisonment at some point in their lives (Murphey and Cooper, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Articles 2, 3, 9, 12, 16 and 19

<sup>3</sup> A more comprehensive summary of relevant research can be found in a paper we have written on IWW, to be published shortly in the *European Journal of Probation* (Clancy and Maguire, 2017).

highlighted the fact that imprisonment often leads to increased financial pressures on the family, and sometimes loss of the family home. The links between the imprisonment of a parent and subsequent offending by his or her children are also strong; one study estimates that these children have three times higher risk of anti-social and/or delinquent behaviour than their peers (Murray and Farrington 2008), while Murray and Farrington (2005) estimated that 65% of boys with a parent in prison would go on to offend themselves. Besemer et al. (2011) also found that the number of parental prison sentences (after the child's 7<sup>th</sup> birthday) was predictive of sons' offending. Indeed, Murray et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis of eleven prospective longitudinal studies concluded that:

*“Parental imprisonment is a relatively strong predictor of multiple adverse outcomes for children. Parental imprisonment might cause adverse outcomes for children via mechanisms of traumatic separation, economic and social strain, and stigma but stronger tests of causation and mediation are required to draw firm conclusions.”*

There is also a substantial body of research evidence which indicates that stable family relationships, contact and support can have strong positive effects on a prisoner's chances of successful resettlement, including reduced likelihood of re-offending. For example, a series of Home Office resettlement surveys found that prisoners visited by family members had a reoffending rate of 52% compared with 70% among those who were not visited (May et al., 2008). Williams et al (2012) found that prisoners who were not actively supported by their partner or family members during their sentence were up to six times more likely to offend during their first year back in the community compared to those whose families remained in contact during the sentence. Contact with family during imprisonment is also positively linked with broader resettlement outcomes such as employment and stable accommodation: Niven and Stewart (2005a) found that those prisoners who received at least one visit were almost three times more likely to have accommodation arranged on release and were more than twice as likely to have an education, training or employment place arranged. Similarly, Losel et al (2012) found that family contact and communication during the sentence, participation in prison-based family interventions and social support from family and friends were all associated with more effective resettlement on release.

In formulating explanations for the positive impact of family contact with prisoners, a number of studies have theorised it in terms of its capacity to maintain or increase offenders' levels of 'social capital' (see for example Laub and Sampson, 1993; 2001; Field, 2003; Farrall and Calverley, 2006). Social capital represents the bonds and links an individual has with family, friends, wider social networks and the community, and can refer to the practical and financial help offered by

families in addition to emotional support and guidance. Those with higher levels of social capital are less likely to engage in criminal behaviour as they have more to lose and are more firmly 'bonded' to conventional societal norms through employment, education and more stable, pro-social relationships. The desistance literature has further emphasised that assisting offenders to change their 'personal narrative' or 'sense of self' from that of a 'criminal' or 'drug user' to one that is more pro-social such as 'family member' or 'parent' can have a positive effect upon offending behaviour (Maruna, 2000; McNeill and Weaver, 2010).

The role that the family can play in effective resettlement has also been recognised in a raft of Government publications. The influential Social Exclusion Unit report on reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners (SEU, 2002) identified 'family networks' as a key factor in preventing re-offending, and in 2005 the Home Office named 'Children and Families' as one of seven key pathways in their National Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan. A Ministry of Justice commissioned review, 'Children of Offenders' in 2007, led to the development of a framework for improving the delivery of support to offenders' families (MoJ and DCSF, 2009). This introduced the 'Think Family' concept with the aim of improving awareness of the needs of offenders' children and families at each stage of the Criminal Justice System.

More recently, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS, now renamed HM Prison and Probation Service – HMPPS) included family and marital relationships as a criminogenic need, linking this to the wider Troubled Families programme run by the Department for Communities and Local Government. In its *Commissioning Intentions*, NOMS lists relationship coaching and family visits as promising approaches, as well as recommending interventions that target the offender and his/her family together:

*"We recognise that supporting and maintaining links between offenders and their families can help reduce reoffending. Doing so can contribute to tackling inter-generational offending by addressing the poor outcomes faced by children of offenders."*

*(NOMS 2014)*

Increased official recognition of the problems of prisoners' families, as well as of the potential benefits of improving family contact and support, has undoubtedly had some effect on policy and practice. Some encouraging developments took place in the early 2000s in family focused services (Boswell & Wedge, 2002; Pugh, 2004). The number of visitor centres has also increased, and in 2011 the Ministry of Justice issued a mandate for all prisons to provide a purpose built visitor facility. More prisons now offer extended family visits and facilities for children. Parenting

programmes are also being run in a number of prisons, and some establishments have appointed Family Support workers to provide a casework service to prisoners and their families.

However, encouraging as these developments have been, the pace of change in this area has been relatively slow and patchy overall. In practice, the burden of support for prisoners' resettlement often falls largely upon the families themselves. Condry (2007) highlights the personal costs to the wives, girlfriends and mothers of offenders serving long term sentences as the demands of supporting the offender through the sentence are not only time consuming and financially draining, they are also deeply emotional. Condry also refers to the 'web of shame' as many women reported feeling that they were also stigmatised by the criminal behaviour of their family member. More recently, Jardine (2017) warns against placing further emotional and financial requirements upon offenders' families by positioning them as both a source of support throughout the sentence and as a resettlement resource on release. This is particularly pertinent in the current climate of austerity and emphasises the need for provision of adequate support to mitigate the effects of the sentence upon these families, many of whom are already experiencing major social disadvantage and hardship.

The development of the IWW project in HMP/YOI Parc, Bridgend can be seen as potentially representing a step change in family services. IWW is a comprehensive multi-agency intervention in which prisoners and their families are intensively supported for a period of 12 months during the sentence and up to six months post release in order to achieve the key project aims of reducing reoffending, improving the quality of family life and community inclusion, and reducing the likelihood of intergenerational offending. It includes work with prisoners within a special Family Interventions Unit (FIU); joint work with prisoners and their families in the Family Interventions Lounge, part of the totally refurbished visiting facilities; 'through the gate' casework with the whole family by Family Integration Mentors (FIMs); and a range of other services, mainly in the community, delivered by third sector organisations (principally Barnardo's and Gwalia) and in some cases Social Services staff. These three areas of work are referred to as the three service 'hubs' of IWW (prison, transitional and community).

## **1.2 Research aims and objectives**

The main aim of the research is to evaluate the effectiveness of IWW in terms of (a) quality and effectiveness of organisational processes and practices, and (b) impact on participants. The research therefore contains two distinct elements; a process evaluation and an outcome evaluation. The aims of each can be specified as follows:

### **Process evaluation**

- To assess the quality of contact between IWW prisoners and their families during the custodial phase of the project.
- To explore the views and perspectives of IWW participants regarding their experiences of the project.
- To assess the efficacy of the individual components of the IWW delivery model in practice.
- To examine the extent to which the three 'hubs' of the service collaborate to deliver a coherent, multi-agency service which meets the needs of prisoners and their families.

### **Impact evaluation**

- To examine the impact on re-offending of prisoner participants (within the constraints of the IWW sample size).
- To evaluate the extent to which Invisible Walls improves the quality of life and personal relationships for prisoners and their families.
- To evaluate the impact upon factors likely to be associated with intergenerational offending.
- To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the project.
- To explore issues of sustainability and the potential for replication of the project.

## **1.3 Background to IWW**

IWW is based at HMP/YOI Parc, which has a reputation for running an innovative regime, offering prisoners a wide range of rehabilitative activities and courses. In keeping with this reputation, the prison established (in 2006) a small steering group of staff from a multi-disciplinary background known as Parc Supporting Families (PSF), whose purpose was to create a strategy to meet calls from NOMS for greater attention to the children and families of offenders. As part of this work, in 2009 the PSF opened the UK's first Family Interventions Unit (FIU) for male prisoners. The FIU (situated on T4 wing) is a 62-bed drug free unit for prisoners with children, which focuses upon repairing and maintaining family relationships. It offers a range of group and individual interventions aimed at developing positive, healthy family relationships as a means of reducing re-offending and intergenerational offending. In 2010 the PSF oversaw the replacement of traditional security-led visits at Parc by an interventions-led approach in which responsibility for the management and delivery of visits was transferred from security staff to the Family

Interventions Department. This not only brought about a major change in practice, but represented a significant conceptual and cultural shift, whereby staff were encouraged to view each visit as an opportunity to engage with the prisoner and his children and family. It also enabled all prisoners with children, rather than just those in the FIU, to benefit from the family-focused approach. October 2014 saw the opening of the Susan Ellis Interventions-Led Visitor Centre (ILVC), located outside the main gates. Specifically designed as a child and family friendly environment, this provides all visiting families with opportunities to benefit from support and activities while waiting to go into the main prison for their visit. In July 2016, operational responsibility for running the ILVC was handed over to Barnardo's, whose staff now undertake the 'booking in' of visitors, with the aim of creating a more welcoming atmosphere at the 'front end' of visits.

In the course of developing these services, the PSF steering group has gradually integrated the children and families approach throughout Parc. It has also forged close partnerships with local statutory, private and voluntary organisations. It is on these foundations that the IWW project was built.

## **1.4 Overview of the IWW Project**

Phase One of IWW, funded by a very generous grant from the Big Lottery, ran between September 2012 and May 2017. Phase Two funding was obtained from HMPSS in Wales and G4S, to continue the project from June 2017 onwards with no break in service. However, as this funding is lower, the configuration of the staff team and community partnership arrangements has changed. Our evaluation focuses only on Phase One.

The IWW project has three over-arching objectives, namely to:

- Reduce the likelihood of prisoner participants returning to crime after release.
- Increase the quality of life and community inclusion for whole families.
- Impact positively upon issues relating to the risk of intergenerational offending.

In Phase One IWW was delivered by a sizeable multi-agency team, some based in the prison and some in the community. The project as a whole was overseen by HMP/YOI Parc's Head of Family Interventions. The 'G4S team', based in the FIU on T4 wing, was directly employed by G4S and managed on a day to day basis by the IWW Project Manager. It consisted of four Family Integration Mentors (FIMs), a substance misuse worker, an Education/Training/Employment/

Volunteering (ETEV) specialist, a Family Support/Interventions Worker and a Business Support Officer (BSO). External agencies were sub-contracted by G4S to provide specific services and line managed their own staff rather than seconding them to G4S.

The largest community partner was Barnardo's, who were contracted to deliver a range of family support services to participants.<sup>4</sup> Their team was managed by the Barnardo's Children's Services Manager and staffed by one full time advocacy/under 8's worker (to provide one to one support sessions and advocacy for younger children); a part-time Family Group Conferencing Co-ordinator (responsible for convening child-centred family group conferences to help families communicate more effectively and make plans to promote the best interests of their children); and three Parenting Support Workers (to deliver Barnardo's parenting programme with adult IWW participants on a needs-led basis).

IWW also commissioned the services of two staff from Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC). One was a consultant Senior Social Worker contracted to provide clinical case support and supervision to the four IWW mentors; the other was a Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) worker, responsible for undertaking preventative work with children aged 8 and over by delivering one-to-one support sessions and providing advocacy support where necessary. Finally, a community-based ETEV specialist (employed by Gwalia) was contracted to provide education, training and employment support to ex-prisoners on their release into the community and to all IWW family members where required.

The project adopted a 'whole-family' approach, aimed at motivating, engaging and working with each participating offender and his family over a period of 12–18 months. This was to be achieved by integrating services in and between three 'hubs' of activity (prison, transitional and community), enabled by the continuous, through-the-gate case management work of the Family Integration Mentors and partnership with key agencies. The three hubs can be broadly distinguished as follows, although it is important to stress that there were (deliberately) major overlaps between them:

**Prison Hub:** This refers primarily to the cluster of services and interventions offered to IWW prisoner participants within HMP Parc (e.g. programmes focusing upon family relationships, parenting skills, employment, training, education, social enterprise and other resettlement

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<sup>4</sup> In addition to the Parenting and Pathways programme for parents and children aged 8 or over, as specified in the contract, an additional intervention for children aged under 8 was developed (see Chapter 4).

issues). This work was centred around the Family Interventions Unit (FIU) and delivered by staff from the G4S IWW team, other prison staff and sometimes external providers.

**Transitional Hub:** Sometimes expressed as ‘where inside meets outside’, this refers to work with participants as a family, either together in the same room or separately, the key idea being that they progress together along a planned ‘journey’ from a family life constrained by imprisonment to a new one in the community. Both intervention-led visits and the supportive ‘through the gate’ casework of the FIMs with both prisoner and family were critical elements of this ‘hub’.

**Community Hub:** This represents the specific aspects of the project that are particular to the family participants, both adults and children. Most of the relevant services were delivered within the community, at designated premises or in some cases in the family home. The interventions were delivered by a combination of FIMs, Barnardo’s, Gwalia and YISP workers.

To be eligible for the project, a prisoner had to:

- Have a family and children living in South Wales<sup>5</sup>
- Intend to resettle in South Wales
- Have a minimum of six months, and a maximum of twelve months left to serve.
- Have a partner or significant adult with an identified need for community support.
- Have no offence/child protection issues that prevented him from having contact with his children, partner or significant adult.

Eligible prisoners were targeted using a variety of methods to ensure that as many as possible of those suitable were offered the chance to join the programme.

On receiving an eligible referral, the FIM gathered additional information from prison IT systems, the Offender Management Unit and other relevant agencies involved with the individual and/or his family. An initial assessment was undertaken with the prisoner and his partner (or other carer). Within two weeks of receipt of the referral, a multi-agency Offender Referral Forum (ORF) was convened to discuss the family’s suitability for the project. These forums were held on a needs-led basis (depending on the number of referrals received and/or available spaces on IWW). Unsuitable referrals were signposted to other services and were sent a letter from the Business Support Officer informing them of the ORF’s decision.

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<sup>5</sup> Participants came from Cardiff, Newport, Torfaen, Bridgend, Swansea, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil and Neath Port Talbot.

Following acceptance at the ORF, the FIM as case-manager was responsible for passing the referral to key IWW partners (principally Barnardo's, and others where appropriate). More detailed assessments were then carried out with all accepted participants and baseline measures taken of their attitudes to crime (prisoners), family functioning and wellbeing. Details of the results were shared across all IWW partners working with each family. Once the support needs of participants were identified, a support planning meeting was held (where practicable, within 4 weeks of the ORF). The aim of this meeting was to allow the family to engage with the IWW staff and agree which services they would take advantage of, and when. This meeting was either conducted on a formal basis in the prison with all agency staff present, or informally between the FIM and prisoner/family member participants on a one to one basis, as deemed appropriate. Following this meeting, a support plan was drawn up and distributed to the prisoner, his family and all relevant IWW staff. Work based on this plan then continued for the remainder of the man's time in custody, as well as with his partner and children outside. On occasion, too, it took place with the whole family together on visits to the prison: prisoners on the FIU are permitted extra contact with their family, as well as attending a number of family focused interventions offered on the wing; IWW participants are also able to keep 'Family diaries' and record messages and stories for their children on DVDs (see section 4.4 for more detail).

Prior to release, a review meeting was held to assess progress made and amend the support plan in preparation for the father's release to the community. Once in the community, the FIM, Barnardo's and other IWW workers, together with partner agencies, continued to provide support to the ex-prisoner and his family for up to 6 months. A final 'roll off' meeting was held towards the end of this period to determine whether additional support was required and to make any necessary referrals to other agencies for ongoing support. Relevant third sector agencies were also invited to this meeting to maximise the possibility of a seamless transition to other agency support if needed.

#### *1.4.1 Monitoring and recording*

A comprehensive recording system was put in place from the outset of the project and staff monitored numbers of individuals referred, accepted/declined, 'starters' and numbers completing and exiting the intervention. All referrals (successful and unsuccessful) made to the IWW project (internally and from external agencies) were monitored using the IWW referral form. Referrals were collated by the Business Support Manager on a rolling basis using Excel spreadsheets.

The progress of all IWW participants was monitored by means of a computerised case management system, using an Access database, which was internal to G4S. The Barnardo's IWW team also used an internal case management system. On receiving a referral for a Barnardo's service from the FIM, a case file was opened and managed for each adult and child participant. Regular updates were provided to the Project Manager, and telephone, email and face to face contact was maintained with each FIM as the over-arching case manager for every client receiving a Barnardo's service. On receiving an update from a Barnardo's worker, the FIM entered a record of it on the G4S database.

Similarly, the YISP worker and the Gwalia ETEV community specialist retained responsibility for maintaining their own participant records and updating the FIMs/Barnardo's workers as appropriate.

## 2 Methodology

The main sources of research data were analysis of IWW records; interviews with participants, staff and external stakeholders; focus groups with, and pictures drawn by, children; and a variety of psychometric instruments completed by participants before, during and after taking part in the project. These more formal methods of data collection were complemented by lengthy periods of participant observation by the main researcher. Throughout the duration of the evaluation, she made frequent visits to the prison. Following the necessary checks and training, she was given keys which allowed her to move freely around the wings, offices and key locations such as the Visitors Centre. A fair amount of her time was spent in observation of the day to day delivery of the project and in informal conversations with staff and prisoners (particularly on the FIU wing), which over a period of four years gave her very close insight into how the project was progressing. She also spent time observing the work of the FIMS and visited many participants in their homes.

More details about the interviews, focus groups, pictorial representations and psychometric instruments are provided below, followed by brief comments on the economic evaluation.

### 2.1 Interviews, focus groups and pictorial data

A key source of data for both the process and impact evaluations was a total of 642 semi-structured interviews conducted with (1) G4S and IWW managers and staff (senior managers, managers, support workers and mentors across the partnership), (2) managers and staff of partner organisations, schoolteachers and other stakeholders, (3) IWW offender and family participants (interviewed on joining IWW, on release, and/or on exiting the project). The main aim of the interviews was to gather information about the operation and effectiveness of IWW from a variety of perspectives, as well as providing both qualitative and quantitative information about the impact of IWW upon participants, with a particular focus on perceived changes to their quality of life and family relationships. All of the interviews with staff, and those with offenders while still in prison, were conducted face to face; those with teachers were conducted by telephone; and those with offenders and families outside were conducted by a combination of the two.<sup>6</sup> All staff interviews and a few participant interviews were digitally recorded. Table 2.1 summarises the interviews conducted.

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<sup>6</sup> About three-quarters of these were conducted face to face.

**Table 2.1: Number of research interviews conducted**

| <b>Respondent type (N)</b>                        |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>G4S and IWW managers, and prison hub staff</b> | 48        |
| <b>Barnardo’s Cymru, Gwalia</b>                   | 22        |
| <b>Bridgend CBC (Social Services)</b>             | 4         |
| <b>Youth Offending Service</b>                    | 4         |
| <b>Teachers (telephone interviews)</b>            |           |
| <b>Wave 1</b>                                     | 79        |
| <b>Wave 2</b>                                     | 71        |
| <b>IWW prisoner participants</b>                  |           |
| <b>Pre-release phase</b>                          |           |
| Wave1   | 82        |
| <b>Post release phase</b>                         |           |
| Wave 2  | 64        |
| Wave 3  | 59        |
| <b>Comparison group of prisoners</b>              |           |
| <b>Pre-release phase</b>                          |           |
| <b>Wave 1</b>                                     | 76        |
| <b>Wave 2</b>                                     | 40        |
| <b>IWW adult family member participants</b>       |           |
| Pre-release phase                                 | 35        |
| Post release phase                                | 58        |
| <b>IWW and CSOF child participants</b>            |           |
| Focus Group sessions                              | (24)      |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | 642 (+24) |

In interviews with both prisoner and family participants, a variety of psychometric instruments were used to produce quantitative measures of aspects of their progress. These included the Outcome Scaling tool, Family Star assessment, the Goodman’s Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and the Crime-Pics II questionnaire. Further details are provided in the next section.

A comparison group of prisoners not participating in IWW was drawn from the main prisoner population at HMP Parc and interviewed twice: once between twelve and six months prior to release, and a second time shortly before release. The interviews gathered information about the

prisoners' experiences and perceptions of family interventions and the visiting process at HMP Parc. They also completed 'before and after' questionnaires measuring their attitudes to crime, motivation to change and perceptions of their children's wellbeing. Eligible prisoners were initially targeted for interview if they were not residing on the Family Interventions Unit, were not participating in the IWW project and were able to match a number of the eligibility criteria for participation on the IWW project (i.e. had a minimum of six months and a maximum of twelve months left to serve on their sentence, had no restrictions on contact with their families and had been identified by the Parc Supporting Family team as having children/stepchildren in the community). However, we were unable to ascertain in advance whether their family members were experiencing high levels of need, as this information is not held on prison records.

Two focus groups were also held during half term and summer holidays with children from the IWW and CSOF<sup>7</sup> projects. These methods were selected by the research team due to a number of difficulties associated with accessing and interviewing individual children during school time, combined with the resource limitations of the research team. The ethical implication of questioning this very vulnerable group of participants in a formal research interview situation about the sensitive issues surrounding their father's imprisonment was also an important factor in the decision not to conduct one-to-one interviews with the children. Instead, participatory drawings were used as a tool to gather children's feedback, as this method did not require any level of linguistic proficiency from the children and young people, and instead empowered them to express thoughts and emotions which they may have found difficult to do orally or in writing.

Further information was gathered from child participants by collating drawings completed during one to one sessions that the children attended with a FIM, YISP and/or Barnardo's worker. Pictorial data was coded from each of the drawings to interpret the child's perceptions of themselves and their families before and after joining the IWW project.

Finally, a short and informal email survey was conducted with a variety of people identified by the IWW project manager as having visited or been influenced by the project. These included politicians, policy-makers and prison governors in the UK and overseas. The aim of this survey was to gain a broad picture of the extent of the 'ripples' created by the IWW project, including its influence on criminal justice policy and the extent of any replication elsewhere.

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<sup>7</sup> Community Support for Offenders' Families (CSOF) is jointly funded by Barnardo's and HMPPS to provide support in the community for the children and families of offenders.

## 2.2 Database and assessments

Another key source of evaluation data was records and assessments completed by IWW staff. These included detailed information on participants and interventions from the prison hub IWW database<sup>8</sup> and live client files maintained by the Family Integration Mentors. Quarterly one to one meetings were also held by the researcher with each FIM in order to gather updates for every family as they graduated through the prison, transitional and community hubs of the service. Results from the Outcome Scaling tool, Family Star assessment and Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties and Crime-Pics II questionnaires were also collated for analysis by the research team. Further details of each of these are outlined below:

### i) The Family Star Assessment

The Family Star parenting tool was administered by Barnardo's support workers to measure and support progress towards participants' goals for change in their parenting skills. Positive change in this measure reflects improved parenting skills, which has been used by the evaluation team as a proxy measure to assess change in the quality of family life and family relationships, and is likely to impact subsequently upon the behaviour and wellbeing of the child (Objectives 2 and 3).

The tool was administered to both prisoner and adult family member participants on two occasions – shortly after joining IWW and on exiting. On the first occasion, as well as describing the current situation, interviewees were asked to think back to their lives prior to imprisonment. This was done to obtain an assessment of their family lives at three points in time:

- 1) The period just before imprisonment;
- 2) Shortly after joining IWW;
- 3) When exiting IWW.

On completing the Family Star, the Barnardo's staff forwarded a summary of the assessment to the Family Integration Mentors for inclusion in the participant's case-files.

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<sup>8</sup> This was an internal G4S system which tracks a participant (prisoner and each family member) from joining through to exiting the program. Each IWW partner agency retained control and responsibility for updating participant records on their respective internal computer systems and forwarded client progress updates to the IWW prison hub team.

ii) The Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

The SDQ (Goodman, 1997) is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire for use with 3–16 year olds. The questionnaire asks parents and teachers to provide their perceptions of the child's wellbeing and to assess the risk of the child developing emotional and/or behavioural issues. Scores from this measure were used by the research team both in their own right and as a proxy indicator of the likelihood that the child will engage in delinquent and/or criminogenic behaviour (Objective 3).

The SDQ comprises 5 scales:

- 1) emotional symptoms (5 items)
- 2) conduct problems (5 items)
- 3) hyperactivity/inattention (5 items)
- 4) peer relationship problems (5 items)
- 5) pro-social behaviour

Barnardo's staff completed the SDQ (face to face) at two points in time, with:

- Adult participants on joining IWW.
- Adult participants on exiting IWW.

Researchers completed the SDQ with prisoners in the comparison group to reflect the periods:

- Six to twelve months before release.
- Approaching the release date (interviews were conducted between six weeks to one day before release).

Researchers also conducted telephone interviews with teachers of all IWW child participants in schools where consent to contact them had been obtained. This was done in order to gauge any changes in their perceptions of the child's behaviour and performance in the school environment, again as measured by the SDQ.

iii) Crime-Pics II Questionnaire

Prisoners were further assessed using the Crime-Pics II instrument (Frude et al 1994), which measures their attitudes to crime (G score), victim empathy (V score) and their rating of the seriousness of practical and emotional problems they currently face (P score). This was

administered by the research team to prisoners on joining IWW, on release and on exiting the intervention. Comparison group participants also completed the instrument six to twelve months before release, and a second time shortly before release. Previous research has found Crime-Pics II scores to be associated with re-offending rates<sup>9</sup>, and they are used here as a proxy measure to indicate the likelihood that the prisoner participant will re-offend after release (Objective 1). Once sufficient time has passed, the one-year reconviction rates of the participants and a comparison group will be calculated and published (see Chapter 5).

iv) IWW outcome measurement (scaling) tool

A broader outcome measurement tool was also developed, loosely based upon the framework used by Integrated Family Support Teams (IFST, Bridgend Social Services). The form used was built around the seven 'pathways' of resettlement (Home Office, 2004) and 'scored' participants' status in the areas of: accommodation; education, employment and training; health; drugs and alcohol; finance, benefit and debt; children and families; and attitudes, thinking and behaviour. Another version of the form was developed for use with child participants to reflect their well-being in the areas of living arrangements, education, peer relationships, health and wellbeing, substance misuse, family life, engagement with services, and attitudes, thinking and behaviour.

The tool was completed by the Family Integration Mentors with all participants to reflect the period prior to the offender's imprisonment, on joining, on release and on exiting IWW. Change as measured by this form has been used by the research team to evaluate participants' progress across a range of areas which can impact upon the likelihood of offending (Objective 1), quality of life and positive community inclusion (Objective 2) and intergenerational offending (Objective 3).

## 2.3 Economic evaluation

An analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the project will be carried out when full re-offending data are available. This will be produced by external consultants, Andrew Rix and Richard Gaunt, who have already undertaken some preliminary analysis using data from the main evaluation, combined with interviews with G4S staff to obtain cost information and some additional judgements about outcomes for families.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.crime-pics.co.uk/publications>

### 3 Referrals and participant profiles

A total of 321 referrals to IWW had been received by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017. An examination of the source of referrals<sup>10</sup> indicates that the vast majority were internally generated, with only 6% referred in from an external agency and only three external referrals received since 2015. The greatest proportion of referrals (32%) came from the prisoners themselves, indicating that the population in Parc was being made well aware of the project. 28% of referrals came from the Parc Supporting Families team, 16% from IWW staff and 14% from the Offender Management Unit.

Figures to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 also indicate that 238 (74%) of the 321 referrals had been declined, and 83 accepted. An examination of reasons given indicates that they were most commonly declined because of insufficient support needs in the community and/or partners not wishing to engage (n=80). A substantial proportion, too, were deemed ineligible because their sentence length did not fit the criteria (either too long left to serve or due for release within six months: n=51), their family lived outside the IWW catchment area (n=10) or they did not appear to have children (n=11), while 23 were assessed as representing a high security risk.<sup>11</sup> This indicates that there may be some more work to do in educating potential referrers (including prisoners themselves) on the eligibility criteria for the project.

During the first few months of the project, 18 referrals were declined because of risks associated with domestic abuse. However, this exclusion criterion was later removed when it became clear that many of the prisoners/families being referred had experienced problems in this respect and it was felt that the support and additional monitoring provided by IWW would prove to be of benefit in suitable cases. Indeed, a retrospective review of case files indicated that 42 of the 83 IWW prisoner participants were known to have been involved in domestic abuse of some kind.

Prisoners who expressed a willingness to join but were considered to have too long left to serve to benefit fully from IWW, were monitored from a distance by the FIMs (light touch). Brief contact was made to raise awareness and the individual was then placed on a waiting list and reassessed at a later date when eligible.

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<sup>10</sup> The source of referral was not recorded for 38 cases.

<sup>11</sup> In some cases, more than one reason was given.

## 3.1 Numbers of participants, completers and drop-outs

As can be seen from Table 3.1, about one in four of the 321 prisoners referred to IWW were accepted (along with their children and families) on to the project. Altogether, 349 participants from 83 families (83 prisoners, 94 adult family members and 172 children) participated in the project. Of the 349 participants who commenced IWW, 324 went on to fully engage with the intervention (defined as remaining in post-release contact with the IWW team for a minimum of 3 months) and only 25 ‘dropped out’, disengaged or were removed. This represents a full engagement rate of 93%.

Of the 25 ‘drop-outs’, 10 were prisoner participants, meaning that 88% of the prisoner cohort fully completed their participation in IWW. Eight of these 10 left the project while still in prison, in most cases being removed because of lack of engagement, non-compliance or concerns about their behaviour or risk to staff. Only two ex-prisoners voluntarily disengaged from the project after release. The remaining drop-outs consisted of 8 adult family members and 7 children: not all of these were in the families of the prisoner drop-outs, as it was permitted for individuals to disengage while the rest of their family continued with IWW.

**Table 3.1 Throughput of IWW participants (September 2012<sup>12</sup> –31<sup>st</sup> May 2017)**

| No. of prisoners referred | No. of referrals declined | No. of prisoner participants | No. of adult family member participants | No. of children participants | No. of individuals ‘dropping out’* | No. of individuals successfully engaging |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 321                       | 238                       | 83                           | 94                                      | 172                          | 25                                 | 324                                      |

*Notes: A prisoner and his family are recorded as being ‘active’ participants once accepted as eligible at the Offender Referral Forum (ORF) and consent has been obtained from both prisoner and family. A drop-out is recorded only if it takes place after this acceptance has occurred and consent to start has been obtained. A successful engagement is defined as any individual remaining in post release contact with the IWW team for a minimum of 3 months.*

*\*10 prisoners, 8 adult family members, and 7 children.*

<sup>12</sup> The period from September to the end of November represented the mobilisation phase of the project. The first participants commenced in December 2012.

## 3.2 Participant profiles

This section provides a breakdown of the profile of all IWW participants by age, sex, ethnicity and geographical location. A summary of their assessed needs and psychometric scores will also be given. These represent the status of participants either at the time of joining IWW or prior to imprisonment. An analysis of changes that had occurred by the time of their exit from IWW will be provided in Chapter 5.

### 3.2.1 Age and ethnicity

Table 3.2 provides a breakdown of participants' ages. It shows that the majority of both prisoner and adult family member participants were aged between 21 and 35 when they joined IWW. Two family member participants were aged 17, and only four participants (one prisoner and three family members) were aged over 50. 38% of child participants were aged under 4, 30% fell into the 4–7 age bracket and 31% were aged between 8 and 17 at the time of joining.

**Table 3.2** Age at referral of all participants

| Age group      | Participant<br>% (N) |                 |                  |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
|                | Offender             | Family member   | Child            |
| <b>Under 4</b> |                      |                 | <b>38 (61)</b>   |
| <b>4 - 7</b>   |                      |                 | <b>30 (49)</b>   |
| <b>8 - 17</b>  |                      | <b>2.5 (2)</b>  | <b>31 (50)</b>   |
| <b>18 - 20</b> | <b>7 (6)</b>         | <b>15 (12)</b>  | <b>1 (1)</b>     |
| <b>21 - 35</b> | <b>78 (65)</b>       | <b>67 (53)</b>  |                  |
| <b>36 - 50</b> | <b>13 (11)</b>       | <b>11 (9)</b>   |                  |
| <b>50+</b>     | <b>1 (1)</b>         | <b>4 (3)</b>    |                  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100 (83)</b>      | <b>100 (79)</b> | <b>100 (161)</b> |

Date of birth missing for 26 individuals.

Percentages do not always total 100 due to rounding.

A breakdown of the ethnic group of offender participants<sup>13</sup> shows that 88% (n=73) were white. Among the 12% (n=10) belonging to a minority ethnic group, three described themselves as African/British, two as White/Black Caribbean, two as White/Asian, and one each as

<sup>13</sup> Ethnicity as self-reported by participants.

Asian/Chinese, Bangladeshi and Asian. Although these figures show an underrepresentation of ethnic minorities on IWW compared with the general prison population<sup>14</sup>, this is likely to reflect the lower numbers of minority ethnic groups in Wales from which the Parc prison population is principally drawn.

### *3.2.2 Geographical location*

Analysis of the distribution of participants indicates that families were spread across South Wales, but with the majority in South East Wales. The largest proportion of participants (35%) were from the Cardiff County area, 13% were from Newport, 11% from Torfaen, 11% from Bridgend, 8% from Swansea, 6% from Blaenau Gwent and 4% each from Monmouthshire, Caerphilly and Rhondda Cynon Taff. There were also participants on the project from Merthyr Tydfil (3%) and Neath Port Talbot (2%). This wide spread of locations undoubtedly placed demands upon staff resource due to time spent travelling to visit families in their own homes.

### *3.2.3 Predicted risk of re-offending*

The Offending Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS) is a static risk assessment tool routinely used by Prison and Probation staff throughout England and Wales to determine the likelihood that an offender will be reconvicted of an offence within 12 (OGRS12) and 24 (OGRS24) months of release; the higher the score, the higher the risk of re-offending.

A breakdown of currently available<sup>15</sup> OGRS scores for prisoner participants on joining IWW indicates that their average predicted risk of reoffending within 12 months of release was over 50%. This is considerably higher than the rate of re-offending across the prison estate for adult male prisoners serving 12 months or over, which for those released in 2014-15 stood at around 31% (Ministry of Justice 2017: Table C2a).<sup>16</sup> Among those on whom we have relevant data so far, only 10% were assessed as low risk and over a third as high risk of re-offending. In short, there is no indication that IWW was 'cherry-picking' participants.

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<sup>14</sup>At 30 December 2016, the latest published data, one-quarter of the prison population whose ethnicity was recorded were from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) group (4% mixed race, 8% Asian or Asian British, 12% Black or Black British, 1% other ethnic group) Source: House of Commons Library, UK Prison Population Statistics, Number SN/SG/04334, 20 April 2017.

<sup>15</sup> At the time of writing, we have OGRS12 data for 37 prisoner participants and OGRS24 for 40. When undertaking the reoffending analysis for the project (after sufficient time has elapsed) we shall obtain OGRS scores for all prisoner participants, as well as the comparison group.

<sup>16</sup> All IWW prisoners had been sentenced to 12 months or over (because of the eligibility criterion of having at least six months left to serve).

### 3.2.4 Family living arrangements on joining IWW

Table 3.3 shows that, prior to their fathers' prison sentence, 41% of IWW child participants were living with both parents, while 52% were living in single parent households (in nearly all cases, with their mother) and 7% with other relatives (mainly grandparents). At the point of joining IWW, 94% were now living with their mother and the other 6% with members of the wider family. Three of the latter were formally registered as 'looked after' children, although none had been fostered or lived in care homes.

**Table 3.3 Living arrangements of IWW children prior to prison and on joining IWW**

| Status                      | Prior to father in prison |     | On joining IWW |     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
|                             | N                         | %   | N              | %   |
| Living with both parents    | 68                        | 41  | -              | -   |
| Living with single parent   | 86                        | 52  | 162            | 94  |
| Living with other relatives | 12                        | 7   | 10             | 6   |
| Not born*                   | (6)                       |     | -              | -   |
| <b>Total</b>                | 166                       | 100 | 172            | 100 |

\*6 of the IWW children had been born during the father's sentence.

## 3.3 Support needs of the family

The support needs of the families were assessed in a number of ways by both the FIMs and Barnardo's workers using a suite of tools. All participants underwent a general assessment on joining the project, using IWW's own Outcome Measurement Scaling tool, which allocated scores to a range of possible needs. More specific assessments were made using The Family Star tool (to measure family functioning and parental skills) and Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire (SDQ, to measure children's wellbeing). The SDQ was administered both to parents and to teachers in order to reflect their perceptions of the child's behaviour and well-being at home and in school. We present below some of the scores obtained from the latter two specialist instruments, before providing a broader picture of needs derived from general assessments by IWW staff.

### *3.3.1 Family Star and SDQ scores*

Analysis of the Family Star scores, reflecting retrospective assessments of the situation prior to imprisonment, shows an average score of 40.5 across all adult participants, which indicates a high level of need in relation to parenting and family functioning.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, a significant proportion (34.5%) scored between 0 and 30, signifying very high levels of need. Only 8% scored 70 or above and were thus assessed as parenting effectively. Of course, these scores represent the period leading up to the father's imprisonment, which is likely to have been a particularly problematic and unsettled time for the family. Scores obtained at the point of the family joining IWW (when the father may have been imprisoned for some time) indicate a slight improvement in familial functioning, with 22% of participants scoring less than 30, and an overall average score of 44.3.

Analysis of children's SDQ scores illustrates that over a quarter of IWW child participants were at increased risk of, or were already experiencing, clinical problems at the point of joining IWW, with 29% of both mothers<sup>18</sup> and fathers scoring their children at 17 or over<sup>19</sup>. Both parents completed the questionnaire separately (the father while in prison and the mother in the community). The similar scoring given may reflect the fact that although the father was likely to have been incarcerated and away from the family home for a substantial length of time at the point of joining IWW, parents appear in many cases to have remained in contact regarding any behavioural/attitudinal difficulties being experienced by their child/ren in his absence, even prior to joining IWW.

There were slight differences between parental and teacher perceptions of the child's well-being, with an average score of 11.0 given by teachers<sup>20</sup> compared with 12.3 by mothers and 12.9 by fathers. It is possible that these variations illustrate differences in children's behaviour and sense of well-being in school compared with at home, or differences in teachers' and parents' interpretations of behaviour (or indeed a combination of both). Additionally, many of the teachers may have been unaware of the situation in the family home at the point at which the child and his/her family joined the project. They may therefore not have had the full picture of issues that the child was coping with at that time.

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<sup>17</sup> Based on 165 completed Family Stars

<sup>18</sup> Including, in a small number of cases, a grandparent who was caring for the children.

<sup>19</sup> A score of 17 and over indicates that the child is at high risk of clinically significant problems. 14–16 represents an elevated risk.

<sup>20</sup> Based on 79 'wave one' interviews with teachers, 116 maternal SDQs, and 101 paternal SDQs.

### 3.3.2 Overview of assessed needs

Further evidence of high levels of need among child participants comes from data on their involvement with other agencies at the time of joining IWW. For example, 28 (16%) were on the Social Services 'At Risk' Register and five (3%) were categorised as 'Children in Need'. A further 32 (19%) had some sort of involvement with Social Services, while 36 (21%) were receiving support from other external agencies. Only 69 (40%) of the children were receiving no agency support when they joined the project.

Table 3.4 shows the numbers of prisoner and adult family participants assessed by IWW staff (using their own scaling tool) to have any of a list of possible support needs, at the point of joining.

**Table 3.4 Assessed support needs of adult participants on referral**

| <b>Problem</b>  | <b>N</b>   | <b>%</b>  |
|---|------------|-----------|
| <b>Parenting</b>  | <b>125</b> | <b>80</b> |
| <b>ETEV</b>   | <b>101</b> | <b>64</b> |
| <b>Family relationships</b>                               | <b>101</b> | <b>64</b> |
| <b>Substance misuse</b>                                   | <b>82</b>  | <b>52</b> |
| <b>Life management</b>                                    | <b>77</b>  | <b>49</b> |
| <b>Finances/debt</b>                                      | <b>70</b>  | <b>45</b> |
| <b>Offending behaviour</b>                                | <b>69</b>  | <b>44</b> |
| <b>Problem solving</b>                                    | <b>67</b>  | <b>43</b> |
| <b>Accommodation</b>                                      | <b>56</b>  | <b>36</b> |
| <b>Health and wellbeing</b>                               | <b>54</b>  | <b>34</b> |
| <b>Childcare</b>  | <b>47</b>  | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Domestic abuse</b>                                     | <b>33</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Mental health</b>                                      | <b>28</b>  | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Children at risk</b>                                   | <b>25</b>  | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Help with behaviour/<br/>school exclusion of child</b> | <b>9</b>   | <b>6</b>  |

Total N=157 (Completed referral forms were available for 157 of the 177 adults who joined the project.)

\*Percentages do not sum to 100 as many participants were assessed as having multiple problems.

The results clearly illustrate the constellation of problems being experienced by many families, significant numbers of whom were in crisis at the point of referral. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the nature of the intervention, analysis indicates that parenting was the most commonly

identified type of need, being recorded as a key concern for 80% of adult participants. Issues relating to employment (64%), family relationships (64%), substance misuse (52%), life management (49%), and finances/debt (45%) were also issues of concern for a substantial proportion. Finally, domestic abuse was a key concern highlighted for 21 participants at the point of referral. However, it is important to note that in many cases, domestic abuse did not come to light until the FIM had been working with the families for some time; as mentioned earlier, a total of 42 of the 83 IWW families were eventually identified as having some history, or potential risk, of domestic abuse.

### *3.3.3 Educational issues*

Table 3.5 shows that 78 (57%) of the 138 school-age IWW participants were attending school with no identified issues at the time of joining IWW. However, the remainder had been assessed as experiencing attendance, behavioural and/or educational attainment issues, and eight of these (6% of the total) had been excluded from school and/or were subject to an alternative education curriculum and hence were not in mainstream education.

**Table 3.5 Educational status of children of school age on joining IWW**

| Status   | N   | %   |
|--|-----|-----|
| <b>Permanently excluded/NEET</b>                     | 1   | 1   |
| <b>Temporarily excluded/ suspended</b>               | 3   | 2   |
| <b>Alternative education curriculum</b>              | 4   | 3   |
| <b>In education: issues of attendance/attainment</b> | 52  | 38  |
| <b>In education: no issues</b>                       | 78  | 57  |
| <b>Total school age children</b>                     | 138 | 100 |

### *3.3.4 Mental and physical health*

An examination of the health assessments<sup>21</sup> carried out with children on joining IWW indicates that over a quarter (28%, N=48) of all child participants were experiencing either physical or mental health issues on joining. Eleven of these were receiving or had received treatment for

<sup>21</sup> Assessments were conducted by the FIMs using the Outcome Measurement Scaling Tool (see section 2.2).

their conditions, nine had been referred to an appropriate service and were awaiting treatment, and the other 28 were categorised as unwell but receiving no medical intervention.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.3.5 Peer relationships

Only 68% of child participants were assessed as having appropriate peer relationships and networks at the time of joining IWW. 18% were assessed as having limited social networks, 10% were experiencing bullying issues and 8% were 'isolated'. In addition, four children (2%) were reported to be engaging in inappropriate behaviour with peers and a further five (3%) were assessed as having inappropriate 'non peer' relationships.

### 3.3.6 Accommodation and employment

Tables 3.6 and 3.7 show the employment and accommodation status of both prisoner and adult family member participants during the period prior to the father's imprisonment.

**Table 3.6 Employment status of adult participants before offender's sentence**

|                              | Employed % | Unemployed % | Training/ Education % | Retired % | Total % |
|------------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Prisoners (N=83)</b>      | 20         | 80           | 0                     | 0         | 100     |
| <b>Family members (N=94)</b> | 24         | 69           | 3                     | 3         | 100     |

Base = 177 (complete set of scaling tools received)  
Percentages do not always total 100 due to rounding

**Table 3.7 Accommodation status of adult participants before offender's sentence**

|                              | Permanent % | Transient % | NFA % | Rented % | Supported Housing % | Traveller site % | Total % |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|----------|---------------------|------------------|---------|
| <b>Prisoners (N=83)</b>      | 6           | 20          | 17    | 54       | 1                   | 1                | 100     |
| <b>Family members (N=94)</b> | 13          | 9           | 2     | 74       | 1                   | 1                | 100     |

Base = 177 (complete set of scaling tools received).  
Percentages do not always total 100 due to rounding.

<sup>22</sup> Issues highlighted ranged from IBS/anxiety/emotional symptoms to dental health problems.

80% of prisoner participants and 69% of adult family member participants were unemployed when the father entered prison. At the point of joining IWW, nine of these prisoners had lost their jobs. Altogether, 89% expected to be unemployed on release.

As Table 3.7 shows, around half (54%) of prisoner participants and three quarters (74%) of family members were in rental accommodation at the point of the father's imprisonment. 17% of prisoners were registered as homeless (NFA) on entering prison. At the point of joining IWW, their housing situation had worsened, with over a quarter of all prisoner participants (29%) expecting to be released with no accommodation.

### *3.3.7 Substance misuse*

Assessments conducted by FIMs with prisoner and family member participants using the IWW Outcome Measurement Scaling tool indicated that substance misuse was a huge problem for the IWW families. 89% of prisoner participants were reported as misusing substances prior to entering prison. Four others were ex-users assessed as 'action', 'maintenance' or 'long term change', leaving only five (6%) assessed as non-users.

By contrast, only 15% of adult family members were assessed at that point as having substance misuse problems, and 79% were classified as non-users.

## 4. The implementation process

This chapter addresses the main research aims outlined under ‘Process evaluation’ in section 1.2, namely:

- To assess the quality of contact between IWW prisoners and their families during the custodial phase of the project.
- To explore the views and perspectives of IWW participants regarding their experiences of the project.
- To assess the efficacy of the individual components of the IWW delivery model in practice.
- To examine the extent to which the three ‘hubs’ of the service collaborate to deliver a coherent, multi-agency service which meets the needs of prisoners and their families.

The findings are based on a combination of interviews with G4S and partner agency managers and staff, prisoners and family members; analysis of records; and frequent observation of all aspects of the project in action. Part One of the chapter focuses on IWW’s face-to-face work with participants, looking in turn at prison community centred work. In each case we examine the roles and skills of the staff, and the contributions of the various interventions provided. This is followed by some general findings about the extent of staff engagement with participants and the value of the relationships they developed. In Part Two of the chapter we discuss a variety of organisational issues, including questions about relationships between partner agencies (both within and outside IWW), referral mechanisms, eligibility criteria, and caseloads and capacity. We also highlight the development of extensive partnership with local schools, which had not been envisaged in the original plans.

### **PART ONE: FACE-TO-FACE WORK WITH PARTICIPANTS**

Between 2012 and 2017, IWW was delivered by a mix of staff employed by G4S and by external partner agencies sub-contracted to provide particular services. Most worked full-time on the project, although there were also some part-time posts, especially among the non-G4S staff. Ignoring some minor staffing changes made over time, the full IWW ‘team’ can be broadly divided into two groups: those forming the ‘G4S team’ (employed by G4S and with a base in the prison and a satellite base outside) and those employed by partner agencies who were sub-contracted by G4S to provide specific services, mainly in the community (see Figure 4.1).

## Figure 4.1 The IWW team

|   |
|---|
| <p><u>G4S team</u></p> <p>Project Manager</p> <p>Business Support Officer (BSO)</p> <p>4 Family Intervention Mentors (FIMs)</p> <p>Substance misuse specialist</p> <p>Education/Training/Employment and Volunteering (ETEV) specialist</p> <p>Family Support/Interventions Worker</p> <p><u>Employed by contracted partners</u></p> <p>Social Worker (Bridgend County Borough Council, BCBC)</p> <p>Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) worker (also BCBC)</p> <p>Community-based ETEV specialist (Gwalia).</p> <p>Advocacy/under 8's worker (Barnardo's)</p> <p>Family Group Conferencing Co-ordinator (Barnardo's)</p> <p>3 Parenting Support Workers (Barnardo's)</p> <p>Children's Services Manager (Barnardo's, responsible for managing the Barnardo's staff).</p> |
|---|

The above two groups of staff were sometimes spoken of by managers and the staff themselves as forming the 'prison hub' and 'community hub', respectively, although this is not strictly accurate, as the term 'hubs' was initially meant to distinguish between different types of activities (those focused on prisoners, on family members, and on both together) rather than between different groups of staff. Moreover, in terms of where they actually worked, the labels prison and community hubs are arguably misnomers. Some staff worked exclusively in the prison and some were community-based, but in keeping with the 'through the gate' ethos of the project, most worked in both environments.

For reasons of simplicity, we shall divide the following discussion of the day to day work of the project into two main sections, under the headings of 'prison centred work' and 'community centred work', but it is emphasised that this (like distinctions between 'hubs') is an artificial distinction.

## 4.1 Prison centred work

### 4.1.1 *The 'G4S team': roles, skills and contributions*

The G4S team based in the FIU was managed by a full-time Project Manager, who oversaw the operational delivery of the project and was responsible for managing, supervising and supporting the FIMS. She also assumed some day to day responsibility for tasking the YISP and Gwalia post-holders. Her duties included (but were not limited to) chairing referral forums, team meetings and other meetings where required; managing financial processes in conjunction with the G4S management accountant and senior managers; ensuring compliance with budgetary, child protection, health and safety, data protection and freedom of information policies; and providing regular management reports and updates. The Project Manager was also required to form effective relationships with key personnel across the IWW partnership to ensure the effective delivery of the service across the prison, transitional and community hubs.

This was a varied and challenging role, involving liaison across prison, statutory, community and third sector agencies. Moreover, the role and the skills required changed considerably over time. In its early stages, the project went through a complex mobilisation and development phase, requiring strong organisational and project management skills, but once clients were recruited other key skills became vital, including knowledge and experience of rehabilitative work, as well as clinical support and supervision of staff. Later, too, the Project Manager was expected to assist in organising events such the IWW Accord and School Showcase events. As with many complex and innovative projects, it was clear that the efficacy of the day-to-day operation of IWW depended to a considerable degree on the qualities of the person holding this post. As will emerge in the following sections, IWW was generally very successful in this respect.

The Project Manager worked closely with and was assisted by a business support officer, whose main tasks included the co-ordination of all administrative support. This included arranging Steering and Governance group meetings, and ensuring that all business, administrative and operational processes were developed to meet contractual compliance. The BSO was also responsible for developing and maintaining systems for collecting and storing information and case management records.

The main operational staff in the G4S team hub consisted of the FIMs, the ETEV worker and the substance misuse specialist. We discuss each of these roles in turn.

### *i) Family Intervention Mentors*

The 'lynchpin' of the IWW service was undoubtedly the role filled by the four FIMs, who carried the overarching responsibility for case managing each family from the point of joining IWW, through the prison phase of the sentence and post release for up to six months in the community. Their demanding role required a broad knowledge of all the common practical issues affecting individuals within this client group such as housing, employment/education, finance and benefit entitlement and substance misuse, combined with the ability to deal with more complex issues such as child protection and safeguarding, domestic abuse, risk, mental health, and vulnerable adults. Mentors also needed to be able to motivate, engage and build relationships with families who might be unwilling, mistrustful and unmotivated to continue.

Interviewees' answers to the question, "what makes a good mentor?" generally emphasised the importance of having a range of knowledge and skills, although it was pointed out that these could be possessed either by one person or between the mentor group as a whole.

*"We have to be able to deal with everything, housing, employment and drugs. At a lower level, could a person manage the complexities of the case? If things are failing it is all yours, a lot of pressure is on us. We go home and I think, have I done that or done this? Pressure is a lot more than when I was working in X. Also how to manage them [participants], challenge them, motivate them?"* [FIM]

*"The teams definitely need a background in offending behaviour, somebody with family and children/parenting background. These skills can all be learnt by each other. Somebody with alcohol and drug knowledge. Another element would be ETE. A mix of that within the team ideally; which is what we do have in this team, which is why it works. It is holistic...."*

*.... It's about being resilient and finding what works for each family. One size doesn't fit all. All are trained in Motivational Interviewing and pro-social modelling."* [G4S Staff]

*"You have got to have a sense of humour and be a people person, you have to be able to work at all levels, you could be with a service user, the mum one day, a child the next and the head of CPS the next day. Good organisational skills, you have really got to keep on top of things. For me the biggest thing is to constantly be working outside that box and don't think that every family you can deal with in the same way, so be creative in your thinking and look elsewhere for answers. It is absolutely not to do with qualifications but you definitely need experience of working with vulnerable families."* [FIM]

The need for staff to be able to challenge their clients' attitudes to crime and increase motivation to change was also highlighted during interviews.

*"We challenge pro-offending attitudes. Recently one of our guys was saying, "I need the best things for my children, so justifying that it is ok for him to steal for them. We challenged that in that it is more about their children wanting dad home for birthdays and Christmas. It is about changing their way of thinking. We ask a prisoner what he thinks is important to his child. He might say his child wants the best trainers or an iphone.... We recently did mediation with a mum and a dad who have a child. The FIM worked out what expectations mum had of dad, what dad was looking for out of the relationship when he got out with the child. The FIM had those conversations with them separately and then we brought them together to have that conversation. It worked well; they were both assuming what the other was thinking. I suppose coming from an offending behaviour interventions background has been useful coming into this role.... X has come from a Probation background and X was a facilitator in offending behaviour programmes so they have that offending behaviour background."*

*[G4S Manager]*

The four<sup>23</sup> FIMs in the G4S IWW team came to the role from a mix of backgrounds including; domestic abuse, prison-based interventions, Probation, mentoring and education. This composition worked well and afforded a high level of flexibility and range of knowledge, which would not otherwise have been available if all FIMS were required to have the same qualifications and/or skillset. The co-location of the four FIMs within the same office along with the prison hub ETEV and Substance Misuse<sup>24</sup> specialists also had the added advantage of access to a wide range of skills, knowledge and agency contacts across the prison-based team. The weekly practice exchange slots held at each team meeting also facilitated the sharing of effective practice and knowledge.

## *ii) ETEV workers*

ETEV services were delivered to offenders during the custodial phase of their sentence, and to both offenders and family members in the post-release period. Although there was a general consensus that FIMs did not have the time or resources to develop the specialised ETEV

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<sup>23</sup> One FIM left and was replaced by the prison hub ETEV specialist in June 2016.

<sup>24</sup> Until Spring 2016, the IWW substance misuse specialist was based in the IWW office on T4. From June 2016 this post was filled by a G4S substance misuse worker responsible for delivering interventions and support to prisoners on both the T4 Family Interventions wing and the Endeavour unit (designed for prisoners with an ex-military background) and consequently was not based in the office full time.

knowledge and bank of community contacts (training providers, funding bodies/organisations and employers) required to meet the ETEV needs of participants, interviews indicated that whilst a specialised ETEV role was seen as important, it did not necessarily need to be filled by an individual from an ETEV background specifically:

*"I think they need to be a certain type of person but not specialists in that field. With ETE, that's changing all the time; providers are changing, legislation is changing with benefits, so it is ongoing learning for anyone anyway.....On the other hand if you have someone who has been doing that role for a long time you can get very blinkered as to what that role should be, and with a project like IWW it is evolving all the time and you need flexibility to work within it."*

[G4S manager]

Community ETEV provision for all family member participants and ex-prisoner participants on release was fulfilled by the Gwalia post-holder. Whilst she was originally expected to focus her work upon the delivery of ETEV services, she often also provided help with issues such as housing, benefit advice, one to one support and assistance with transport which, in some respects mirrored the work carried out by the FIMs.

*"I go out to see someone about ETE, but they need help with housing, counselling, benefits everything you know. I end up taking them to appointments and dealing with all issues. Getting dragged into housing, benefits that type of thing. It puts you on the spot to want to help them there and then. Gwalia have a lot of supported housing and housing properties but I've got no back door to get into the housing and I have to go through the central hub... There needs to be more clarity on roles and what is expected."*

[ETEV specialist]

Staffing changes during the second year of the project meant that both ETEV (Prison hub and Gwalia) specialists left their posts towards the end of 2014, and were replaced in January 2015. The new workers were given flexibility and freedom to develop the role. This resulted in some excellent outcomes, including the opportunity to gain funded places for IWW prisoner participants to complete a Personal Track Safety course post release and deliver a prison-based CSCS course enabling graduating prisoners to be 'work-ready' on release.

*"I think the role is working well. X and I work well together.....We are very joined up and we complement each other. She has a lot of contacts..... We communicate really well, the PTS is an example of that. She got the contact and funding via Gwalia; I got the people to go on it and did the admin and organising, so between the two of us it worked really well."*

[IWW ETEV Specialist]

*“The CSCS course we did inside was a big success. They did a 2 day Health and Safety course and test. It was IWW, T3 and the Endeavour wing. They all completed that in prison and normally they have to wait until they get out to do that. 12 of them did it. Four of them got released last week, sat their test and all passed it, it was amazing.”*

*[Gwalia ETEV Specialist]*

Recent changes to resettlement work in prisons following the Offender Rehabilitation Act (ORA) in February 2015 have had a significant impact upon the way ETEV provision is delivered across the prison estate. As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) staff are now responsible for providing the majority of ETEV support to all prisoners prior to release, and as a result the ETEV department within Parc was restructured in Spring 2015. During this period of transition, many of the ETE workshops previously available to all prisoners were no longer running and are now only available during the final three months of a prisoner’s sentence. Consequently, the IWW ETEV specialist had the opportunity to develop her role and co-ordinated with the CRC ETEV team in the prison to deliver sessions to IWW and other prisoners in the Family Interventions Unit, covering skills such as CV writing, interview skills, disclosure of offences and money management:

*“I linked up with ETEV in the prison, but what they did as a department wasn’t really what I do.... The ETEV Department as it was doesn’t exist now as of a couple of weeks ago. I assess what the guys need. ETEV only work with them in last three months anyway. What they did do was interview skills, CV writing, disclosure of offences, money management and personal development and so I implement those myself now on T4; before we would refer for that. It’s because of CRCs being introduced, they will be doing all of that stuff but they are not at the moment, there is a gap so I am doing that at the moment. IWW get more support from me... With IWW, I write their CVs with them, do job searches, help with college applications, help them to get training on release, liaise with training providers and try and get them funding to pay for things.”*

*[IWW ETEV Specialist]*

Overall, the evidence indicates that both the prison and community-based ETEV specialists fulfilled an important role in the IWW team. Reductions in prison-based ETEV provision following the ORA in 2015 had little impact on IWW participants (and to a certain extent, the wider T4 population) due to the extra services provided by the IWW ETEV specialist. Additionally, the close working relationship between the community and prison-based ETEV workers resulted in continuous ETEV provision on release, with many of the ETEV interventions completed during

the sentence designed to co-ordinate with employers and/or course providers in the community. In relation to the Gwalia post in particular, the limited capacity of the FIMs meant that they did not have the time or resources to develop the same bank of community contacts, and access to funding resources that the ETEV specialist was able to achieve. Furthermore, as the number of IWW participants released to the community increased as the project progressed, the Gwalia post holder was able to assist the FIMs in their role and in many cases acted almost as a 'deputy FIM' by providing housing/benefit advice in addition to transporting and accompanying participants to community-based appointments as necessary.

*iii) Substance misuse specialist*

From June 2016, the IWW substance misuse post was filled by a G4S substance misuse worker responsible for delivering interventions and support to prisoners on both the T4 Family Interventions wing and the Endeavour unit (the first prison unit in England and Wales for ex-military personnel).

The post was also reconfigured slightly to enable community support to be provided to IWW prisoners following release and their family members where necessary. Prior to this time, the substance misuse role provided support during the prison phase of the intervention only, as participants were encouraged to engage with community-based substance misuse support agencies following release. To facilitate this, participants were offered the opportunity to attend an agency day within the prison as they approached release, in order to 'hand-over' from the prison based substance-misuse specialist to the community-based support agency.

Despite this, participants still reported an unwillingness to attend agencies in the community for fear of being drawn back into substance misuse by mixing with other users on or near agency premises. Participants also reported that they had built a strong relationship with the IWW substance misuse worker and were reticent about 'opening up' to other agency workers.

*"More face to face visits from [Substance Misuse Worker] would have helped. She would have put him back on the right path. I know he really connected with her, she is incredible and any user who works with her will open up to her, she will get them back on the right track. They won't work with anyone else, he would never seek help outside as they would recall him; there is no way X would have gone to any agencies or probation."*

*[IWW family member participant]*

*“These drug agencies won’t go to doctor’s appointments with them. Sometimes that is what they need. It’s too easy out there to offer Methadone or Subutex but all you are doing is feeding their habit. I am all for listening therapy and changing their way of thinking. It is very difficult to get that from an agency. I honestly think it is about building a really good rapport with those people and them trusting you with everything. There is a fear of seeing other drug users and being offered drugs. It is an ongoing battle.”*

*[IWW Substance Misuse Specialist]*

Staff and participants alike reported that the extension of IWW substance misuse support to the community hub worked well. Similar to the relationship between participants and the FIM, the trust established by the substance misuse worker with participants prior to release was seen as effective in maintaining prisoner engagement in the community and preventing relapse.

The background of the substance misuse worker as an ex-user himself was felt by many to facilitate this relationship as substance misusing participants reported that they felt more able to relate to him because his experiences were similar to their current situation. Family members also indicated that they felt reassured that he could help them to ‘spot the signs’ of drug use in their partners and get them ‘back on track’. FIMs also reported drawing upon the substance misuse worker’s skills and knowledge to identify any issues with their participant families following release. For example:

*“The external element of the drug worker, shame on us for not having that from day one. The likes of [prisoner A] and [prisoner B] would have struggled without that. Those little five minutes talks over a coffee, right you are struggling, try this, it worked for me and it helps us, we can ask [substance misuse worker], do you think he is using, do I need to be doing anything more? If there are things happening with the families he works with them too and the partner is so happy that he has that outlet, its bloody working, 100%.”* [FIM]

*“[Substance misuse worker] brings different ideas and his experiences of substance misuse, the guys particularly like it and are more open to discussions with him. The family members are reassured because they know he has a good understanding of what it is like and he has helped us as FIMs to give us more clarity of the situations that they have been experiencing because of their substance misuse. If I think a person is behaving unusually, he can help me understand how amphetamine use can affect a person’s behaviour because he understands so much about the effects of the drug. He is a wealth of knowledge.”* [FIM]

*“There has been a few times I have had back up from him in the community and it’s all very well in here but it’s out there when they get out that it is needed. He can speak to the guy in a way that we can’t. He can cut through all the bullshit because he knows; he has been there, heard the lies and told them himself.”* [FIM]

*“I started taking drugs aged 9, biggest part of my downfall is drugs. I’m now in control again for the first time I can remember I’m clean. I always wanted to change but I never had the right help. Without their guidance I wouldn’t have got to where I am now, [substance misuse worker] cares about you and I can really relate to him. I went to Narcotics Anonymous in Parc and talking to [substance misuse worker] out here really helps. It keeps it all fresh.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“I was with agencies before and I still took heroin. I wanted to do it myself this time to prove to [partner] and the girls I could stay clean and get a job to support them. I saw [substance misuse worker] and I thought if he could do it, why couldn’t I do it? He always took time for me, even just to say hello.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“I would like to be kept informed about what [prisoner] is doing I would love to know what [substance misuse worker] thinks of his mindset and where he is in his journey as my main worry and anxiety is about that when he comes out.”* [IWW family member participant]

In short, then, the appointment of an IWW substance misuse specialist proved effective in a number of ways. The close relationship developed with prisoners facilitated engagement after release and offered an important source of help for those who were reluctant to attend community-based drug agencies. The specialist also provided a source of knowledge and reassurance for family members and indeed the FIMs themselves by helping them recognise signs of substance misuse in the ex-prisoner. In many cases, the worker helped families to communicate more openly about their substance misuse issues, which not only helped to improve family relationships but also encouraged ‘whole family’ engagement with the IWW service. However, at the same time there was a strong view expressed by some senior managers that there was a risk of over-reliance on one individual, and that IWW should have complemented his work by greater efforts to integrate it with community-based substance misuse services through developing more effective referral routes for the bulk of participants into partner agencies.

## *Conclusions*

Overall, our evidence suggests that the IWW prison hub team had a comprehensive set of skills and knowledge relevant both to the resettlement of prisoners and to meeting the diverse needs of their children and families. Sensible adjustments were also made to its composition from time to time in the light of experience. The emphasis placed upon developing close trusting relationships with participants before prisoners had been released proved particularly valuable, several interviewees pointing out a contrast in this respect with ex-prisoners' relationships with other service providers in the community whom they had met only after leaving prison.

### *4.1.2 Prison-based family interventions*

In this section we make a broad assessment, based on interviews and regular observation, of the various facilities, activities and interventions that were available in the prison to offenders and their families. The two key locations for the activities were the 62-bed Family Interventions Unit, located on T4 wing, and the visits hall.

#### *i) Family Interventions Unit*

All IWW prisoners were expected to work towards earning a place in the FIU before release. Having secured a place, each prisoner (with the help of his FIM) would begin working through the various interventions that were appropriate to his and his family's circumstances and needs.<sup>25</sup> The wing itself was very different to other wings in the prison. Each cell had access to a (monitored) telephone and television. Inspirational literature and wall art was evident on all three floors. The IWW prison hub office was located on the second floor of this wing and provided IWW staff with the opportunity to engage with prisoner participants regularly.

*"We have a board on the wing that mentors have made of photos and success stories of these men in their jobs, showing clear and obvious outcomes there, and which motivates others on the wing".*

*[G4S Manager]*

*"Having the IWW office on the T4 wing was really helpful in there. They were always willing to help or just speak to you. I could just knock the door and if I ever had a problem or an*

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<sup>25</sup> While all T4 prisoners received the intense family-focused support and parenting programmes offered on T4 during their sentence, only IWW prisoners were eligible for the full range of interventions and mentoring support offered by the project pre and six months post release.

*issue they would help. I just want to thank them for their help. I wouldn't be in this position if it weren't for them."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

The entire focus of the wing was upon repairing and maintaining familial relationships. This was manifested through offers of a wide range of interventions relating to parenting and family life, as well as access to the Family Interventions Lounge (see below) to attend joint sessions and programmes with partners and/or children aimed at cementing familial bonds and facilitating wider family relationships. Specific interventions delivered included:

- Baby Steps (eight sessions covering pre-birth through to one month post birth),
- Language and Play/ Number and Play (six sessions focusing upon the development of literacy and numeracy through the medium of play for children aged under three).
- Parenting for Dads (six week course aimed at improving and developing effective parenting skills).
- Learning Together club (one evening visit a month with buffet, providing children with the opportunity to bring school/home work in to the prison to show their stepdad/dad and encourage the family to work together to support the child's learning).
- M-PACT (ten week course for whole families and children aged 10- 8 to encourage open family communication, with a particular focus on issues associated with parental substance misuse).
- Fathers Inside (intensive eight week course aimed at parents of primary school aged children to develop parenting, social and life skills).
- Family Man (twelve week drama-based educational course for prisoners and their families to improve communication and family relationships).
- Duke of Edinburgh (HMP Parc was the first prison to run the Duke of Edinburgh Leadership programme). The fathers were able to gain a Duke of Edinburgh Leadership qualification while mentoring their children through the Bronze Award.
- 'Firefighter for a day' (South Wales Fire and Rescue service ran an educational session with the prisoners and a joint session with prisoners and their children together, which provided participants with the opportunity to engage with the firefighters and gain experience of the equipment and fire engine).
- 'Create' programme (a two day literary programme for prisoners and their children provided an opportunity for participants to co-author a story. The story was illustrated and published as a book for the prisoner and child to enjoy reading together).

Regular observations of the wing indicated that the atmosphere was different to that of other wings, not just because of the more colourful and cheerful physical environment, but because of a sense of purpose that was evident among the prisoners.

This positive impression was confirmed in the interviews with IWW prisoner participants and their families, where many said that their time in the FIU had affected them profoundly. For example:

*“The contact on the family unit, the parenting classes, it all really helped. He wants to be a good dad and a good son. It’s amazing, like watching somebody flower. He wants to provide for his son and give him everything. He is a new man, a proper family man.*

*[Mother of IWW prisoner participant]*

*“IWW has changed me and all I want to be is with my partner and the babies. Without the project I wouldn’t have this bond with the baby and it created a love I have never had for anyone like I love my daughter. If it weren’t for T4 and the family wing I never could have done it. By the time I came out I felt like I had been a dad for years.. helping that bond with my daughter, all the programmes I did and the family visits, things like the baby bathing and the Barnardo’s parenting and Fathers Inside, it kept us connected through the sentence. On a normal wing I would have had two visits a month, and would not have connected to my family at all. 14 months is a long time to see someone for two hours a month. The extra contact we had in there made all the difference.”* [IWW prisoner participant and PPO<sup>26</sup>]

*“Since coming on this wing (T4) I’ve come back together as a person. I stopped speaking, my spark had gone out and I couldn’t stop crying. The situation was horrendous, being away from my children for the first time like that, but they were emotions I was meant to experience. I used to be a victim of my anger and temper, now I don’t let it control me. I observe my emotions and can control them now.”* [IWW prisoner participant]

*“We would have just had standard visits without IWW and Parc and would have had a complete lack of contact on the sentence. The kids loved getting their visits, coming in and playing games. We actually grew closer on this sentence as we had so much contact compared to the standard contact”* [IWW prisoner participant]

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<sup>26</sup> Prolific and Priority Offenders are offenders identified as causing most harm to their communities.

ii) *Visiting facilities*

The introduction of ‘intervention-led’ visits in 2010 represented a shift within Parc from a traditional security focused visiting model, in which little consideration was given to the rehabilitative potential of the visiting environment, to one where visits were seen as an opportunity to engage with prisoners and their families and deliver rehabilitative interventions. In addition to the staffing change and interventions on offer, the physical space in the visits hall clearly reflected a child and family-centred focus. The use of plants, colour and art formed an important aspect of the visit areas. A relaxed lounge with sofas, toys and books was also available, especially for activities and interventions undertaken jointly with children and partners by IWW prisoners and others residing on the Family Interventions Unit.

*“20 families get the IWW service but the rest of the families who visit here get a considerably enhanced visiting experience than they would get elsewhere in other prisons. With the model here the biggest unexpected outcome so far is the impact we have been able to have. ...Every person who visits received some betterment from that whether they are part of the project or not. The national average uptake for regular family visits is 48% (NOMS) Here, 69% of our population have a regular (fortnightly) family visit.”* [G4S manager]

*“We get lounge visits where we can sit on the settee and play with the kids. It is horrendous on normal visits you just have to sit opposite them, you can’t engage with a 5 yr old like that, you have to get on the floor and play with them.”* [IWW prisoner participant]

*“I can’t put it into words the difference it has made. The lounge visits and having [son] coming into prison turned it around for me. I couldn’t deal with the emotion of losing him so when I started seeing him on those visits, I started making real progress”.*

[IWW prisoner participant]

Over time, the range of activities available in either the main visits centre in the prison or in the ILVC outside the gate (where visitors ‘book in’ and wait before entering the prison), has grown enormously. Relatively recent additions include a Scouts Group for visiting children, a St John’s First Aid course and a ‘Come Dine with Me’ experience for prisoners<sup>27</sup>:

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<sup>27</sup> Scouts Wales intervention comprises seven sessions for children aged between five and a half and ten years old. All sessions are delivered by a Scouts Wales leader and give children the opportunity to engage in activities and achieve a First Aid badge). St John’s Ambulance deliver a two hour long family first aid training session in the prison for the prisoners and their child/children and supporter/partner).

*“Our more recent family interventions in there are with Scouts Wales. We have the Glyndwr Scouts group.... a scout leader comes in and delivers that, we have volunteers who support it and they have own kit. They come in on a visit, they see mum and dad initially, then they go off and do their scouts thing and they see their mum and dad at the end who come and see what they have been doing. We tell the prisoners through the CMS system and posters, we tell the schools, we tell their families. The scouts group meet upstairs in the visits hall, we also have the lounge and we will have new areas we are opening shortly as well. With St John’s, we have both adults and their children, 5 or 6 families together in the lounge to teach them household first aid. That’s family engagement. We give them extra time for this, additional to their entitled visit time. It involves doing stuff with mum and dad; in particular you are trying to focus on dad and the child and keeping them engaged.”*

*“Two officers from Parc also visited Oakwood and brought back the idea of come dine with me. As a reward for good behaviour, prisoner pays £10 and in the visits hall they get a meal with their partner (and children if they want). They have a menu to choose from, the works for say, the cleanest cell, the most improved on a programme, things like that. Four families get this restaurant experience every six weeks.”* [G4S Manager]

The opening of the Susan Ellis Visitor Centre in Parc, October 2014 provided an additional link between the community and the prison and gave staff further opportunity to engage with the children and families of prisoners. Now run by Barnardo’s, it employs Family Engagement Workers supported by volunteers, who offer activities for children and parents such as a swap shop for clothes, healthy eating workshops and Baby Bathing sessions for new parents:

*“We have doodle and dot linked to literacy with Dilly the dragon, tasty treats with Tilly the turtle, healthy habits with Leo the lion and Hetty the hedgehog looking at the importance of cleaning your teeth and healthy eating, washing your hands and round the world with Will the whale. We teach them all about different cultures, music, different festivals, different religious festivals, different foods. They are drop in activities happening in the Visitor Centre, so 20 minutes before they go on a visit, families can just drop in. We also have our swap shop.. We are going to build a participation tree in the play area, a wishing tree so the children can put their thoughts and feelings in the corner on the tree. We also do family interventions with prisoners and families in the visits hall and in the lounge such as Bathing Babies, Five to Thrive, which is about attachment and we do Rhyme Time. Our interventions are open to anybody in the prison, prisoners just book themselves on, it’s open access. Two weekends*

*before Christmas we are doing a Santa's Grotto with our army of volunteers and all the children can visit Santa. On 26<sup>th</sup> October we are running a participation trip taking families bowling in Cardiff. We also went to Folly farm and took a whole busload of families. There will also be a Halloween party on 29<sup>th</sup> in Family lounge and a Christmas party in December. Dads can just book their visits on those days and whoever has visits on those days can attend those parties in the lounge.”*

*[Barnardo's Manager]*

While other prisons undoubtedly cater for visiting families in some similar ways, the sheer scale, variety and centrality of the child-friendly facilities and activities are clearly exceptional. Additionally, although IWW prisoners and others on the FIU get greater access to the full range of family interventions available, the collaboration between G4S and Barnardo's in the Susan Ellis Visitor Centre has helped to improve visiting experiences for all prisoners with children.

### *iii) Other family interventions*

While IWW prisoners located on T4 wing already had full access to the suite of parenting and family-focused interventions available to all T4 prisoners, the IWW team continued to build upon this and developed a number of additional courses in response to specific needs identified among IWW participants.

One issue which assumed increasing prominence as IWW progressed was domestic abuse. From September 2014, FIMs delivered a six session programme loosely based around the Women's Aid Freedom Programme for men. This course (for prisoner participants) was developed by a Family Integration Mentor with a background in supporting victims of domestic abuse. The sessions aimed to promote healthy relationships by assisting participants to use positive methods of communication and understand what constitutes negative behaviour and characteristics. While the need for this was largely identified as a result of IWW staff observing and responding to the way participants conducted themselves with their partners, it was anticipated that the benefits would be far-reaching post release, as participants learned to interact more positively not only with their partners, but also with wider family members and the community.

In recognition of the prevalence of domestic abuse involving children, the YISP worker also adopted elements of the Respect programme for IWW children who were identified as behaving abusively in the home:

*“I have come up against domestic abuse of children against parents. I have started delivering the Respect programme for children who are violent towards their parents. I use elements of it too with people who aren’t necessarily violent against their parents... It’s more the older boys and where there has been domestic abuse from the dad we see it. It is a really good programme. If they are part of IWW then I do that programme with them.” [YISP worker]*

The first IWW substance misuse specialist also developed the Past, Present and Future course, an 8-week (16 session) programme which required participants within a group environment to acknowledge the root of their substance misuse issues, understand the impact drugs/alcohol had had on their families, and look at techniques to avoid relapse in the future. One session involved the attendance of their children (aged 8+) and families to discuss how the substance misuse had affected them.

Additionally, the second Substance Misuse Specialist and an IWW FIM collaborated with an ex-drug misusing IWW prisoner participant to develop an educational DVD, “The Real Price of Spice”. This initiative was born out of a near fatal heart attack experienced by the prisoner on the T4 wing as a result of Spice use. The prisoner was keen to support this work and both he and his partner used the DVD as a mechanism to educate other prisoners regarding their experiences of the drug and the impact of Spice use upon health and family life. The DVD was shown to 56 prisoners during a series of eight workshops facilitated by the IWW prisoner and a FIM on residential wings within the prison. Prisoner feedback about the sessions and DVD was overwhelmingly positive. For example:

*“The video with [IWW prisoner participant] was really good. I smoked it now and again in there and there were 3 boys who used to smoke it heavily. They were even stoned whilst they were in the session watching it and they saw that video and they never smoked it again. I think they should put that DVD out to every prisoner in all jails. It would make a lot of people think twice about smoking that stuff.” [IWW prisoner participant]*

Indeed, the DVD had such an impact upon one individual that it prompted him to undergo a detoxification from Spice, the effects of which he recorded in a personal narrative (see Appendix 1). This was shared with staff from IWW and consent was given to circulate it across the prison and community-based drug agencies. The positive response received subsequently prompted his family to offer support to others by recording these experiences in a Facebook blog. After release, the prisoner continued to raise awareness of the dangers of Spice use by

facilitating sessions with service users across Dyfodol<sup>28</sup> and students at Bridgend Further Education College. The DVD was also distributed to 12 community substance misuse agencies across South Wales.

The Family Diary tool was also highlighted by a number of participants as helping them to communicate better with their children during the prison sentence. The diary was intended to be written by the prisoner for his children, telling them in his own words how his day/week had been. In turn, the diary was then passed to the children and family members for them to write about how they were feeling and what they had been doing; this included drawings, stories, anecdotes or just an account of their day. The diary was exchanged on an ongoing basis throughout the sentence and effectively 'brought the outside in'. Not only did this improve communication between the prisoner and his family, but also enabled the family to see the efforts the prisoner was making to change. Feedback indicated that the tool could have a huge impact upon both parties and in many cases, enabled the prisoner and families to write about emotions and sensitive issues which otherwise would have remained unspoken.

*"The diaries for me have been really beneficial. [Prisoner] told me how he used to love going back to his cell to read it and knowing his children's feelings, their likes and dislikes; it was the making of him."* *[FIM]*

*"IWW definitely brought us all closer though. The diaries were really good, the girls loved being able to write to him and would look forward to drawing him pictures and writing to him."* *[IWW family member participant]*

Although the overwhelming messages from ex-prisoners, family members and staff was highly positive, attention was drawn by a number of staff across the partnership to one gap in services particular. Mental illness was identified as an issue affecting a substantial proportion of both prisoner and family member participants. Several interviewees emphasised the need both for more staff training in this area and improved access to mental health services and/or a project counsellor. For example:

*"Mental health is a gap in the service. We had Mind coming in, she came in and saw one guy but I am not sure how we could make that work if they all needed it. Lots of these guys have mental health issues."* *[FIM]*

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<sup>28</sup> Dyfodol is the G4S-led multi-agency partnership across South Wales which won the contract to deliver substance misuse to prisoners and ex-prisoners (it replaced CARATS and DIPs, the previous incarnations of these services).

*“I would like some training around mental health issues as I can come across issues that ring alarm bells and I have had to go and source my own information. It would be really nice to get a grounding in mental health issues because we get a lot and it would help us to spot signs.”*

*[FIM]*

*“A counsellor would definitely be beneficial. Someone with mental health experience; that would be really useful. A lot of the people we work with have possibly undiagnosed mental health issues and they would really benefit from that.”*

*[Barnardo’s worker]*

In conclusion, our evidence indicates that the range of family focused rehabilitative interventions available to prisoners and their families in HMP Parc is extremely impressive. Participant feedback indicates how profoundly the family focused ethos of the FIU, the various interventions and the enhanced interactions facilitated by the family visits has affected the prisoners and their family relationships. The close relationships built with IWW staff on the wing, combined with the development of a number of IWW specific interventions, such as the domestic abuse programmes for prisoners and children and the family diaries, highlights the ‘added value’ of IWW to the family-focused culture evident in Parc. While IWW prisoners and those residing on the FIU undoubtedly benefit from a greater number of interventions and more opportunities for family engagement than those residing in the main house-blocks of the prison, the transfer of operational responsibility for the visitor centre to Barnardo’s has provided increased opportunity for family engagement across all prisoners and their families in the prison.

## **4.2 Community-based work**

We now describe and evaluate the contribution of activities in the community, both before and after the prisoner’s release. In addition to the continuing ‘through the gate’ casework of the FIMs (described earlier), these included family group conferencing, advocacy, the YISP service, and parenting support. These are discussed in turn below. We end by drawing attention to an aspect of IWW work which was not foreseen as having the prominence that it eventually attained, that of engagement with teachers in local schools. Indeed, as will be described, this work resulted eventually in a new initiative involving formal partnership with schools, known as the IWW Accord.

### 4.2.1 Family Group Conferencing

The Barnardo's Family Group Conferencing (FGC) Service offered child participants the opportunity to voice their thoughts and wishes in a safe environment by convening the child's family and/or wider support network in a neutral venue. FGCs were offered on a needs-led basis, subject to joint approval from the IWW Project Manager and Children's Services Manager (Barnardo's).

The Family Group Conference Co-ordinator chaired the first and final parts of the meeting, which allowed the family 'private time' to develop their contact and support plan for the child/ren. Over the course of the project, 16 FGCs were convened. After a lower than expected flow of referrals for this service during the first 12-18 months of the project, 2014/15 saw a marked increase. This was believed to be due to IWW staff, particularly FIMs, acquiring a greater understanding of the role and benefits of the FGC service. Participant feedback from those receiving this service was extremely positive, with many praising the child-centred focus of the process:

*"It's about supporting my children and getting an insight into what the children expect. It's all about them."* [Adult FGC participant]

*"We had three. It gave the kids more and they could say what they needed from me and I could tell them what my plans were. It's given me a better relationship with them and with my ex's mother. I have them for three weekends out of four now."* [Ex-prisoner FGC participant]

At the same time, the need for all parties to co-operate fully with the FGC process in order for it to be effective was also highlighted.

*"It was structured well and we were all there, me, my ex, the two kids, [FIM], advocates and you tell them what you all want. We all worked together to make sure the plan worked for everyone, but with my ex doing it, it didn't work as she backed out of the contact plan."* [Ex-prisoner FGC participant]

Nevertheless, despite the enthusiastic response from participants, throughout 2016/17 the number of referrals to the FGC service dipped markedly. This appears to have been due largely to a greater confidence on the part of the FIMs in bringing families together to conduct FGC 'type'

meetings themselves, combined with some reluctance to refer to Barnardo's due to issues associated with the working relationship (see section 4.6).

*"I never really felt the need for it. I think I know more about what is going on in the situation and can bring people together to discuss something with a certain topic in mind... We go out and talk to them all separately anyway, that is just a normal part of the job and then we bring them together to discuss issues and if I need someone to help me manage that situation I could use another FIM or [substance misuse worker]. If you don't gather all the info together correctly some vital things can be missed and if someone who doesn't work with the family then tries to gather that information and if they aren't using information from us then things get missed and the families don't achieve what they want to."* [FIM]

*"FGC hasn't been used to its full potential. I think it is an excellent service to have; the issues that some families present with by virtue of the father having been absent for a long time, lots of the families are concerned about him coming back and the FGCs have been fantastic in addressing those concerns, the prisoner's concerns, the children's and the mothers and for everybody to feel as if they have a say. I think FGCs are essential."* [Barnardo's Staff]

*"From a Barnardo's point of view, a lot more families could have benefitted from an FGC had they been referred. I think having us based with the FIMs would give them a reminder that we are part of the team and this is what we have to offer."* [Barnardo's Staff]

#### **4.2.2 Under 8s and Advocacy support**

A gap in support for those aged under 8 was identified very early on in the project<sup>29</sup>. The Barnardo's advocacy worker therefore developed a programme of support specifically for children aged under 8. The sessions aimed to provide the child with the ability to express feelings appropriately, an increased understanding of the importance of social skills, and increased awareness of self and others. A number of activities were carried out on a one to one basis; these included identifying feelings through the use of feelings cards, feelings puppets and acting out emotions. Books were also used to aid communication, in conjunction with pictorial

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<sup>29</sup> YISP support was targeted at children in the project aged 8 and over whilst the Barnardo's Pathways programme was also designed for children aged 8 and over (some may attend aged 7 depending upon their cognitive development). Additionally, although the 20 week Barnardo's parenting programme was aimed at improving the parenting skills of adult participants, which is likely to improve family functioning and hence quality of life for all children in the family regardless of age, there was no specific program of support for the youngest IWW participants.

representations made by the child of their life and their family. With the agreement of the child, some of the content relating to any worries he/she had was fed back to the parent with the aim of reducing their concerns. Parental feedback indicated that families placed a high value upon this service and noticed positive changes in their children's emotional wellbeing and behaviour following completion of the sessions.

*"I didn't like the thought to start, but I got it wrong. X got play therapy, which is a really nice way for kids to do it and through art in the sessions at the school."*

*[IWW participant]*

*"I'm happy, they've said things to her [Barnardo's under 8's worker] they would never say to us [parents]. I'm just really happy and reassured that they have that support."*

*[IWW participant]*

*"They didn't talk about the sessions much. They just came home and went out and played but they seemed a lot happier after seeing them."*

*[IWW participant]*

*"He is easier and better behaved... the school have said they have seen a big improvement. He has had lots of good certificates for working well, teachers are proud of him as he sits down now instead of chucking things at them. He won best pupil last week!"*

*[IWW participant]*

### **4.2.3 Barnardo's Pathways Programme**

The Barnardo's service delivered a cognitive behavioural Pathways Programme to children aged 8 and over, which aimed to improve their confidence and self-esteem and offered 'completers' the option of achieving an Agored Cymru accreditation in Confidence Building. The programme was also intended to run in tandem with the Barnardo's parenting programme, so that parents and children could come together for a number of collaborative sessions towards the end of their respective parenting/Pathways programme. However, very few referrals were received for children to undertake the full Pathways programme and there was a feeling that this service was under-utilised. This could have been, in part, due to an overlap in eligible clients for the services offered by the YISP worker (described below) and by the Pathways programme, and/or to incomplete awareness of the eligibility criteria and aims of the Pathways programme across the IWW partnership.

#### 4.2.4 Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) service

Typically, a YISP service comprises a multi-disciplinary panel, which aims to address anti-social behaviour and prevent offending by identifying children at risk and delivering a support plan of constructive activities and one to one sessions. IWW employed a YISP worker to work on a needs-led basis with IWW child participants aged 8–17; sessions were conducted in the child’s school and where appropriate, at home. The YISP employed a range of different methods and exercises to engage and motivate the children to discuss their feelings and emotions. Children were also encouraged to take part in activities such as arts and crafts, nail painting, and making worry finger puppets in order to relax them and encourage them to talk.

“I had to adapt techniques and I found if they could make something or do something fun it really helped. Lots of them have such a hard time at home, it was nice for them to come to me to do something fun and take their mind off things. Doing that also helped them to talk.”

[YISP worker]

Although the YISP worker was based within the Bridgend Youth Offending Service, her caseload was comprised solely of IWW participants. This separation from the team caused some problems, particularly with the use of different recording and assessment systems across the IWW prison hub and Youth Offending Service (YOS). As the IWW child participants were not part of the YOS caseload, the YISP worker was unable to utilise the YOS recording system and therefore had to develop her own record keeping system using Excel spreadsheets. This proved cumbersome, and data retrieval and analyses was reportedly very time-consuming. Similarly, the YISP worker felt that the standard YISP assessments were not always relevant for the IWW children and suggested that a separate assessment specifically tailored to the needs of the IWW cohort should be developed:

*“The YISP assessments aren’t right for the children we work with. It would be a good idea to develop something to use for IWW children but then that isn’t tried and tested, like the YISP tool.... is just looking for offending and risk of offending and some of the YISP assessment questions aren’t relevant for our children. I can’t use the YISP recording system and I can’t see how that will improve unless we have a centralised IWW recording system.”*

[YISP worker]

Despite this issue, communication across the YISP and the rest of the IWW partnership was felt to have improved greatly over the course of the project. The YISP was included in all group email communications, attended the weekly prison hub team meetings and exchanged weekly participant updates with both the prison hub and Barnardo's teams. Meetings with relevant IWW partners were also convened as required to discuss individual cases.

However, the YISP worker reported that IWW children often did not meet the criteria and were not eligible for many of the YOS and other service interventions aimed at children within this client group. Often, services were area specific, and as the IWW children were spread across South Wales, availability of interventions was often a 'postcode lottery.' Many of the IWW children also fell beneath the threshold of YOS/YISP intervention and could not be referred:

*"I was looking to refer X for play therapy but he didn't meet the criteria in that area. I also tried referring X to the Prevention team, but because there isn't any ASB and they aren't under Social Services, they don't meet the criteria. It's like it for a lot of the IWW children, they have so many issues and needs simmering, but they aren't meeting the criteria of these services because they haven't committed ASB or any crimes. Apart from IWW, there is nothing out there for these children."* [YISP worker]

The role of schools was highlighted as a potential way of developing support for more children like the IWW participants, who have needs and/or a parent in prison but who do not meet the criteria of many services:

*"This should be happening in schools. Something specific to meet the needs of all of these children. Not all schools can afford a counsellor and some schools also don't like to acknowledge that there are families with needs like that. It's often because they just don't know about them."* [YISP worker]

In addition to facilitating access to support services, the YISP worker provided intensive one to one support and counselling sessions with child participants. Work completed by the children during these sessions was often shared (with the child's consent) with their mother in the community and father in prison. The YISP worker also engaged with the school of each child participant in order to assist in mutual information exchange between the project and the school and conducted the sessions on school premises with minimal disruption to their schooling. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from both schools and participants alike.

*“It’s good, sometimes kids won’t open up to you but they took to [YISP] and told her things they probably didn’t tell anyone else. [YISP] then had an input into the meetings, knowing the girls could speak was reassuring and just knowing they had support.”* [IWW participant]

*“It was brilliant. Our eldest was having support from [YISP] in school. He struggled with his emotions and his behaviour after [prisoner] went in. I’ve seen a big change in him since [YISP] started working with him. He loves going to school on the days she is going. It’s his own little special thing. We don’t see her, his brother doesn’t see her so it’s all just for him and he loves it.”* [IWW family member participant]

*“[YISP] has been amazing and if I had had nothing else from IWW other than [YISP’s] support for [daughter], then it would still have been worth it. She worked with [daughter] to write a letter to me of her worries and issues and even though we are so close and I thought she was telling me everything, there were things in that letter that neither me or her mum knew. [YISP] made friendship bracelets with her and was brilliant at not making it seem like anything official or formal but made it fun and friendly for her. She loved [YISP] from the minute she met her and although [daughter] thought it was all great fun, what came out in those meetings were so important.”* [IWW prisoner participant]

*“When X started working with me she would barely even speak, she was so scared and upset about her dad. By the end even the receptionist in the school said she is so much brighter and happier because she wasn’t worrying about her dad and she knows she has that consistent contact with him.”* [YISP worker]

#### **4.2.5 IWW Social Worker**

The funding by IWW of a social worker post represented a close collaboration between G4S at HMP Parc and Bridgend County Borough Council. This role provided monthly clinical case supervision and support to the FIMs and other partner agency staff if requested. A key aspect of this post was the provision of safeguarding and risk management guidance and advice to all IWW managers and staff. The post-holder also frequently attended home visits with the FIMs and assisted with all safeguarding referrals, Child Protection Conferences and social care meetings and procedures.

The close working relationship between the Social Worker and the FIMs, combined with the presence of the post holder within the prison itself also helped to break down some of the stigma offenders and their families associated with Social Services.

*“I went in and did a group on the wing to say what SS did and it went really well, the boys grilled me for an hour and then they started approaching me on the wing. If I got in and they met me... from the very beginning, so they can see what they can have and what they can access. Me going into those groups really broke down the barriers and misconceptions. I said what do you think of social workers and they all said, “arseholes”, “child snatchers”, and we broke down all the stigmas and they were able to talk to me then, We need to be showing our face and breaking down those stigmas so when they get out they are more likely to contact Social Services.”*

*[IWW Social Worker]*

In May, 2015, there was a reconfiguration of the IWW Social Worker post; with the departure of the Consultant Social Worker at that time, it was decided that the IWW team would benefit from the support of an operational level Social Work role. In July 2015, the Consultant level role was therefore replaced with an operational Social Worker. In addition to the clinical case review support offered to all FIMs on a 4-weekly basis, if any FIM had a safeguarding concern/query, the Social Worker would accompany them on a community visit to conduct a safeguarding assessment and discuss appropriate next steps.

#### **4.2.6 Parenting support**

Following the completion of the Family Star assessment, participants were referred to the Barnardo’s parenting programme on a needs-led basis and successful completion of the accredited parenting programme enabled graduates to achieve the (GCSE equivalent) qualification in Parenting and receive the Agored Cymru accreditation.

The process of delivery for the parenting programme was amended several times during the project following reports from some Barnardo’s workers that they were encountering difficulties in client engagement upon the father’s release from prison. In order to maximise the number of participants completing the parenting programme, the full ten session programme was intended to be delivered to fathers during the pre-release phase of the project, with the option of a four-session refresher to be completed by both parents together on release. The staff reported that this process increased attendance, with fewer resources ‘wasted’ on missed community appointments and time spent attempting to engage with some of the more

reticent clients following their release. However, staff capacity meant that this was not always possible and in these instances the programme was delivered in the community, which resulted in a lower engagement and completion rate.

Barnardo's staff also reported that the individual needs of prisoners and their families often necessitated additional one-to-one work which fell outside the remit of the parenting programme. To address this, a number of sessions aimed at improving self-esteem, confidence and understanding of healthy relationships were developed. These were designed to be delivered on a needs-led basis and tailored to meet individual requirements:

*"Some parents were not in the right place to learn and practice what we were teaching on the Barnardo's Parenting course, so we looked to see if there was the capacity to work on the issues like healthy relationships, confidence building, self esteem building before they then go and do the parenting. It's not something we necessarily do routinely but it tends to be integrated in to the parenting programme if we feel there is a need." [Barnardo's staff]*

*"We're realising that all the children we're working with have experienced dad going in to prison, and on top of that many of the dads we're working with have experienced trauma in their childhoods, which means that they process information differently, the way they perceive things, and they have missed many developmental milestones. We're going in, pitching our service thinking that these foundation skills and abilities are there, and they're not." [Barnardo's staff]*

Participant feedback highlights the value that many families placed upon this service.

*"It's really good. It helps if you don't know stuff like the best thing to do if they are naughty. I do it all properly now and they used to be naughty but not now. I use the time out step, and they give you sheets to help to take away after." [IWW participant]*

*"The star charts, everything was all really helpful. It helped with his behavioural issues. The kids talk to me better now and they don't always understand things. So now I know to strip down what I am saying, it was really helpful with X. She stops coming downstairs all the time at bedtime now. Also X is better at sharing and the boys play together better now and X has stopped wetting the bed." [IWW participant]*

*“It gave me more skills on how to handle and observe children’s behaviour. It helps with their needs and gave me more understanding. When I first started having my son he was a nightmare, but I used effective ignoring and praise and it worked. With the routine I have in place now, he behaves with me.”*

*[IWW participant]*

*“The parenting helped me, I’ve changed loads. The parenting courses have helped me learn triggers and now I can pull my son back when I know he is going to lose his head. Before he was out of control and so abusive; just angry and aggressive, he would punch holes in doors. Now I have set boundaries and am making him a better person. The other day he went off on one and I sorted it... and we sat down and had a nice family meal after that.”*

*[IWW participant]*

Finally, a number of families attended the ‘New Leaves’ intervention shortly after the prisoner was released. This aims to assist ex-prisoners and their families to reconnect following release, by offering the whole family the opportunity to spend a weekend away together in the countryside. A number of activities and exercises were undertaken by the participants in order to help them to communicate and bond as a family unit. Families were accompanied for the duration of the weekend by staff from New Leaves. The FIM and YISP worker also attended for part of the weekend where appropriate. Feedback from participant families indicates how beneficial they found this intervention to be:

*“New Leaves was in a humungous cottage, I really enjoyed it. We had a fire and dad thought it was good too. We did archery and I found a dragon. It was like a holiday and the best thing I have done.”*

*[IWW child participant – aged 10]*

*“I think the New Leaves project was fantastic, only positive things have come from it. Our daughter loved the New Leaves, it was something different for her and it gave her the one on one time with her dad that she needed. She really enjoyed it, they did it the second weekend after he came out and it was the right time. Now he chats more openly with me too about things and he never used to talk”.*

*[IWW family member participant]*

*“We did the family weekend to New Leaves. It was really good, the kids really enjoyed it; we made a booklet and the kids used it a lot. It was so nice to go away as a family for a couple of days after the tag came off. It was a few months after release and we got to do archery and make fires with the kids. It was a great experience for all of us.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“New Leaves was brilliant. We had a brilliant weekend, the boys loved it. There was no WiFi, no TV; we spent the time walking in the woods, cooking together, using a bow and arrow, we had no technology and so we entertained ourselves. It definitely brought us closer together. I had not long come from jail, the family were set in their ways and before jail I would have been out in the nights and then I was in jail for a year, so there was a big gap in my time with the family. That weekend brought us together so we talked and got an understanding and ever since we came home we have carried on in that way. The boys there had nothing to distract them, it was really good and I loved being able to educate them. Now I take my son training 4 x per week and he is doing so well.” [IWW prisoner participant]*

### **4.2.7 Service-user participation**

In 2014, IWW Barnardo’s was successful in acquiring GwirVol funding from the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action to fund a series of CAPI ‘TalkBack’ participation events. The initiative aimed to support children affected by parental imprisonment to attend workshops and take part in positive activities. Four participation events were held between October 2014 and June 2015 for children and young people accessing both the Community Support for Offenders’ Families (CSOF) and IWW services. Attendees were asked to provide service user feedback at each event, following which they were supported to take part in a leisure activity<sup>30</sup>. Feedback from families indicated how much the children enjoyed these events and felt supported to take part in activities to which they would not normally have had access.

*“It’s given my kids opportunities. X did the Barnardo’s theatre group, they went horse-riding. They’ve done so much and they loved it all, it was great. They seem more grown up, more independent and they would get so excited telling me about all of the things they did.”*

*[Adult family member participant]*

Additionally, three of the children and young people who participated in the CAPI Talkback group (all IWW participants) attended the Welsh Labour Party Conference in Swansea on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2015. They joined with others from a variety of backgrounds to meet Ministers, Assembly Members, Members of Parliament, prospective candidates and policy makers to provide feedback regarding issues affecting them. An additional IWW child participant was accepted on to the Young Persons Advisory Panel for the Children’s Commissioner of Wales Office and provided feedback as a child affected by parental imprisonment.

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<sup>30</sup> The leisure activities included horse-riding, a trip to Frankie and Benny’s restaurant and completing an assault course.

A series of awareness raising events were also held within the prison for professionals across a range of agencies including Probation, Education, Local Government and Social Services. Selected IWW participants were invited to attend the events to present and provide testimonials to the audience regarding their experiences of the project.

Finally, members of the project received two royal visits. On a trip to HMP Parc in February 2015, the Princess Royal met with two IWW families (including the children) and later provided very positive feedback about the work being done with them. And in 2017, the Earl of Wessex attended an event in the prison to present awards to some of the participants' older teenage children.

### **4.3 Engagement and staff-participant relationships**

Most interviewees agreed that the most important element of the IWW project, the glue that held it together, was the close and trusting relationships forged between staff and participants. To conclude our evaluation of the face-to-face work of IWW, we present some general findings on this topic, including participants' experiences of the support they received from the FIMs and other IWW and partner agency staff.

Overwhelmingly, participants viewed the IWW project and its staff positively. One of the strongest messages that came through from the interviews was that the FIMs had made participants feel that they were 'there' to support them emotionally as well as helping with their more tangible practical needs. Indeed, one prisoner commented that the IWW staff were, "There for you 100%. They don't just work it, they live it".

It was clear that all the FIMs (and in some cases other IWW staff, particularly the ETEV specialist and substance misuse worker) had achieved a high level of engagement with both prisoner and family member participants. Interviewees highlighted the strong, non-judgmental and trusting nature of the relationships that had had been established. For example:

*"They are just really supportive, I felt like I'd known her (FIM) for ages. She made it seem like she was my friend and not work for her. She would just ring or text to check to see how I was and she sat with me for hours in housing when I lost my flat. She would take me for coffee or collect me and take me to the prison. All of them have been a huge help to me, they were just company sometimes when I was feeling low." [IWW family member participant]*

*“She believed in me, she told me I wasn’t on my own and she has been there through every single awful thing that has gone on. She put her faith in me, she is like my guardian angel and she was the only person I would let hold my babies when I was in court. She was there the day I was in court and I have never had support like that from anyone until I met [FIM]. She helped me through everything with Social Services.”*

*[IWW family member participant]*

*“[ETEVE worker] can change people’s lives. She understands and knows where I am coming from. She don’t judge and is never shocked. I am comfortable talking to her. She is like a second mum to me.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

Several made comments contrasting their experiences of IWW with prior experiences of prison and probation services where the needs of their family had not been met.

*“Without IWW I would be stuffed, nothing would happen and I’d be released back to the same old crap; with their support, I have the opportunity to turn my life around.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“There is not anyone else I can ask for help with my kids, plenty of stuff around for help with addictions, but much less for help with families, which is wrong.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“If I had had this earlier, I wouldn’t be in this mess now. Having the mentor has made a hell of a lot of difference; you can’t talk to your mates like this.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

The issue of accessibility was also frequently mentioned by participants, many family members stating that they valued having the ability to get in touch with their mentor whenever they felt in need of emotional support or ‘a chat’, or needed help with practical problems such as getting to and from the prison, attending community appointments or ‘form filling’. Many prisoners, too, reported feeling ‘peace of mind’ knowing their partner was being helped, and that they too had someone to turn to. The following are typical comments:

*“She has liaised between social workers, CAF/CASS... any problem that I need to find out she sorts, she is always there. It is a big step that prisons are starting to work more with prisoners and look at why we come back so we know where we are going wrong.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“She has got me on courses, I’m due to start M-Pact and Family man. Whenever I have problems, my missus can ring her, she will come to see me and I can be honest with her. If you tell Probation anything they just send you back to prison. I tell her the truth.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“She is brilliant, in constant contact with my partner and the face to face contact is really important, it is important that she gets to know her as well as me.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*“IWW is a lifeline, if I have a problem, I ring [FIM], I can’t praise her enough, it has been what we needed. If it wasn’t for IWW, X would be lost in the system and would have no contact with his son.”*

*[IWW family participant]*

*“[FIM] has arranged special family visits, transported us to visits, helped with benefits, sorted our disability living allowance, she has rang the doctors and got anger management lined up for X. I can’t fault her in any way, she is on the ball.”*

*[IWW family participant]*

*“The best part of IWW is the connection between you and your family. They give you the peace of mind and if there is a problem they can go and see you and your family they can act as go between and act as a gel for you and your family.”*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

This picture was confirmed by comments about the FIMs from staff in partner agencies, such as the following remarks from one of the social workers:

*“It’s being there from a very supportive point of view. Even when I have had to go out to the families when there are safeguarding issues, the FIM is still seen as a support person and not someone who has ‘dobbed them up’ if you like. When I go out and say look I am worried that this isn’t good enough, the families are turning to the FIMs and saying ‘help me’. They don’t see them as that bad professional going in there shouting at them, they see them as someone on their side and that is because they have built that relationship from the beginning. It is that continuous relationship.”*

*[Social Worker]*

The importance of continuity in these relationships, and particularly the value of establishing them firmly while the offender was still in prison, was also emphasised by both staff and participants. Having the IWW prison hub office on the T4 family wing, which facilitated frequent

informal as well as formal contact between prisoners and project staff, was seen as especially useful in this respect. This is illustrated in the following comments from a variety of interviewees:

*“I think the key factors for success are the office based on the wing, the guys can see them, familiar faces on the wing and they can go to them with any issues whenever so there is that trust there for when they get out. When they get out normally there is no trust for any authority, they don’t want anything to do with any professionals in case they get caught out. Because we have been around them from such an early stage and worked so closely with them on the wing that is what keeps them engaged on release. Normally the point you would lose them in on release, but we know them so well by that point and that relationship is there already.”* [Social Worker]

*“Having the same people working with them from start to finish so they don’t feel they are being passed from pillar to post and they have that constant point of contact.”* [FIM]

*“Because we have had a small number of families to engage with, we have been able to have that continuity with them and we have use of a car so if we are worried about a family we can go out and see them we are not stuck in the prison on the end of the phone. It’s also about being human, so even if for example they say they don’t want you to attend a social services meeting with them, go with them and let them feel you believe in them and you are there to support them and this is probably the first time they have ever had that opportunity.”* [FIM]

The ‘whole family’ approach taken by IWW, based around the FIMs’ close and continuing relationships with both parents and children throughout the sentence and after release, was also seen as crucial to the success of the project. This was highly valued by participants, particularly during the prison phase of the project as the mentor could keep family members informed of the prisoner’s wellbeing and vice versa.

It was also pointed out by several staff members that if, following the prisoner’s release, family members felt he was ‘slipping back into old ways’, the strength of the relationship they had developed made it much easier for them to confide their concerns to the FIM. While many were reluctant to disclose such concerns to an offender manager out of fear of triggering a punitive response, they were more likely to trust a FIM and/or other IWW worker, who could use the close relationships they had developed to address the issue openly with the whole family – including encouraging a joint effort to rekindle and support the man’s motivation to change. For example:

*"I know he really connected with [substance misuse worker], she is incredible and any user who works with her will open up to her, she will get them back on the right track. They won't work with anyone else; he would never seek help outside as they would recall him. There is no way X [prisoner] would have gone to any agencies or probation."*

*[IWW family member participant]*

*"We wouldn't even be together without them. They gave me the confidence to know that he'd changed. It reassured me to hear all of the things he was doing in there and to have professionals tell you rather than him made a difference as he could have been saying anything. It helped us to build our relationship from there"*

*[IWW family member participant]*

*"The best part was the general support and having someone to talk to and keep my head straight; IWW has made me get back to normal. Without them, I couldn't have talked to no one, my head would have been fried and I would have been back on drugs."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*"When you are trapped in that vicious circle of drugs and jail, you are so used to messing up that's all you see in yourself and you lose your self esteem, your confidence you think you can't do anything. To be able to speak to someone like [FIM] and to have just one person telling you that you can do it, that you are doing something right and then when you do finally pull something off and it goes well you realise that you can do it and that person you want to be is still inside. IWW have given me a family life. full stop, what more can I say?"*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*"With IWW, they take everybody forward, the family, everybody goes forward together and that is amazing and that is why IWW works so well. Everybody is singing together from the same hymn sheet. The workers, the families, the schools, Social Services, everyone. I went to see X and he said to me, 'my partner told me to say things aren't working too well near the time we finish so we can stay on!' People want to stay with us."*

*[IWW Substance misuse worker]*

*"It is about working with the family and dad, so maybe if dad is not wanting to engage particularly then they get a bit of pressure from her outside and that can work both ways. It's hard work but we build a relationship with all of them."*

*[FIM]*

*“What we try and do is educate the whole family and move them forward and that is what IWW stands for. It is amazing. I have gone into families and they are all there smiling, all knowing why we are there. There is no more of us whispering in the kitchen, what are we going to do about your drug use? The families are now open and free and honest with each other. You are empowering the partners as well as the prisoners, they don’t have to hide and they can come out and say and be safe saying it.”* [IWW substance misuse worker]

Of course, not every comment about the work undertaken by IWW staff was totally positive. For example, some worries were expressed that the emphasis on someone ‘always being there’ for participants could lead to over-reliance upon the project staff, it being pointed out that the eventual aim is to prepare and empower participants to deal with problems themselves; and if participants exit the programme in an over-dependent state, the sudden withdrawal of support could be damaging. However, interviews undertaken with participants at the ‘roll off’ have generally indicated that they felt ready to ‘go it alone’. Moreover, in a small number of cases where significant ongoing problems were identified, arrangements were made to continue support (albeit at a reduced level) for another few months to make its withdrawal more gradual.

A small minority of respondents commented that the support received post release was not as intensive as they expected it to be, and did not match the support received during the custodial phase of the project.

*“Prior to X coming out, [FIM] was brilliant. When X came out ..I felt I went from loads of contact to nothing, made me feel a bit lost”.* [IWW family member participant]

*“Before his release, the support was good, but not since.”*  
[IWW family member participant]

*“IWW haven’t done much since he got out, seems like it’s just us left to get on with it. He hasn’t had any money off dole since release.... support is fine on inside but we’ve only seen her once since release, 4 weeks is a long time and it’s not enough time for the families post release. I can’t fault [FIM] she has been amazing, but there has been a gap since release. I would have liked her to come to the benefits appointments with us and explain our situation.”*  
[IWW family member participant]

This may of course have been part of a conscious intention to empower these participants to take control of their own issues as they near completion of IWW. It does however raise the question of how participants’ expectations are managed as they move through the intervention. As

participants (prisoner participants in particular) progress through to the community phase of the project, they need to be prepared for the 'dip' in the level of contact with mentors and other staff; inevitably they will not be seeing them on such a regular basis as they did whilst on the T4 wing.

Several prisoner participants also commented that when they were located on other wings in Parc, there was a need for more contact with IWW staff. A small number, too, had been transferred temporarily to HMP Prescoed, where this problem was particularly salient:

*"Since I've gone from Parc (to HMP Prescoed), it's distant. I don't know what I can and can't have."* [IWW prisoner participant]

*"I haven't had as much support since I've been in Prescoed.... IWW were struggling to get appointments with me."* [IWW prisoner participant]

Finally, one prisoner made the suggestion of increasing awareness and educating staff about the IWW project at HMP Prescoed.

*"Have an awareness day at Prescoed. Officers don't understand they say, 'why are they coming from Parc to see you? What do they want with you?'"* [IWW prisoner participant]

## **PART TWO: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES**

### **4.4 Referral and eligibility questions**

Although a considerable amount of awareness raising work was carried out both within HMP Parc (particularly with Offender Management Unit and Induction staff) and with external agencies, this generated much lower levels of referrals – and of suitable referrals – than anticipated. As a result, in practice much of the responsibility for recruiting new referrals fell upon IWW staff, especially the FIMs.

A particular issue for year 4 was the need to 'front-load' all referrals and new starters in order to enable all participants to complete the full period of six month post release support before the end of the project in May 2017. Subsequently, the team was required to ensure that the full 20 referrals for year 4 were received and approved before the end of November 2015. Staff reported that this was a very resource-intensive activity, which had a 'knock-on' effect across the partnership as other agencies needed to complete assessments and interviews with all new

participants. During this period, too, nearly all referrals were recruited from wings in HMP Parc, in most cases by FIMs or other IWW staff, and it was argued that there was a need to increase the flow of referrals from other sources, including a broader range of Parc staff and indeed from other prisons (a small number were recommended by staff elsewhere and transferred to Parc to take part in the project).

Several staff also identified a need to refine the current eligibility criteria in order to target the IWW resource towards those who would most benefit, 'filtering out' those in need of more complex psychiatric support and those who might pose a risk to staff. For example:

*"There are patterns with the three [participants] that have been removed; knowing more about their background, their childhoods I was told that shouldn't preclude them but actually if you want to work with families you can make a difference to them we should be looking at those things. There are people out there that we can't help, people that need intensive psychiatric support. If there are people that are too high risk or too damaged then we can't help them."*

*[FIM]*

Conversely, staff in the Barnardo's arm of the partnership commented that the profile of IWW families was too broad and there was a need both to refine the criteria and change the project referral process. In particular, they pointed out that, especially towards the end of the project, a number of participants were not referred to Barnardo's services because of a relatively low level of need for support with parenting:

*"If you take people on to the project that don't have a need for half of the service then that is going to leave a lot of people on the project redundant and twiddling their thumbs. Maybe better identification of families that fit the whole bill. Maybe better selection in that sense so we are involved with every family."*

*[Barnardo's staff]*

*"The whole referral criteria about having systematic levels of community need in a lot of cases hasn't been the case. So when we go out to do the engagement and assessment work, they say we don't need the Barnardo's service."*

*[Barnardo's staff]*

However, as discussed in section 4.6, it is possible that other factors may have contributed to the lower level of referrals to Barnardo's services during the last two years of the project.

Several staff acknowledged that whilst the eligibility criteria were not perfect, there would be difficulties associated with any proposed narrowing of the selection process, as the criteria need to be deliberately broad in order to ensure that families in need are not missed. Staff emphasised that many issues did not come to light until the project had been working with a family for some time. One interviewee, indeed, emphasised the need for IWW to select families who fall beneath other agencies' intervention threshold but have the potential to fall into crisis without support:

*"We need to get to the ones who maybe we think are ok, aren't necessarily meeting the thresholds for intervention from other agencies and are slipping through the net. Those are the ones the criteria for IWW should be targeting. The criteria does need to be looked at again. The crisis families, have so many agencies and so much intervention, we have to look at what we can do. The lowest end families, well again maybe not but it is the ones in the middle, who maybe aren't in crisis but could be getting there if they don't have our support. It is hard to know at the beginning when we take them on exactly where they are going to fall. I don't think we will ever get perfection on that."* [IWW Staff]

Other comments on the eligibility criteria included:

*"The criteria pretty much relates to every prisoner with kids I would say!... We might not want to narrow it in case we miss people who need us."* [FIM]

*"You have to have a basic criteria, there are people on our project now that if you stuck to all the criteria wouldn't be on there and there are people that meet all of the basic criteria but actually when you have met with them it wouldn't work, they are not ready. You have to have a basic formula but you can't be rigid in this type of work which is why we have the multi-disciplinary ORF where everybody gets an input. The initial criteria said no DV, well we wouldn't have anyone on the project if we had no dv. Most of our families have dv in there somewhere. It would have been a huge gap if we had stuck to that criteria and they are the families that probably need us the most."* [IWW Staff]

To summarise, the referral processes and selection criteria were topics about which some concerns were expressed by IWW workers, including those in partner agencies. Much of the responsibility for identifying potential participants fell to the FIMs, who said that at times this could add a considerable burden of extra work. Consequently, some consideration might fruitfully be given to ways of increasing referrals from other sources. There were mixed views regarding the need to refine the eligibility criteria: some staff members recommended narrowing the criteria in order to exclude offenders representing a high risk to staff and those needing more

specialist help than the project was able to offer, while others felt that the criteria needed to be deliberately broad in order to ensure that families in need did not, 'slip through the net'. Barnardo's staff on the other hand commented that the profile of community need across the IWW participant families varied too widely and that demand for their parenting services in particular had diminished substantially during the latter two years of the project.

## 4.5 Caseload and capacity

Both G4S and Barnardo's staff reported capacity to be an issue during the latter half of year three and throughout year four, with high caseloads and the geographical spread of families across South Wales stretching resources. The high caseloads (some FIMs having to mentor up to 12 families at a time) arose largely from the need to 'front-load' year four referrals to ensure that all IWW participants had the opportunity to receive the full six months of post release support. This created concerns about reductions in the level and quality of service that could be provided:

*"Capacity is hard with 11 cases. It is about maintaining an equal balance. Out of 11, some are ticking along and they are tickety boo. It is when you become entrenched with a difficult family and they take a lot of your time. Monitoring suffers, the paper work. Lifts in and out of prison have got less."* [FIM]

*"We used to spend a lot more of one to one time chatting with the prisoners, helping them to change their way of thinking. Now we are more fire fighting, more of a response thing. Less of the spending time with them and building that relationship. Don't get me wrong, relationship building does still happen though because you have them for so long. It is important as you have to build that confidence in them so they trust you. Especially when they get out, they make that decision as to whether to turn to you if something is going wrong or if they are going to hide it or lie. If you haven't spent enough time with that client because of your workload then it can have an effect."* [FIM]

Help offered by IWW with travel to and from the prison for various interventions and visits was hugely valued by family members, many of whom had to travel substantial distances with small children and/or babies and were otherwise reliant on public transport. Without this support, the frequency of visits would undoubtedly have been much less for many families.

*"The visits, the contact with my family was the main thing for me. Knowing my partner had that support. I wouldn't have had any visits with my family without IWW. I wouldn't have seen my children for 16 months."* [IWW prisoner participant]

*"They have helped us loads, especially me and my partner. That was the biggest thing. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be together now. The help with visits especially was huge, we would have lost contact as she couldn't have got in."* [IWW prisoner participant]

However, the higher caseloads and subsequent demand on staff capacity during years three and four made it more difficult for FIMs to maintain this element of service provision:

*"Lifts do still happen. I've been bringing them in for Language and Play and Learning Together club and also for the partner days on Fathers Inside. It is a juggling act and they do take a long time. I still do it as it gives you time and opportunity to bond with them, but it does take a lot of your day."* [FIM]

In order to offset the impact of increased workloads on service delivery, efforts were made to reduce the burden of 'paperwork' on Barnardo's and G4S staff. All were issued with laptops to enable them to continue working while out of the office on community appointments, and in 2014 the Barnardo's team ceased completing interim Family Star assessments at the point of release in order to focus as much of their time as possible on delivering support. Additionally, from July 2014, an IWW post was redeployed to the IWW prison 'hub' team to assist the FIMs in supporting prisoners and their families and also to deliver interventions to prisoners on the T4 wing.

Overall, our evidence indicates that whilst capacity was stretched at times, measures were put in place in order to manage the heavy workload. Additionally, the varying profile of need across the IWW participant families meant that demand for services fluctuated, as not all families required the same level of staff input and resource at the same time. Feedback from participants indicates that although the IWW staff may have felt stretched by the high caseload, this did not impact upon participant satisfaction with the service and support received.

## 4.6 Partnership working

### 4.6.1 *Relations between prison and community hubs*

As with all partnership working, successful multi-agency project delivery can often rest upon the quality of working relationships and communication between key staff within the individual agencies. As a cross-sector, multi-agency partnership with staff from Third Sector agencies (Gwalia, Barnardo's), a Local Authority (YISP and Social Services) and a private prison, this issue was of considerable importance to IWW. Our research indicated that the relationships and communications between most of the partners worked well. However, there were undoubtedly intermittent problems, some quite significant, in relationships between the two main partners, G4S and Barnardo's. Some of these, it was said by staff in both organisations, stemmed from differences in philosophy, culture and practice:

*"Sometimes we feel like two separate teams and we don't partnership work really. We are one team, but you would never think that. We are two separate teams thinking very differently from each other."* *[Barnardo's staff]*

*"Gwalia – fabulous, I feel I can go to her at any time. YISP – fabulous she has done some fabulous work with young kids. As for Barnardo's, I seem to be constantly battling with them, they seem to have a different agenda to us."* *[FIM]*

Interviews with staff across both of these agencies highlighted some specific examples of such differences. One of the most problematic concerned the differing thresholds for risk adopted by each organisation in relation to decisions whether to refer cases to Social Services on child safeguarding grounds. In response to some significant disagreement over actions taken in a particular case, and in order to ensure that full consultation would take place in future cases, a Social Services referral process flow-chart was jointly developed by the Project Manager, the Barnardo's Children's Services manager and the Consultant Social Worker. All staff across the partnership were required to adhere to this process, although if agreement still could not be reached, staff tended to revert to their own agency's policy.

A suggestion was also made that, in order to further offset the potential for 'clashes' over the safeguarding process and increase consistency in referral practice, the IWW Social Worker should provide pan-project supervision to all agencies as required:

*“Maybe it would have worked better spending some of my time in the Barnardo’s office going through some of their cases. I am an IWW social worker, not just a G4S social worker. I think that is a gap. I’ve always said I should be providing clinical supervision to Barnardo’s as well as the FIMs. With Barnardo’s I just send them an email and say don’t refer, don’t do that... I think the Social Worker post should be for IWW as a project not just for the prison team.”* [Social Worker]

Several staff interviewees stated that there had also been more general problems of decision-making and communication between the two main ‘hubs’ of the project, attributable mainly to perceived flaws in the management structure and ‘logistics’ of the IWW partnership rather than to individual personality clashes. In particular, it was argued that the appointment of a single manager for the whole project, rather than sharing management and supervision responsibilities between agencies, might have prevented some of the partnership problems that arose:

*“One manager and co-location would have delivered a more cohesive, coherent team and a better level of service for the service users... It’s been such a difficult cross between the cultures and the ethos.”* [Barnardo’s staff]

*“Whoever project manages the project should have the lead role in allocating the work for all elements of the project. I think that would naturally make it more one team and it would be more efficient.”* [G4S staff]

*“One manager across whole IWW partnership would be brilliant. There needs to be one manager, managing and supervising in essence everyone.”* [Social Worker]

It was pointed out that although both the YISP and Gwalia workers were project managed by their own agencies, the IWW Project Manager was responsible for their day to day supervision. Additionally, they each attended weekly G4S team meetings, and the Gwalia worker was co-located within the IWW Satellite office on prison grounds. Conversely, the Barnardo’s team comprised a much larger team located off site, were project managed by a Barnardo’s Children’s Services manager, and did not attend the prison hub weekly team meetings:

*“It has worked differently with [ETEV specialist], Gwalia is one person, [YISP] is one person. They don’t have a team, yes they have a manager but they don’t have a manager who is IWW so they come to our team meetings and they very much see themselves as part of the prison*

*hub and part of our team. I don't think that works when you have another complete team with their own manager because ultimately you have two teams then." [G4S staff]*

*"Two managers can be difficult as the two teams come from a completely different ethos, with different views over so many things and the managers come from completely different viewpoints and are governed by different agencies, with different processes and procedures and child protection is viewed completely differently." [Barnardo's staff]*

Duplication of paperwork also appeared to be an issue for some; both the FIMs and Barnardo's each created their own action/support plans for each family and similarly, both completed a roll off/closing summary for families on exiting.

*"IWW processes seem to have a lot of duplication. I write an action plan and the FIM has an action plan. There are times I feel it is wise for us to feed our parenting into the FIMS action plan rather than have two. I am also going out trying to do final closing summary with families. The FIMs go out and do a comprehensive roll off report. I would think that the final roll off report would be sufficient with input on parenting outcomes from us but we have to write an additional closing summary, isn't that what the roll off report is?"*

*[Barnardo's staff]*

Additionally, the timings of Barnardo's Family Star, SDQ assessments and action plans reportedly did not always co-ordinate with the development of the support plan by the FIMs; staff commented that prison hub support plan documents were often drawn up without the input of information from the Barnardo's arm of the service. This was largely believed to be a capacity issue as the number of referrals and geographical spread of families delayed the completion of paperwork in the community.

Further suggestions on how to improve partnership working in any future delivery of the IWW model have included a proposal that the different agencies be co-located in the same office or building, effectively replicating the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team model used for child protection:

*"MASH teams have a whole range of professionals, housing, police, drug workers, social workers; it works because they are in close proximity, they share an office. They build relationships, it's that working together on a practical basis. They see themselves together as part of the same team."*

*“If you are in one office with people even if they do a different role to you, communication is better, your understanding of their roles is better, there is just a more cohesive and respectful atmosphere than if you are two very separate teams, with very separate roles then that division gets bigger. We are seen as a very different service, we would have been valued greater if we had been more joined up like in team meetings. Whether it would be doable every week when workloads are high, but it would have been worth a try.”*

*[Barnardo’s staff]*

While no major changes were made to the overall management structure during phase one of the project, some new mechanisms were put in place to improve inter-agency communication. Originally, formal support plan and review meetings were held on a quarterly basis to enable professionals and participants to come together to review progress and amend the delivery of support accordingly. It was later decided that these should be held only when deemed necessary by the FIM and that more informal, small-scale meetings would be conducted on a needs-led basis to enable relevant staff to come together to discuss individual clients and tailor support accordingly. These smaller meetings were widely agreed to have facilitated detailed information-sharing at the individual client level. Staff from partner agencies (responsible for working with individual members of the family) found them a useful means of garnering a more holistic understanding of issues across the family (in addition to those of the individual they were working with). Without them, only the FIM, as over-arching case manager, would have had a ‘whole family’ view of ongoing issues and needs.

After the first year of operation there was also a ‘tightening up’ of operational processes through the development of weekly multi-agency<sup>31</sup> team meetings and clear mechanisms for ongoing inter-agency information exchange; in addition to the practice of regular individual case contact updates fed back to FIMs from Gwalia, Barnardo’s and the YISP worker, all staff across the partnership shared weekly updates on work conducted with participants. However, some felt that having to provide updates on all families to all professionals was a resource intensive activity and was too generic an approach. Suggestions were made during interview, to tailor the updates to just those professionals across the partnership working with each family, with clear action points highlighted as appropriate.

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<sup>31</sup> Weekly team meetings held in the prison and attended by staff from G4S, Gwalia in addition to the YISP and Social Worker.

#### 4.6.2 IWW and the rest of the prison

Within the prison, communication between T4 officers, Offender Management Unit (OMU) and IWW staff was reported to have improved over the course of the project. The T4 wing manager and relevant OMU staff were invited to each Offender Referral Forum to provide information and input into decisions to take on new referrals. This appeared to work well and improved intra-prison working relations, which resulted in a smoother transition for the prisoner participants on to the T4 wing.

However, some staff reported encountering a lack of understanding of IWW on occasion among some wing officers located both on T4 and on wings in the main body of the prison. IWW staff also commented that they had experienced problems when requiring access to prisoners or assistance in escorting them around the prison. It is likely, however, that this was not a reflection of any hostility towards IWW. The recent period of expansion at Parc was said to have had an impact on staff capacity and similarly affected the availability of radios for escorting prisoners and visitors. Moreover, the implementation of the smoking ban across the prison estate in July 2016, combined with a reported increased prevalence in the use of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) over the past two years in particular, has caused problems in prisons across the UK, resulting in increased pressures upon prison staff and greater staff turnover. As various staff members put it:

*“When the non-smoking started the wing was a lot more crazy, more violent but that has calmed down now you don’t get them kicking off now it has been accepted. Spice was massive; at one time 12 out of 20 prisoners on the adjudication list would be IWW so then [wing manager] wanted them off the wing. Again, that has died down now.”*

*[IWW staff]*

*“Some officers don’t understand what we are doing. I think it has affected the culture of the prison. The more we try and work with them, the easier it will get but staff changeover is so massive and even on T4 you never know who will be there from one day to the next.”*

*[IWW staff]*

*“Visits staff now seem to have less capacity to bring visitors over for visits. There is an issue with radios and we need them to run interventions in the lounge. We need two radios and two members of staff as I can’t take the prisoner back after it’s finished as I have to escort their visitor. It does put me off arranging interventions in the lounge.*

*[FIM]*

### 4.6.3 External agencies

Staff from a variety of external agencies were invited, where appropriate, to IWW meetings to discuss participants. In many cases, too, FIMs attended Social Services 'Child in Need' and other meetings to provide input and support participants through the process (see Section 6 for further detail).

*"I think it has been an eye opener for Social Services, they have never had that link...when we work with them and we tell them what dad is doing in prison and what he intends on doing when he comes out of prison then it is saving a lot of children because we are keeping Social Services involved when they need to be involved. I think they respect us as a project and I have done some lovely work with them. Like with one family, she didn't know what he was doing in here so it was lovely and it makes such a difference to tie everything up so we have made a massive impact across lots of counties. With Probation, they were grateful; 9 times out of 10 they wanted us on board as another pair of eyes on him in the community."*

*[FIM]*

*"Early on probation are made aware that the prisoner is on the project. Where possible we try to influence those licence conditions for the better to make sure they are more streamlined. We have to have probation involved and engaged. In many cases the FIM has informed Probation of things they knew nothing about. Risk has been reduced or mitigated because of their work on the project. FIMS have been in court several times to represent them. All information and assessments are shared both ways."*

*[G4S Manager]*

Feedback from prisoner participants on the project also indicated that they felt they had benefitted from this mutual exchange of information.

*"With IWW though, [FIM] speaks to Probation and OMU so everyone knows you and what work you've done and progress you have made. She does that with all agencies so every agency knows you and you haven't got to explain yourself to six different people and just that in itself is a huge relief."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

The IWW team also made efforts to engage and build links with other agencies outside the criminal justice system, such as substance misuse and housing agencies, and made referrals to these where appropriate. Perhaps the most fruitful partnership, that with local schools, will be described and discussed in the following section. To raise awareness of its work, IWW ran

quarterly Community Awareness Events in the visits hall throughout the lifetime of project. These were typically attended by 40-70 staff and volunteers from a wide variety of organisations, and often resulted in new partnership interventions for prisoners' children and families. Examples include initiatives with Scouts Wales, Fire Fighter for a Day and St John's Ambulance.

To conclude, it appears that inter-agency collaboration between the core partners in the IWW 'hubs' worked well in many respects. However, particular challenges pertaining to the working relationship between the G4S prison hub team and the Barnardo's community hub team were reported by staff from both agencies. These appeared to derive either from differences in philosophy and working practices or from perceived flaws in the management structure of IWW, it being argued by several that there was a need for one project manager to have operational responsibility for staff across the whole IWW partnership. Other suggestions for improving multi agency working included the streamlining and co-ordination of IWW paperwork, the need for one case management and recording system across the partnership, a greater degree of interaction between the teams through joint team meetings and events, and co-location of all partners.

Interviewees had mixed views on the extent to which the IWW team had integrated with G4S staff within the prison. While it was acknowledged that communication between T4 officers, staff in the OMU, and IWW had improved greatly over the course of the project, some interviewees reported encountering a lack of understanding about IWW and sometimes uncooperative behaviour among a small number of wing officers. It was generally conceded however, that the high staff turnover combined with the introduction of anti-smoking legislation and the issues relating to NPS use (which have affected all prisons across England and Wales in recent years) were likely to have been the main reasons behind this.

Finally, relationships with external agencies were generally good, and were aided by a proactive programme of visits to the prison with invitations extended to a wide range of local organisations.

## **4.7 Engagement with schools**

In this section we discuss a type of external partnership which grew unexpectedly in scale during the project, and has arguably become one of its major achievements in terms of engaging other local agencies in work with the children of prisoners. This is the development of mutually supportive working relationships between IWW/Barnardo's staff and teachers in schools attended by IWW child participants. These relationships were nurtured through teacher awareness sessions run in the visits hall once per term for three years, and attended

by large numbers of local school staff, including head teachers. IWW staff also began to visit the schools of children of prisoners on their caseload.

IWW staff across the partnership reported that both head-teachers and class-teachers of child participants welcomed their presence in the schools, information-sharing was working well, and teachers reported that once children knew they were aware of their family circumstances, they felt more willing to share their feelings and concerns. In some instances, schools also agreed to resource one to one support to ensure the continued well-being of the child after the family had completed the IWW intervention. Corresponding improvements in attendance rates and school attainment were also recorded for IWW child participants (see Chapter 5 for more detail).

*“The role of the school is crucial. The SENCO<sup>32</sup> teacher came along to the meeting and without her we wouldn’t have known as much as we did. It was really interesting to see the school’s perspective on things, they told us things which we never would have otherwise known about. It is in their interest as well, we find schools are more than happy to be involved as they don’t want a difficult child in school.”* [IWW Staff]

*“Children know the school is aware so they find it easier to talk to their teacher. Once the support for children and families is there, they can say, “I’m feeling a bit down” and the teacher will know why. Also as our support is coming to an end, some schools will really up their game and say, right this teacher will be available for X to talk to for so many hours per week.”* [IWW Staff]

*“Linking in with the school is such a positive thing for the family, it’s somebody who is going to be there in the long term when we go and someone who can offer that support when we aren’t around. Most schools are really accommodating and supportive.”* [IWW Staff]

The mutual benefits arising from the information exchange between IWW and schools was highlighted during interviews with a number of teachers:

*“Even though I see X every day, this has given me a completely different insight into how she has been feeling and everything that she has been going through.”*  
[Class teacher of IWW participant]

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<sup>32</sup> Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

*“At the beginning of the year when dad first went in [to prison] we had teething problems and he had conflict with him and others in the class. Once he knew I knew about dad and [YISP] started coming in he seemed to settle fantastically. He is a popular little boy and is now working to the level he should be.”* [Class teacher of IWW participant]

The relationship between IWW and one school in Swansea in particular, exemplified how effective and beneficial the school partnership with IWW could be. After working with IWW in relation to one family with three siblings at risk of being removed from parental care, the school appraised their role in identifying and protecting children with a parent in prison, with the following results:

- A ‘rainbow room’ was established where children met and talked in confidence to the school counsellor.
- Teachers attended the first parent/teacher showcase in Parc.
- Worked closely with the IWW team, especially the Youth Inclusion Support Worker.
- Attended the prison to run a workshop for prisoners to explain how schools can work with their families. This workshop is repeated on a rolling basis during every father’s inside course held within Parc.
- Identified a further 20 children in their school with a parent in prison whom they would not otherwise know about.
- School staff took forward a programme of awareness raising and conducted talks and workshops across a range of audiences to highlight how schools can identify and help children with a parent in prison.

Outcomes for the family in question were very positive; the children were removed from a potentially harmful and violent domestic situation to live with their father (IWW prisoner participant). School attainment and attendance improved, as had the children’s physical appearance and emotional wellbeing. As two teachers noted;

*“The hardest thing was me saying you are going home with dad not mum. A month or so before I thought I would be saying you won’t be going home with either of them. He has kept his side of things going and looked after those three children. Their hair is shiny, they are thriving. Everything goes back to this family still together. The children are now safer than in the five years I have known them.”* [Class teacher of IWW participant]

*“They are thriving..... What a difference a year makes! Without IWW the story would have been SO different.”* [Class teacher of IWW participant]

### **4.7.1 The Invisible Walls Accord**

The Invisible Walls Accord (IWA) initiative developed as an offshoot off the IWW project as a result of an identified need for support for school age children with a parent in prison who would otherwise fail to meet the threshold for support from other agencies.

*“For the most part, a lot of the children with a parent in prison wouldn’t meet the criteria for YOS Prevention services, a lot of it is to do with their age, so most services say they haven’t done enough for us to bother, they still need that support but they wouldn’t get it if IWW weren’t involved.”* [IWW staff]

*“The needs of some of the children are so high but Social Services just don’t pick them up. There is a threshold which is lower like Team Around the Family (TAF), but as soon as they know we are involved they are quite happy to say IWW will do that. Really it should be the community projects do it and we support them but reality is it’s the other way around and it is so easy to get sucked into doing it all.”* [Social Worker]

As a result of this identified need, the IWA aimed to engage with primary and secondary schools across Bridgend and South Wales and identified an individual within each school as a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), whom children could approach if they had a parent in prison.

The IWA was an aspect of IWW that was not specifically planned, but which proved to be a critical approach to ensuring that the project maximised positive impact, both on individual children who participated in IWW and on the wider population who, often unbeknown to schools, have been affected by parental imprisonment.

The scheme enabled schools to:

- Receive all of the electronic links, details, websites, and contacts for all the relevant statutory and voluntary agencies that support children and young people who have a close relative in prison. Including all pertinent historic and up to date research.
- Access a support phone line and email link to the IWA Team.
- Receive child-appropriate posters for their establishment to signpost their S.P.O.C.

- Receive invitations to quarterly awareness events at HMP & YOI Parc, where teachers can experience the visiting process, network, and receive further information.
- Receive regular electronic updates from the prison hub, details of pertinent legislation, policy, effective practice, conferences and training opportunities.

51 schools signed up to this and the IWA was included as an objective in Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) Council's Strategic Action Plan, which stated that all schools in RCT must sign up to the IWA.<sup>33</sup> RCT also included 'child with a parent in prison' as an additional risk factor in their vulnerability profiling tool.<sup>34</sup>

The success of the IWA also reached as far afield as Uganda, with the Christian charity Wells of Hope, adopting and signing up to the principles of the IWW accord, following a visit to that country in 2014.

Such was the widespread take-up of the scheme that in 2016, Barnardo's Cymru in partnership with G4S secured further Big Lottery funds to develop the Invisible Walls Accord Service as a separate, independent three-year project aimed at improving outcomes for vulnerable children including those with a parent in prison. Key to this project will be the education of community partners (including teachers and other staff in schools) to support this group of children, young people and families.

#### 4.7.2 *School showcase*

Another key achievement for the project was the development of the 'Children's showcase'. These events were essentially parent-teacher evenings held within the prison, and represented the first parent/teacher meetings within a custodial setting in the UK. Feedback from the events (see below) indicated that they were very well received by participants and teachers alike, with the benefits seen long after the event itself.

*"The showcase event; that was a massive achievement with [prisoner's] family. We got him for the first time ever to engage with the school and considering he's got so many children, they've never been to parents evening, they've never had any involvement with*

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<sup>33</sup> The Welsh Government has also expressed an intention to make this mandatory for all councils in Wales.

<sup>34</sup> Vulnerability Profiling was first developed in 2012 by the Attendance and Wellbeing Service as a means of early identification of those children and young people at risk of disengaging from learning as a result of socio-economic barriers they face outside of the school environment.

*the school ..... So for him then, he did the showcase and he spoke to all of their teachers and he built some kind of relationship with them...it broke down a million of his barriers cause he was absolutely petrified, it took a lot for us to just get him there. His worry about teachers and what they thought of him, and what we did is we also got Barnardo's and YISP, so when they were doing their 1-1s with the children in school, when [prisoner] was released, we got him to go in there and do them as well with the children, so it became like introducing him even further in to the school and he's actually going in there, and really trying."*

*[IWW Staff]*

The showcase event not only helped the IWW parents to acquire a greater understanding of their children's educational needs, but also gave the teachers some insight into the issues the children had to deal with at home.

*"That regardless of what the prisoner's wrong doings are, it's the children that suffer the most. Like other professionals I think I have been guilty of thinking "thank god dad is out of the picture and in prison". I can honestly say whole heartedly I feel very differently now!! We are all human after all."*

*[Schoolteacher]*

*"I really didn't know what X and her little sisters had to cope with in life and it will really help me to support X and her family going forward. I thought that X's Mum and Dad did a really good job; it can't have been easy for them, but they chatted to me really well and showed a genuine interest in helping X to progress. If there's anything I can help with, please do let me know and I will make sure I make time for it."*

*[Schoolteacher]*

The UK's Bishop of Prisons also made links with the Head of Family Interventions (and IWW) in HMP Parc to explore the potential for 4,500 Church of England schools across England to link with prisons in their diocese with the aim of delivering children and families work and in particular, of exploring the possibility of replicating the parent/teacher showcase. Plans are in place initially to target three schools close to a selected local prison in Northeast England that fall within the Church of England diocese.

In sum, there was a broad range of community-based interventions available to meet the needs of both adults and children participating in IWW and, as with other aspects of the service, community engagement was highest when links were made with prisoners and families prior to release. Interviews with staff highlight the flexible approach taken by IWW partners to ensure interventions were adapted and developed to meet the specific needs of the participant

group, while a range of innovative activities and events were held in order to facilitate ongoing service-user engagement and feedback. A key success of the project was the partnership established with schools across South Wales through the School Showcase events, IWW Accord and mutual information exchange between IWW staff and teachers. These links not only helped to improve outcomes and establish ongoing community support for IWW children, but also raised awareness of the needs of all children with a parent in prison, many of whom 'slip beneath the radar' for agency support. The success of this work underpinned the achievement of funding (until December 2020) of the IWW Accord project, which represents a partnership between Barnardo's, G4S and other Welsh prisons. The Accord is designed to improve awareness of the impact of parental imprisonment on children and to assist specifically targeted schools in South Wales with a proven need, to become more skilled in supporting relevant children and families.

## 5. Effectiveness of IWW: Impact and outcomes

Key objectives of the project were to improve the quality of life and increase the social integration of all participants, reduce re-offending by the prisoners, and reduce the risk of inter-generational offending. As described in the preceding chapters, all family members received support from IWW, both individually and together. Bearing its 'whole family' approach in mind, it is important that the success of IWW is assessed in a comprehensive way, to include its impact on prisoner participants, on adult family members, on children, and on family relationships as a whole.

This section outlines our findings on a broad range of outcomes in relation to both (ex-)prisoners and their families. These include changes in the former's attitudes to crime; changes in employment, housing and levels of substance misuse among all adult participants; and improvements in familial functioning and parenting (as measured by changes in Family Star scores). We also present evidence of the impact on child participants, showing changes in measures of wellbeing at home and in school (as reflected by scores on the Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) and changes in living arrangements, educational status, peer relationships and engagement with Social Services. However, two important outcomes cannot yet be quantified. Any impact on re-offending cannot be determined until at least a year has elapsed after the release of all IWW prisoner participants and members of the comparison group; accurate evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the project is also dependent on re-offending data. Some brief preliminary indications of likely outcomes in both respects will be provided below, but firm conclusions will not be available until a supplementary report in late 2018.

### 5.1 Overall impact on participants

We begin this section with some broad statements by participants about the impact of IWW upon their and their families' lives and well-being. When asked what difference IWW had made to their lives, the most common replies by adult participants were to the effect that their family had become closer, that their children were happier and that they had become better parents. Typical comments included:

*"My parents are a lot happier, we are all back as a family. I'm much closer with mum. IWW have sorted out Social Services so they don't have to be with me when I see my daughters.*

*It's changed the way I think about the kids, I'm all about family. I can work now with professionals. Anyone with authority, before, I hated them, but now that's all changed."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*"We're a lot closer and there's more communication. It's [IWW] set up family life and shown me how to make up the time I've lost with them. We're all definitely a lot happier now. I'm more hands on with the kids and X [partner] now. I decide and do things now, I don't just go with the flow. I use my head and feel grown up and think of the family now."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*"The girls would have suffered a lot more and they went through such a lot but IWW supported us all the way. If [prisoner] hadn't got on to T4 he wouldn't be alive right now it's as simple, as basic and as fundamental as that. That wing and the project helped his recovery and even if he did survive, without them he would have drifted further away emotionally from all of us. Without IWW, I dread to think where we would be now; there would have been a lot of negative outcomes for us all that's for sure."*

*[IWW partner participant]*

*"Were it not for IWW and that wing, I wouldn't have got to know my daughter like I did. I would have acted differently in there, fighting and refusing to bang up, breaking up cells, the usual. Things are perfect now and it's weird how much the project has changed us both. [Partner] supports me so well and knows I need to keep my head straight. I couldn't rob a kinder egg from a sweet shop now and I was a PPO from age 14. I am not letting my past rule my life no more.... My biggest motivation to change? My baby."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*"I'm very confident I won't offend again. I just appreciate now what I have got around me, my missus, my kids. I want to work; I want to show my sons how to live life properly. I want to be a good role model to them."*

*[IWW prisoner participant]*

*"All we can say is we have had such a supportive response. We've been overwhelmed with help and received more than we could have ever wished for.....My son is in a place now I never thought I'd see him in again, I can't even say how grateful we all are. If IWW had not existed, the stress and worry would still be a problem... now we are very happy, much better and more relaxed."*

*[IWW family member]*

The impact of IWW specifically in maintaining or improving father/child relationships was also frequently highlighted. This was also the case in families where parents had separated during the sentence, it being commented several times that, were it not for the IWW staff engaging with the 'ex-partner' and/or assisting the children to visit 'dad', it would have been very difficult to maintain their relationship during his sentence.

*"Without IWW, it would have been a lot harder. I would have been starting out afresh with the kids as I wouldn't have seen them for four years"* [IWW prisoner participant]

*"There are no words to describe how much they have done for me. When I was in Cardiff, I wouldn't have seen X [son] for six months. When I was with IWW I saw him in lounge visits every two weeks. Having X [son] coming into prison turned it around for me. I couldn't deal with the emotion of losing him. When I started seeing him, I started making real progress."* [IWW prisoner participant]

The impact of the one to one work with the children was also mentioned several times. For example:

*"She [daughter] received some work and play with [Barnardo's worker] and she loved their sessions together. The family is more at ease now, [daughter] is happier, she's less withdrawn...It's a total turn around and exceeded all our expectations."* [IWW family member participant]

*"My son saw [YISP] 1 to 1 for a year in school, everyone in my family was telling me not to do it saying he doesn't need it and it would make things worse but we asked him and he wanted to do it. At first he was nervous and quite sensitive, but when he got used to her he loved seeing her. He saw it as a reward because she did fun things with him. He changed after a couple of sessions with her, it helped him to deal with things, and express himself more to me. He used to have mood swings and be withdrawn and always upset. He said he didn't used to like talking about his dad in jail as he worried about upsetting me. After seeing [YISP] he would talk more and he would open up with her too. She would then share with me what had gone on in sessions so it helped me to understand how he was feeling. it helped us to communicate so sometimes we would sit and cry together but he stopped worrying about upsetting me. The support just made the whole family happier."* [IWW family member participant]

*"[Son] had support from [YISP]. He likes talking to her, he is working with his anger with her and he won't deal with anyone else. The younger two talk to [Barnardo's worker] and she really helped them open up especially in the FGC it was really good for them to have that support. [Son] likes [Barnardo's worker], he isn't a talker normally and just bottles things up but she relaxes him and he has opened up to her no end. The kids have adjusted brilliantly to [prisoner] being home. When he was inside, the eldest just refused point blank to go to school, now he is going and is working with the school educational psychologist too. This all stems from IWW. He even did Duke of Edinburgh because of them."*

*[IWW family member participant]*

### **5.1.1 Perspectives of IWW child participants**

In this section, we provide a 'child's eye' perspective on the impact of their engagement with IWW. Rather than undertake formal interviews with children, the researcher conducted two focus groups with several of them. In addition, the FIMS and YISP were asked to get the children they visited to draw pictures of how they felt as a result of taking part in IWW. During the focus group, the children were asked five questions:

#### **1) What is good about IWW?**

Many of the children spoke positively about the extra time they were able to spend with their dad during the interventions and were very positive about their visits in the lounge area. Typical comments included:

*"I like Scouts and all of the courses we can do and the play area; especially the lounge. It's really relaxed and I get to sit next to him"*

*"My dad can get up and walk around to different areas [of the lounge] and play with me, things like Connect 4; there are different areas to sit with dad. It's like a living room."*

*"I prefer lounge visits as dad can move around and we can do more things together."*

*"We are able to see dad for longer. When I only see him for an hour, it doesn't feel long enough."*

*"I like the comfy settees in the lounge! It's not the same on a normal visit. The lounge feels more like home"*

Children also spoke about the value they placed upon the various interventions held within the prison along with the extra support they received from the IWW team.

*"I really like Homework club, I get to bring in work and posters I have made to show dad."*

*"The fire-fighter session was good. A truck came and we got to do courses with dad."*

*"I liked the art and making mosaics. We can do activities on our own too like Scouts."*

*"In scouts we do fun games. We made a 3 D campsite out of paper. That was awesome."*

*"I like making dreamcatchers. I have so much fun in here."*

*"I liked Scouts. I made friends with other children the same as me and we got a free t-shirt."*

*"They help children and take us to activities."*

*"They [IWW] do a lot for you – SuperX [Gwalia ETEV specialist] always sorts stuff out!"*

*"I like the help and support for children in here; they keep us happy."*

## **2) What don't you like about IWW?**

None of the children highlighted any aspects of IWW that they weren't happy with; instead they spoke about the inconvenience of having to visit the prison as it limited their opportunities to play with friends and take part in activities in the community.

*"I don't like that I have to miss clubs and playing with my friends to visit him"*

*"I miss football and time with friends."*

*"It takes a long time going to a visit. It takes too long to get to the hall/lounge and we just have an hour with him. The hour goes too quickly. Getting to the prison, checking in and getting home means half of my day is gone."*

Several children also talked about the conflicting feelings they had regarding some of the interventions they attended without their parents; although they enjoyed taking part they recognised that they could have been spending that time with their father:

*"I liked the course but I wanted more time with my dad."*

*"When I do scouts I miss dad."*

One child even commented that they felt guilty when spending one on one time with their dad during the homework club intervention as it meant he spent less time with his partner.

*"When I do homework club I feel bad for mum not seeing dad."*

### 3) What could we do better?

When asked how IWW could improve, rather than identifying issues with IWW, children focused on processes in the prison and talked mainly about needing more visiting time with their parent.

*"I want more time with dad. The courses need to be longer. The longest course was the fire-fighting course that was 6 hours."*

*"I would like a private visit with my dad and our whole family so we have space to say private stuff. In the hall we can't as it is always packed and in the lounge there are always other families and I don't want other people to hear."*

*"I always want to stay longer; they need to make the visits longer."*

### 4) How did you feel when dad went to prison?<sup>35</sup>

The children spoke about feeling a range of negative emotions when their parent was sent to prison. Typical words used to describe their feelings included;

- "Upset"
- "Heartbroken"
- "Lost"
- "Emotional, I just didn't know where he was".
- "Sad"
- "Disappointed"
- "I thought we couldn't cope without him."
- "He'd already been in fourteen times. I was two when he first went in so I thought, 'Ah here we go again". (Shrugged shoulders)
- "Felt sad- felt like it was a bad dream"

### 5) How do you feel now?

The children all described feeling happier as they felt reassured knowing where he was, and the fun they had experienced during the activities within the prison had helped them to feel more positive about their family's situation. Several children were also feeling excited about their parent's impending release date.

- "Happy as he is coming home soon."
- "Proud when I'm doing these activities."
- "Happy dad is coming home. This will be the 5<sup>th</sup> birthday he will be home for (aged 10)."
- "Smiley, like a Cheshire Cat" (asked me to draw a smiley face)

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<sup>35</sup> Children were given the opportunity to draw a picture in response to this question if they didn't want to respond verbally.

- “Happy now as I love to visit him. I know he is safe now as it’s a good place. My visits are my favourite time of the week.”

When asked to draw pictures of themselves and their families before and after IWW joining the IWW project, most child participants depicted a change from sad to happy faces, or from a separated to a joined up group. Some examples are reproduced below:



**Child A: Pre IWW**



**Child A: Post IWW**

The first image represents IWW child participant, child A prior to joining the project. She was asked to draw a picture of herself. The picture depicts her alone and with a sad expression. The second drawing above, also by child A, represents how she sees herself after joining the IWW project. She has drawn herself together with members of her immediate family. All have happy, smiling expressions and are drawn standing closely side by side. This second picture also has flowers, grass and a blue sky around the family. The previous drawing has none of this, and instead the child is shown alone on the page with the rest of the page left blank.

Further pictorial representations of feelings before and after engagement with IWW are shown in the next two pictures, by Child B.



I felt sad and worried



I felt scared to anger my and safe

**Child B Pre- and post-IWW**

The first picture highlights how the child felt when her father was sent to prison. Again, her sad expression portrays the emotions she was feeling at the time. Underneath, she writes that she, 'felt sad and worried'. Although she carries a skipping rope, it is bunched up in her hand and she is not shown skipping. The child was also asked to draw herself after the project had been working with her for a while. She is shown smiling and playing with the skipping rope. Underneath, the caption reads, 'I felt I could do anything and safe'

Finally, pictures drawn by child C highlight the sadness she was feeling when her father was imprisoned compared with how she felt on his release. The 'before' picture shows her sat in bed at night, crying to her mother; the caption reads 'I'm going to miss him'. In contrast, the 'after' picture shows her smiling and hugging her dad on his release, with the sun shining and a rainbow in the sky.



**Child C: 'Before and after'**

Although simple, all of these pictures demonstrate how frightening the experience of parental imprisonment can be for the child/ren. The picture from Child A in particular, highlights the loneliness children can feel when separated from a parent. However, all three of the 'post IWW' pictures exemplify how positively the children view the project with 'happy' emotions displayed in both drawings. Picture A also demonstrates how the project helped the child to feel closer to her family and gives a sense of the family being back together, despite the prison sentence.

## 5.2 'Whole family' case studies

In this section we comment on three case studies of families which participated in IWW, details of which are provided in Appendix 2. which exemplify the multifaceted nature of Invisible Walls Wales and explore how three prisoners, along with their families, were supported as they progressed through the intervention. The cases not only offer insight into the considerable breadth of work undertaken by Invisible Walls Wales, but also highlight how diverse the support requirements of families can be. Above all, they illustrate clearly the 'whole family' approach adopted by IWW and its impact upon all participants.

The case studies each contain a profile of the prisoners and his family, the main areas of support needed, and the family's journey' through IWW, including the services delivered, obstacles encountered, and outcomes achieved, together with brief concluding comments.

The case of '*Family A*' exemplifies Invisible Walls Wales' ability to engage in effective multi-agency work to promote the desistance of an offender, while providing support and advocacy to the wider family. In addition, it highlights how unsettling the transition from custodial to community life can be for offenders and their families. Having surmounted a number of obstacles however, the ongoing desistance of '*Offender A*' - despite a number of 'blips' following his release - illustrates the ability of IWW staff to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances by working effectively with partner agencies, thus preventing an escalation of events that could have resulted in his recall to custody.

The case of '*Family B*' represents a significant positive outcome. On joining the intervention '*Prisoner B*' was on a methadone script, could not receive visits from his children and had no employment or accommodation arrangements for release. IWW however assisted him in securing full time employment and funding for suitable accommodation, as well as giving support to promote abstinence from drug use. Most notably however, the intervention gave him the opportunity to prove his motivation to rebuild relationships with his children and family; his mother stated '*I've got my son back*'. He engaged fully with all of the support offered and has continued to work towards demonstrating to Social Services that he can be a responsible parent capable of looking after his two daughters. The outcomes for both daughters and grandparents are equally positive, with the improved emotional wellbeing of the eldest daughter, and regular consistent contact established.

The case of 'Family C' represents a significant positive outcome for the whole family. 'Prisoner C' had been a Class A drug user since his teens and when he joined IWW at the age of 38, he had spent 11 of the past 20 years in prison. He had missed much of his eldest daughter's life, had a fractured relationship with her and risked doing the same to his youngest son. IWW assisted him in tackling his entrenched substance misuse addictions, obtaining accommodation and achieving a number of qualifications and eventually employment. Key to his ongoing desistance and abstinence from drugs however, was the opportunity to prove his motivation to rebuild relationships with his children and family; his daughter stated *'It was like a new beginning for me and my dad. The way our relationship grew was amazing.'* The outcomes for his daughter are equally positive. With the opportunity to complete accredited volunteer training and gain valuable experience as a volunteer with Women's Aid and Parc Supporting Families (PSF) in HMP Parc, she is making good progress in pursuing her goal of a career supporting the children and families of prisoners.

### 5.3 Accommodation and employment status

We now move to more quantitative measures of the impact of IWW, beginning with changes in accommodation and employment status.

A comparison of pre- and post IWW accommodation status (see Table 5.1) reveals that only 1% of (ex-)prisoner participants were classified as No Fixed Abode on exiting IWW, compared with 17% prior to going to prison. There was also a reduction in the numbers of adult participants in temporary accommodation. Overall, 80% were in 'permanent' housing accommodation on exit.

**Table 5.1 Comparison of pre-prison and post IWW accommodation status**

|                            | Permanent* (%) |      | Temporary** (%) |      | NFA (%) |      | In custody (%) | Unknown (%) |
|----------------------------|----------------|------|-----------------|------|---------|------|----------------|-------------|
|                            | Pre            | Post | Pre             | Post | Pre     | Post | Post           | Post        |
| <b>Prisoner</b>            | 60             | 67   | 23              | 19   | 17      | 1    | 10             | 2           |
| <b>Adult family member</b> | 87             | 91   | 11              | 4    | 2       | 1    | -              | 3           |
| <b>All</b>                 | 75             | 80   | 16              | 11   | 9       | 1    | 5              | 3           |

N = 177 participants (83 prisoners and 94 family members) who started IWW.

\*Permanent independent or private/LA rented accommodation.

\*\*Supported housing, transient short-term accommodation (including staying with parents, living on a traveller site or Bail Hostel. One individual was in a deportation centre following release.

Table 5.2 shows the employment status of individuals prior to entering prison and after completion of IWW. It reveals that the unemployment rate more than halved: of the 131 adults (offenders or family members) who were unemployed in the period prior to entering prison, only 64 remained so on exiting the project. Among the offender participants, 63% exited IWW in employment or training, compared to just 20% being employed before entering prison. Indeed, 12% of all adult participants exited IWW with an education or training place, suggesting that they will have an opportunity to apply for better jobs.

**Table 5.2 Comparison of pre-prison and post IWW employment status**

|                      | Employed (%) |           | Training (%) |           | Unemployed (%) |           | In custody (%) | Retired %  | Unknown (%) |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------------|
|                      | Pre          | Post      | Pre          | Post      | Pre            | Post      | Post           | Pre & Post | Post        |
| <b>Prisoner</b>      | 20           | 53        | -            | 10        | 80             | 25        | 10             | -          | 2           |
| <b>Family member</b> | 25           | 34        | 3            | 14        | 69             | 46        | -              | 3          | 3           |
| <b>All</b>           | <b>23</b>    | <b>43</b> | <b>2</b>     | <b>12</b> | <b>74</b>      | <b>36</b> | <b>5</b>       | <b>3</b>   | <b>3</b>    |

1. N = 177 participants (83 prisoners and 94 family members) who started IWW.
2. Percentages do not always total 100 due to rounding.

## 5.4 Substance misuse

As Table 5.3 shows, substance misuse was a huge issue for the IWW families, with 89% of prisoner participants assessed<sup>36</sup> as actively misusing drugs and/or alcohol on entering prison. On completing the intervention however, this fell significantly, with just 20% still using substances on exit. The equivalent figures for family members were 15% and 5%. Indeed, 71% of all participants were assessed as non-users on exiting the project, and a further 14% were assessed as actively addressing their substance misuse.

<sup>36</sup> Assessments were undertaken by the FIM (using the IWW outcome measures scaling tool) with input from the IWW Substance Misuse Specialist. See Chapter 2 for more detail.

**Table 5.3 Comparison of pre- and post IWW substance use**

| Substance misuse status         | Use prior to offender entering prison |            | Use post IWW |            | Total All participants |          |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|----------|
|                                 | Prisoner (%)                          | Family (%) | Prisoner (%) | Family (%) | Pre (%)                | Post (%) |
| Active use                      | 89                                    | 15         | 20           | 5          | 50                     | 12       |
| Taking steps to address problem | 5                                     | 6          | 22           | 7          | 6                      | 14       |
| No substance misuse             | 6                                     | 79         | 55           | 84         | 45                     | 71       |
| Unknown                         | -                                     | -          | 3            | 3          | -                      | 3        |
| Totals                          | 100                                   | 100        | 100          | 100        | 100                    | 100      |

N = 177 participants (83 prisoners and 94 family members) who started IWW.

## **5.5 Attitudes to crime: changes in CRIME-PICS scores**

A further set of 'before and after' figures was obtained from scores on the CRIME-PICS II instrument, which measures changes in participants' attitudes to crime and levels of perceived life problems. The self-report CRIME-PICS II instrument has five sub-scales in total, as shown in Table 12. The instrument was administered at three stages:

- Stage one: On joining IWW.
- Stage two: On release from prison.
- Stage three: On exit, after completing the community phase of IWW.

82 prisoner participants completed a first CRIME-PICS at stage one, 64 completed a second CRIME-PICS at stage two and 59 completed one on exit from IWW. 55 of the 82 completed a questionnaire at all three stages.

As Table 5.4 highlights, the results suggest that substantial levels of positive change in attitudes took place in prison. There were statistically significant improvements in prisoners' average scores on three of the four attitudes subscales (measuring general attitudes to crime, evaluation of crime as worthwhile and anticipation of re-offending) between the times of joining IWW and leaving prison. Average scores did not improve significantly after release, but were sustained at similar levels, meaning that there was statistically significant change on the above scales over the whole period between joining and exiting the project.

**Table 5.4 Changes in average CRIME-PICS scores for IWW prisoner participants<sup>37</sup>**

| Scale                                    | 1 <sup>st</sup> score<br>(on<br>joining<br>IWW) | 2 <sup>nd</sup> score<br>(on<br>release) | 3 <sup>rd</sup> score<br>(on<br>exiting<br>IWW) | Significance of change |               |               |
|--|---|--|---|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|  |   |  |   | CP1 to<br>CP2          | CP2 to<br>CP3 | CP1 to<br>CP3 |
| General attitudes<br>to crime (G)        | 32.5  | 28.5                                     | 27.7  | *                      | n/s           | **            |
| Anticipation of re-<br>offending (A)     | 10.3  | 8.9                                      | 8.9   | *                      | n/s           | *             |
| Victim hurt denial<br>(V)                | 4.7   | 4.2                                      | 4.2   | n/s                    | n/s           | n/s           |
| Evaluation of crime<br>as worthwhile (E) | 8.8   | 7.7                                      | 7.4   | *                      | n/s           | **            |
| Perception of life<br>problems (P)       | 28.1  | 23.1                                     | 21.9  | **                     | *             | **            |

55 prisoners completed a Crime-Pics at all three stages.

\* = significant at the 5% level ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\* = significant at the 1% level ( $p < 0.01$ ) n/s = not significant.

It is also worthy of note that the most significant change during the prison phase of the project was in levels of perceived life problems, indicating that IWW appears to have succeeded in helping prisoners with the practical issues many faced as they approached release.

The figures for change post-release have to be treated with caution, owing to the fact that some ex-prisoners who dropped out IWW before completing six months in the community did not fill in a third questionnaire. However, the problem of drop-outs had relatively little impact on average scores for the prison phase of the project, as only eight prisoners left IWW while still in HMP Parc.

In contrast to the positive change achieved amongst the IWW prisoner participants, table 5.5 shows that the average scores for the comparison group remained largely the same throughout their sentence, indicating that offenders were being released with similar levels of perceived life problems and attitudes to crime as displayed earlier in their sentence. Paired sample t-tests confirm that there was no significant difference in the average scores taken 12 – 6 months prior to release compared with those taken as the prisoner approached his release date.

<sup>37</sup> Lower scores indicate more pro-social attitudes.

**Table 5.5 Changes in average CRIME PICS II scores for comparison group participants**

| Scale                                       | 1 <sup>st</sup> score<br>(6 – 12 months<br>prior to release) | 2 <sup>nd</sup> score<br>(approaching<br>release) | Significance of<br>change<br>CP1 to CP2 |
|---|--|---|---|
| General attitudes<br>to crime (G)           | 39.5   | 40.1  | n/s                                     |
| Anticipation of re-<br>offending (A)        | 13.4   | 13.1  | n/s                                     |
| Victim hurt denial<br>(V)                   | 5.5  | 5.4   | n/s                                     |
| Evaluation of<br>crime as<br>worthwhile (E) | 10.3   | 10.3  | n/s                                     |
| Perception of life<br>problems (P)          | 26.6   | 26.7  | n/s                                     |

76 CRIME PICS II questionnaires were completed at stage 1, 40 at stage 2 and of these, 39 were completed at both stages.

## 5.6 Changes in parenting skills and family functioning

### 5.6.1 *Changes in Family Star score*

As described earlier, the Family Star tool was used by IWW Barnardo’s staff to measure change in parenting skills and family functioning, and was used to assess adult participants on joining and exiting the IWW intervention.

As noted in Chapter 2, the overall average score for participants on joining IWW was 44.3 out of a possible 80, and (applied retrospectively) was even lower prior to imprisonment, indicating a generally poor level of family functioning. Table 5.6 shows changes in average family star scores for those completing IWW and for whom complete sets of scores have been achieved.<sup>38</sup> The results show highly significant positive change in the scores for both prisoners and family members.

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<sup>38</sup> As the tool was applied by project staff during their work with participants, we were able to obtain scores for only four of the 18 adult ‘drop-outs’ (the remainder no longer maintaining contact with staff). Thus the improvements outlined apply predominantly to ‘completers’, and it possible that the results for drop-outs were more negative.

**Table 5.6 Changes in average Family Star scores**

| Relationship to children | Family Star 1 (retrospective pre-sentence)<br>Mean score | Family Star 2 (on joining IWW)<br>Mean score | Family Star 3 (on exiting IWW)<br>Mean score | Significance of change |            |            |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------|------------|------------|
|                          |  |  |  | FS1 to FS2             | FS2 to FS3 | FS1 to FS3 |
| <b>'Dad'</b>             | 33.0   | 35.9   | 50.4   | **                     | **         | **         |
| <b>'Mum'/Main Carer</b>  | 48.6   | 53.0   | 57.9   | **                     | **         | **         |
| <b>All Participants</b>  | 40.7   | 44.3   | 54.1   | **                     | **         | **         |

Based on complete sets of family star scores received for 146 participants (74 prisoner and 72 family member participants) who have completed IWW.

\*\* = significant at the 1% level ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### *5.6.2 Changes in Goodman's Strength and Difficulties Score*

Table 5.7 shows changes in total Goodman's Strength and Difficulty questionnaire scores for child participants as rated by 'mothers', 'fathers'<sup>39</sup> and teachers between the family joining and exiting the IWW project. To ascertain whether the changes were statistically significant, paired sample t-tests were conducted: these indicated that highly statistically significant change ( $p < 0.01$ ) was achieved in both parental and teacher SDQ scores. Reductions in total scores indicate positive change across the four subscales (which represent emotional wellbeing, behaviour, hyperactivity/attention levels and peer relationships). As highlighted in Chapter 2, teachers tended to give a lower score (representing less need) than parents when the family joined the project<sup>40</sup>, perhaps reflecting some lack of awareness among teachers of the family's circumstances. However, by the time of the family's exit from IWW, both parents and teachers gave very similar scores, suggesting that teachers were by then more aware of the family's situation.

<sup>39</sup> Some of those referred to here as mothers or fathers were step parents, current partners of a parent, and in a small number of cases grandparents.

<sup>40</sup> Teachers usually completed the SDQ a week or two later than the parents.

**Table 5.7**                      **Changes in average SDQ scores: child participants**

| <b>Mean Scores</b> | <b>On joining</b> | <b>On exit</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Mother             | 12.4              | 9.2**          |
| Father             | 13.0              | 9.5**          |
| Teacher            | 11.1              | 8.3 **         |

\* Denotes significance at the 5% level

\*\* Denotes significance at the 1% level

n/s = not significant.

116 Maternal SDQs were completed on joining and 73 on exit; of these 72 were completed at both stages.

101 Paternal SDQs were completed on joining and 49 on exit; of these 46 were completed at both stages.

79 Teacher SDQs were completed soon after a family joined, and 71 on exit.

As with the Family Star assessments, in the case of mother and father SDQs the questionnaire was administered by IWW staff as part of their work with participants, so second (exit) questionnaires were not completed by participants who dropped out before the planned end to their engagement with the project. It is possible that the children of those who chose to remain in contact with IWW until the end were 'doing better' than the children of those who disengaged. However, drop-outs were relatively small in number, so this should not affect the overall results significantly.

### *5.6.3 Changes in children's educational status and living arrangements*

As noted in section 3, before their father went to prison 41% of the children who later became IWW participants were living with both parents, and 52% in a single parent household (nearly all with their mother), while at the point of joining IWW 94% were now living with their mother. Table 5.8 below shows that at the point of exit from IWW - usually six months after the father's release - the overall situation had reverted to one similar to that before prison: almost half remained in a one-parent household (in nearly all cases continuing to live with their mother) and 38% were living with both parents. One child had been moved into foster care during the intervention. The number of children in the care of another relative (either through an informal agreement or formally as a 'looked after' child) had also risen. The above figures underline the important point that to take part in IWW, it was not necessary for the whole family to have been living together before the father's imprisonment, nor to plan to do so after release. The focus was on improving the relationships between all the family members and the quality of all their lives, rather than trying to persuade them to live together. Indeed, in several cases it was felt strongly by IWW staff that it would be in the best interests of all participants if the father did *not* return to the family home.

**Table 5.8 Changes in child participants' living arrangements**

| <b>Child</b>                                   | <b>Prior to father's imprisonment</b><br>% | <b>On joining IWW</b><br>% | <b>Post IWW</b><br>% |
|--|--|----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Living with both parents</b>                | <b>41</b>                                  | <b>-</b>                   | <b>38</b>            |
| <b>Living with mother (single parent h/h)</b>  | <b>52</b>                                  | <b>94</b>                  | <b>48</b>            |
| <b>Living with other family member/friends</b> | <b>7</b>                                   | <b>6</b>                   | <b>11</b>            |
| <b>In foster care</b>                          | <b>-</b>                                   | <b>-</b>                   | <b>1</b>             |
| <b>Unknown</b>                                 | <b>-</b>                                   | <b>-</b>                   | <b>2</b>             |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>100 (N = 166)*</b>                      | <b>100 (N=172)</b>         | <b>100 (N=172)</b>   |

Base N=172 (all children starting IWW)

\*Six children were born after the father went to prison.

Table 5.9 shows changes in children's status in relation to Social Services.

**Table 5.9 Changes in Child participants' status with Social Services**

| <b>Child</b>                                  | <b>On joining IWW</b><br>% | <b>Post IWW</b><br>% |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Registered 'At risk'</b>                   | <b>16</b>                  | <b>7</b>             |
| <b>Registered 'child in need'</b>             | <b>3</b>                   | <b>2</b>             |
| <b>Registered as 'Looked after'</b>           | <b>1</b>                   | <b>2</b>             |
| <b>Social Services involvement</b>            | <b>19</b>                  | <b>6</b>             |
| <b>Receiving support from other agencies*</b> | <b>21</b>                  | <b>18</b>            |
| <b>No additional support required</b>         | <b>40</b>                  | <b>69</b>            |
| <b>Unknown</b>                                | <b>-</b>                   | <b>2</b>             |

Based on 172 children who started IWW. Percentages may not total 100 as it is possible for children to be assigned multiple categories, e.g. receiving support from Social Services in addition to other agencies. Outcomes are unknown for three children who did not complete IWW.

It can be seen that among the 172 children who started IWW, 28 (16%) were on the 'At Risk' Register at that point in time, five (3%) were registered as a 'Child in Need' and two (1%) as 'Looked After' children (and living with relatives). At the point of exiting the project, only 12 (7%) were still on the 'At Risk' register, and 2% were registered as 'Looked After'. Additionally, the percentage of children not requiring agency support of any kind rose from 40% (n=69) to 69%.

Additionally, an examination of change in children's educational status as assessed by the FIMs using the IWW outcome measurement tool, indicates that on joining the project, 43% (n=60) of the 138 school age participants were experiencing attainment or attendance issues, but that this fell to just 12% (n=16) of these at the point of exit. Four children were suspended or excluded from school at the point of joining IWW, but at the point of exit no child was.

These improvements were also reflected in the nature of children's relationships with their peers. Pre-IWW, 41% of children were assessed as having issues with peer relationships, 18% reported limited social networks, 8% were assessed as isolated, 5% were engaging in inappropriate behaviour and 10% were experiencing bullying (see Table 5.10). On exit, 92% of children were assessed as having appropriate peer relationships and 3% limited social networks. In addition, only two (1%) were assessed as 'isolated' and only one child reported still being bullied.

**Table 5.10 Change in school age participants' educational status pre and post IWW**

| <b>Child</b>  | <b>On joining IWW<br/>%</b> | <b>Post IWW<br/>%</b> |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Temporarily/permanently excluded</b>               | <b>3</b>                    | <b>-</b>              |
| <b>Alternative education curriculum</b>               | <b>3</b>                    | <b>2</b>              |
| <b>In education - issues of attendance/attainment</b> | <b>38</b>                   | <b>9</b>              |
| <b>In education - no issues</b>                       | <b>57</b>                   | <b>86</b>             |
| <b>Passed school age/unknown</b>                      | <b>-</b>                    | <b>2</b>              |
| <b>Totals</b>   | <b>100 (n=138)</b>          | <b>100 (n=138)</b>    |

Base N – 138 school age children at point of joining. At the point of roll off an additional 10 children had reached school age and commenced education (nursery/school), but these are not included in the table. Percentages do not total 100 as children could be assessed as having multiple issues.

Analysis of school attendance records for 58 of the IWW school age children also indicates that their average attendance rates rose from 86% on joining IWW to 93% at the point of exit.

Finally, interviews with teachers at the point of roll off indicate that the benefits for child participants of IWW were clearly visible;

*“Since dad has come out there has been a real change in him, his eyes are brighter, he is cleaner, more effort seems to be made at home, his confidence has increased, now he enjoys school.”*  
[Schoolteacher]

*“I have seen a marked difference in him and mum is happier too. They now do a lot as a family, they both come to school to support X together, everything just seems more positive. I think a big part of change has been down to whatever intervention he has been receiving from yourselves.”*  
[Schoolteacher]

*“She has been brilliant, behaviour is brilliant and attendance is now fantastic, there has been a huge change in her behaviour this year compared to last year. Now she has 97% attendance, the rate last year was around 58%”.*  
[Schoolteacher]

*“I have seen a massive improvement, he is much more settled, much happier, he is getting a proper night’s sleep and it shows. He is now like a normal little boy; before he was quite unkempt. He had a bit of a smell about him, bless him. Now he is a lot cleaner, has new clothes all the time, regular haircuts and is sleeping properly. He is a totally different little boy.”*  
[Schoolteacher]

## **5.7 Economic evaluation**

As noted earlier, until full information is available about participants’ predicted and actual rates of re-offending (and those of the comparison group) it is not possible to produce an accurate evaluation of cost-effectiveness. This will be provided in a supplementary report in late 2018. It is, however, worth noting that a test analysis of known inputs, outputs and outcomes for a sample of IWW families, undertaken by A. Rix and R. Gaunt, external consultants) has suggested that the costs, which work out at around £29,000 per family, will be outweighed by the benefits (mainly, those related to improvements in education and employment, reduced substance misuse, and reduced social services input), even if savings through reductions in re-offending emerge as zero.

## **5.8 'Ripples in the pond': influence of IWW and replication of the model**

A prominent feature of IWW has been its influence beyond the boundaries of the project. This includes its influence on other agencies in South Wales (notably schools, as shown by the development of the Invisible Walls Accord, described earlier) but perhaps more importantly in the long run, on other prisons and on high level policy-makers in the UK and overseas. The project has received over 60 visits from governors or senior staff from other prisons, as well as many from politicians and senior civil servants. These have included several formal delegations from other countries. IWW's senior manager has also travelled widely to meet similar stakeholders, attend conferences and give invited keynote speeches about the project. These activities have not only helped to raise awareness of the importance of family relationships to prisoner rehabilitation, but in a growing number of cases have led to concrete initiatives to replicate or adapt the IWW model (or elements of it) elsewhere. In this section, we provide an overview, and describe a number of examples, of what we refer as to the 'ripples in the pond' created by the project.

IWW set out with a number of 'replication targets', aimed principally at persuading other prisons in both the private and public estates to adopt elements of its approach. In the event, all replication milestones for year four (2016) had already been achieved by the end of year one (2013) and were comfortably exceeded by year three (2015).

So far, the parts of the IWW model most commonly replicated or adapted have been those involving family-focused support within prison regimes. These were first taken up mainly by other G4S prisons, particularly HMPs Oakwood and Altcourse, but several public sector prisons, including HMPs Maghaberry, Erlestoke, Birmingham, Low Moss, Winchester, Wandsworth, Hull, Guys Marsh, Leicester, Berwyn, and Eastwood Park, have since followed suit to some extent. Erlestoke, for example, has introduced a Family Intervention Unit and intervention led visits and has developed formal partnerships with external child-focused agencies, while Leicester and Norwich have been tasked by HMPPS to run six-month pilots of interventions led visits.

Elsewhere in Europe, prisons in the Irish Republic (Limerick, Midlands, St Patricks) and the Netherlands (Leeuwarden and Het Poortje Young Offenders prison) have implemented elements

of the IWW model within their institutions<sup>41</sup>. Following a visit by its President and senior officials, the Maltese government plans to include a comprehensive package of interventions based on the IWW family support model in its specifications for a new prison, while serious interest in the model has also been expressed by key decision-makers in Finland and Sweden. Further afield, HM Port Philip in Melbourne and Singapore Corrections are both planning to introduce core elements of IWW, and there has been strong interest from prisons in Washington DC and Uganda (for more details, see Appendix 3).

In discussing replication of the model elsewhere, IWW managers and staff highlighted the importance of implementing it alongside a broader set of cultural and environmental changes in the establishment, rather than simply 'parachuting it in'. A G4S manager stated:

*"However you look at the model in any prison, you need a team of people focused on working with families and family interventions. You couldn't just parachute IWW into any prison, because the culture isn't there. Look at the physical experience of visits. What are toilet facilities like? What colour are the walls? Every aspect you have got to look at. Also the change of staff... you have to have the right people working there. So it's the design, the right staff and getting their engagement. The third bit is the interventions and because no one has any money that is where the third pillar comes in, which is about community partnership engagement."*

Replies to our email survey (in June, 2017) from stakeholders in Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand and Malta confirmed that there was still strong enthusiasm for developing family support initiatives in prisons as a result of links with Parc, and that some changes had already been implemented or firmly planned, but also identified significant barriers that had slowed progress in some cases. These included financial constraints, managers unable to 'think outside the box', resistant staff cultures, and security concerns.

When asked (assuming that resources are limited) which of the core elements of the IWW model they thought should receive highest priority, the majority of respondents named the establishment of a family wing. One argued that:

*"An establishment is much more likely to shift its culture if a family-focused wing is in place. It creates its own therapeutic reverberation through a prison, and gives fathers an*

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<sup>41</sup> Two FIUs are planned to open in the Netherlands in January 2018.

*opportunity to learn new skills and how to consider their future actions and behaviours on their own family. The other interventions are important in their own way, but do not create the 'internal shift' in a culture of a prison establishment."*

As well as influencing thinking, attitudes and practice in custodial institutions, IWW has begun to have an impact on other agencies and professionals working in the community. At a local level in Wales, this is particularly evident in the high level of school engagement with the project and take-up of the Invisible Walls Accord. The mutually beneficial working relationships developed with staff in Social Services, Probation, local authorities and third sector agencies (see Chapter 3) also highlight how the children and families work within Parc has helped to 'shine a light' upon the needs of prisoner's families across a wide range of agencies.

IWW has also begun to attract serious attention from a wider range of audiences at a national – and to some extent, international – level. The approach taken to family support in HMP Parc was described in a report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016: 57) as 'radical and innovative and probably the best we have seen in any prison'. It helped the prison achieve the 'Investors in Families' accredited charter mark – the only prison in the European Union to have received the award. IWW has featured in a variety of reports and documentaries in national newspapers and on television and radio. It has received numerous positive mentions in the UK Parliament. It has attracted visits from highly influential figures, including the UK Minister for Justice and three members of the royal family. The IWW manager, in turn, has given invited keynote speeches at major conferences and events in the UK, Sweden, the USA, Australia and New Zealand, and has met with government ministers and/or heads of prison services from among others, Sweden, the Netherlands, Malta, Uganda, Singapore, and New Zealand. More details of all the above can be found in Appendix 4, which reproduces a record of externally-facing events and activities (up to September, 2016) compiled by the IWW manager as well as links to a selection of media reports about the project.

What will be the concrete long term impact of all this activity is of course unknown, but there are signs that, in addition to inspiring cultural and practice change in individual prisons, IWW is beginning to influence government thinking and policy. In Wales, for example, IWW and Barnardo's Cymru are now part of a Welsh Assembly Cross Party Group, chaired by AM Christine Chapman, established to examine the issues affecting children with a parent in prison. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons' *Expectations* (July, 2017) contains a whole new section on children and families, in which Parc's Family Interventions Unit is cited as a best practice

exemplar. Importantly, too, the IWW model featured prominently in the report of the UK Parliamentary Review into family life in prison, led by Lord Farmer.<sup>42</sup> The report noted:

*“HMP Parc in South Wales has a cutting-edge family engagement approach that is being copied in many prisons in this country and overseas. If the local family offer were implemented across the whole prison estate, we would lead the world in the way family ties are recognised as vital for the rehabilitation of prisoners.”* (Farmer, 2017: 38)

Among early responses to this growing political interest in the issue, new measures to make prison Governors accountable for family support, and to move the visiting agenda away from the security department, have been outlined in the Prison and Courts Bill, 2017.

As the IWW manager summed it up in a research interview:

*“There is a huge appetite for this work and it is reaping big unexpected outcomes. The challenge is changing culture and the solution to that is getting the right people. More and more now children and family work is on the agenda and moving quickly.”*

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<sup>42</sup> The IWW manager was an invited member of the review team.

## **6.0 Conclusions and recommendations**

### **6.1 Process evaluation**

Based on the data presented in the report, principally in Chapter 4, the following conclusions can be drawn in relation to the four main aims of the process evaluation as outlined in section 1.2.

***To assess the quality of contact between IWW prisoners and their families during the custodial phase of the project:***

Prisoners located in the Family Intervention Unit and participating in the IWW project undoubtedly received an enhanced quality and greater frequency of contact with their families than those located elsewhere in the prison. Residence in the FIU enabled prisoners to attend a full range of parenting courses and family-focused interventions, in many cases together with family members. They were also able to benefit from the relaxed environment of the family interventions lounge to play with their children in a more natural environment than that of the main visits hall. The location of the IWW office on the T4 wing, the close relationships developed by the IWW team (particularly the FIMs) with IWW participants in prison and the community, and the use of tools such as the Family Diaries facilitated communication between prisoners and their families during custody, and also provided reassurance to each that the other was receiving the emotional and practical support they needed.

***To explore the views and perspectives of IWW participants regarding their experiences of the IWW project:***

Participants interviewed by the research team were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences of the IWW project, both in prison and in the community. In addition to the value placed upon the various courses and practical assistance offered by the project, participants highlighted the importance of feeling emotionally supported and 'having someone there to talk to'. The continuity and trust developed with prisoners and their families during the sentence helped to improve two-way communication between prisoners and their families, which in turn facilitated engagement of all participants with the IWW service post release.

Some participants reported disappointment that the level of contact and support they received post release had been much lower than during the custodial phase of the project. While this may have been partly a consequence of limits in staff capacity and the need to focus resource on those with the greatest problems, IWW managers argued that a lessening of contact was to be expected as the project aimed to empower participants to function more independently as they progressed through the service.

***To assess the efficacy of the individual components comprising the IWW delivery model in practice:***

Individually, all three 'hubs' of the project were working effectively. Where work with prisoners was concerned (the 'prison hub'), the location of IWW participants on the family wing and the provision of a base on the same wing for the IWW team, encouraged frequent communication and contact between the two. Weekly team meetings and practice exchange slots further facilitated effective sharing of information and good practice between staff members.

Effective coordination of the planning and delivery of services offered to individual offenders and their families (the 'transitional hub'), particularly while the father was still in prison, was achieved largely through the casework role of the Family Integration Mentors. This entailed working with offenders and family participants (including children) both separately and together, as well as facilitating communication between them. The mix of skills and previous professional experience held by the four FIMs assisted them as a group in addressing the wide range of practical, emotional and motivational needs of participants. Another key aspect of effective transitional work was the frequent delivery of 'whole family' interventions to prisoners, partners and children together, mainly in the conducive environment of the Family Interventions Lounge.

Work with family participants (the 'community hub') was carried out both by the FIMs and by agencies sub-contracted to provide specific services. All three elements of Barnardo's children-focused work - the programme of parenting support, family group conferencing and one to one work with under 8s - were highly valued by participants. The work of the YISP and Gwalia ETEV worker, too, were enthusiastically praised by participants. Moreover, both latter roles evolved successfully during the course of the project in response to obstacles or newly identified needs.

***To examine the extent to which the three 'hubs' of the service collaborate to deliver a coherent, multi-agency service which meets the needs of prisoners and their families:***

From the viewpoint of participants we interviewed, IWW was almost universally experienced as providing a relevant, reliable and coherent service, albeit with reservations from some that the level of contact had reduced in scale after the father left prison. It was also clear that critical to this sense of cohesion was the role of the IWW Family Integration Mentor (FIM), which provided overarching case-management and one to one service for all participants as they progressed through the various hubs of IWW. On the other hand, from the point of view of those delivering the service, the coherence of the multi-agency work was not always so apparent.

Working relationships and day-to-day collaboration between front-line staff across IWW were generally very good. However, the project involved partnership working across a variety of private, public and third sector agencies, which - not unexpectedly - proved challenging on occasion due to organisational issues around communication systems, fragmented management responsibilities, and differences in culture and working practice. Generally speaking, such problems were identified and responded to in a flexible and collaborative manner, in most cases successfully. For example, inter-agency communication was greatly helped by the introduction of weekly communication of client updates across all IWW partners. However, other issues continued to cause intermittent concern. One of the most contentious concerned the differing risk thresholds used by G4S and Barnardo's in decisions whether to make child safeguarding referrals to Social Services. To mitigate this, a Social Services referral process flow-chart was jointly developed by the IWW managers from G4S, Barnardo's and BCBC, which aimed to ensure that such decisions were made collaboratively, rather than by any one partner. While this undoubtedly ameliorated the situation, agencies still tended to revert to their own policies in the event of any disagreement.

Other organisational issues identified included a need for more clarity and consistency regarding recruitment, referral and selection procedures, as well as unnecessary duplication in data recording and record-keeping. Both of these were said to have put pressure on staff time, especially for the FIMs. More generally, capacity was an issue for all partners across the IWW project during years three and four, due both to the geographical spread of families across South Wales and to the need to receive all year four referrals within the first quarter of the year (the latter a consequence of funding conditions).

Interviewees identified some possible lessons for future replication of such a project. For example, it was widely agreed that it would be more effective to bring all staff under the umbrella supervision of one project manager, while some wanted to go one step further by adopting a co-located 'MASH' approach. Suggestions were also made to streamline and co-ordinate the IWW paperwork to reduce duplication across partners.

Finally, one of the key (and largely unexpected) successes of the project, spanning both prison and community hubs, was the engagement of schools. This was exemplified by the mutually supportive working relationships achieved with schools attended by the IWW child participants (including direct links with individual teachers), the success of parent/teacher school showcase events held in the prison, and the popularity of the Invisible Walls Accord, now a Big Lottery funded project in its own right. One of the main aims of the latter, led by Barnardo's Cymru, is to increase awareness in schools across South Wales of the impact of parental imprisonment and to train teachers to identify and work with affected children and their families. Wider links to expand such work were also made with Church of England schools in England facilitated by the Bishop of Prisons, and with a school in Uganda.

## **6.2 Impact and outcomes**

The evaluation set out to assess the effectiveness of IWW in four main respects: its impact on the quality of life and personal relationships of prisoners and their families; its impact on reoffending; its impact on factors associated with intergenerational offending; and its potential for sustainability and for replication elsewhere. The project's achievements against these key outcomes is summarised below.

### ***To evaluate the extent to which Invisible Walls improves the quality of life and personal relationships of prisoners and their families:***

The majority of participants reported that their family had become closer, their children seemed happier and they had become better parents as a result of participating in the project. Pictorial data gathered from the children also support these perceptions; their drawings highlight how positively they viewed the IWW project, which gave them a sense of 'togetherness' during the custodial sentence and helped them emotionally.

A comparison of pre- and post IWW scores on the Family Star tool for both prisoners and their partners/adult family member(s) – providing a measure change in parenting skills and family functioning - is similarly encouraging, with statistically significant positive change achieved in scores across all participants following completion of IWW.

Marked improvements were also seen in the accommodation and employment status of prisoners' adult family members, with a rise in the numbers living in permanent accommodation, and increases in employment and training. Of the thirteen individuals actively misusing substances when starting the project, only five reported still using on completion.

***To examine the impact on re-offending of prisoner participants:***

While it is too early to determine the reconviction rates of IWW participants and the comparison group, a number of interim outcome measures known to be related to the risk of reoffending have been analysed, with some promising results. Considerable improvements were found in the accommodation and employment/education status of prisoner participants following their completion of IWW and there was a substantial reduction in the number of substance misusing prisoner participants following IWW. Analysis of measures of their attitudes to crime shows statistically significant levels of improvement and suggests that changes occurring during the prison sentence were sustained during the post release period.

***To evaluate the impact upon factors likely to be associated with intergenerational offending:***

Statistically significant positive change was achieved on parental and teacher SDQ scores, indicating an improvement in children's emotional well-being, attention levels, behaviour and peer relationships at home and in school. Figures recorded at the point of exit indicate a fall in the number of children receiving support from Social Services and a rise in the number not requiring any agency support at all. Improvements were found in children's levels of school attendance and attainment, the proportion assessed with such problems falling from 43% to 12%. Average recorded attendance rates among a sample of IWW children also rose from 86% to 93%.

***To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the project***

It is not possible to undertake an accurate analysis of cost-effectiveness until re-offending data are available. A supplementary report will be produced at this time. However, some preliminary work has been done (by Andrew Rix and Richard Gaunt, external consultants) which indicates

that, even if it emerges that there was zero reduction in re-offending by the prisoner participants, the project would still be shown to be cost-effective.

***To explore issues of sustainability and the potential for replication of the project.***

All replication milestones for the project were exceeded, with partnerships established, and elements of the project adopted, in several private and public sector prisons across the UK, Europe and beyond. In addition to direct replicability of the project, the sustainability of the family support model that underpins it is evident in the extensive influence it has already had on awareness, thinking and attitudes in relevant political and policy circles, as well as among senior managers in prisons, probation and a wide range of agencies and professionals in other fields of service provision. In Wales, the mutually beneficial working relationships that IWW has developed with many devolved agencies, including its high level of engagement with schools, suggests that its influence on practice will last. At an England and Wales level, the project strongly influenced the Farmer Review on strengthening prisoners' family ties (Farmer, 2017), which is likely to result in reforms in prisons policy.

## **6.3 Implications and recommendations**

It is evident from the above summary of findings that IWW has achieved considerable success both in the effectiveness of its service delivery and in the outcomes it has produced for prisoners and their family members. We conclude this report by highlighting particular findings and considering their possible implications for the future development of family focused resettlement support. In some cases, these are expressed in the form of concrete recommendations.

1. IWW clearly engendered positive change in the lives of many individual participants. For example, the significant positive changes in prisoners' criminogenic attitudes and self-reported problems,<sup>43</sup> in contrast to the absence of change in the comparison group, indicate that the project had an impact on factors associated with reduced re-offending. There was also evidence of improvements in accommodation and employment status and reductions in levels of reported substance misuse among both prisoner and adult family member participants. Perhaps more importantly, however, the project was successful in facilitating significant positive change in participants' parenting skills and family functioning, which is likely to have improved the quality

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<sup>43</sup> As measured by the CRIME-PICS II sub scales. Further administration of the questionnaire six months after release indicated that such change was maintained in the community.

of family life for all family members, including the children. Moreover, qualitative feedback from family member participants highlighted how much they valued the emotional support offered by the project, with many reporting that they felt their family relationships had changed for the better following the IWW intervention. In short, in addition to the help given to individuals, the emphasis placed by IWW staff on working with the family as a whole brought about significant improvements in the quality of family life and in personal relationships between its participants. The main implications of these findings are that:

**Agencies working with prisoners should give greater recognition to the importance of addressing the social, practical and emotional needs of all family members, rather than working with the prisoner in isolation. Moreover, consideration of the family's needs should not be viewed merely as a mechanism to aid successful resettlement of the prisoner, but also as a means of facilitating positive outcomes for the whole family, including the children.**

2. Previous research on resettlement has demonstrated the importance of establishing trusting relationships with offenders while they are still in custody and, wherever possible, of the same person continuing to work with them after release (Clancy et al, 2006, Maguire et al 2010). The success of the IWW project in sustaining productive 'through the gate' contact with whole families has shown that similar principles apply to prisoners' partners and children: the work of the FIMs, both before and after the father's release, played a major part in bridging the gap between prison and community. Of course, it may not be financially viable to replicate the whole IWW 'model' in other prisons, and full-time family mentors are an expensive resource. Therefore:

**A key challenge for those planning to implement schemes with similar aims to is to find alternative ways of maintaining trusting relationships 'through the gate' with both prisoners and their families.**

3. As outlined earlier, a key aim of IWW was to reduce the risk of intergenerational offending. Although it is impossible, without following the outcomes of its child participants into adulthood, to know whether the project will achieve this, we are able to assess the impact of the project upon the children in terms of a range of interim outcome measures linked to known risk factors for offending behaviour. The achievement of IWW in facilitating positive change in its child participants' wellbeing at home and in school, in their living arrangements, educational status, peer relationships and engagement with Social Services provides a reasonable basis for optimism

that IWW has helped to reduce the likelihood of intergenerational offending. Moreover, the qualitative feedback gathered from the children themselves, combined with teacher and parental observations of their wellbeing, indicates that the project improved the quality of life, family relationships and ultimately the happiness of its child participants. Key to this aspect of the project's success has undoubtedly been a combination of the close partnership between schools, IWW staff and the prison, a multi-agency approach to addressing the child's (and wider family's) needs, and access to a range of prison and community-based interventions designed to address the specific needs of children with a parent in prison. The following recommendations arise from these findings:

**More prisons should make efforts (for example through initiatives such as the School Showcase and Community Awareness events in HMP Parc) to raise awareness of the needs of children with a parent in prison and to develop partnerships with local schools.**

**All schools need to be aware of pupils with a parent in prison and measures put in place to address their needs where appropriate. Where possible, a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) should be established in each school whom children can approach to discuss any issues and problems as they arise.**

**Where possible, mechanisms should be put in place to facilitate information exchange between prison staff, schools and other community agencies working with prisoners' families. The success of the IWW Accord and subsequent Big Lottery funding of this service as a standalone project in its own right is testament to the effectiveness of this approach. More prisons should look to replicate this model and educate community partners in their locality (including teachers and other staff in schools) about the needs of this group of vulnerable children, young people and families.**

4. Finally, a key ambition of the IWW project has been to ensure the sustainability and replicability of the model and the family-focused approach taken in HMP Parc. While IWW itself may not continue in its original form – which was only made possible by generous funding from the Big lottery - there are hopeful signs that at least some of this ambition will be achieved through the many 'ripples in the pond' that the project has created. Aspects of the IWW model have already been adopted by several other prisons in the UK, mainland Europe and further

afield. The project has also begun to influence prison policy in the UK, extending awareness of the needs of prisoners' families and promoting the 'whole-family' approach. Importantly, too, HMP Parc has begun to raise awareness, influence attitudes and build partnerships with non criminal justice agencies across South Wales, in fields such as in health, education and social services, leading to exchanges of information and joint provision of services for children and families.

To conclude, all the evidence we have collected over a period of more than four years indicates that IWW has been an exceptionally successful project, which has not only had a significant positive impact on the lives of the prisoners and families who participated, but which has the potential to have a major effect nationally (and even internationally) on thinking, policy and practice in regard to the children and families of prisoners.

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## **Appendix 1.**

### **The Real Price of Spice: My Journey of Detox Written by a prisoner at HMP Parc, Bridgend, June 2016**

I made a decision to stop smoking Spice and immediately had overwhelming feelings of depression and anxiety. I felt extremely lonely and I needed to be around people for personal contact and support.

I began sweating from every pore in my body, I was soaking wet with sweat and it came through my clothes.

I started to have diarrhoea which I had no control over. It would suddenly gush out of me. I had pains in my stomach and cramps. I started vomiting uncontrollably – it was frothy and not like anything I ever had before. I did not eat anything for 8 days. I could only sip water but this would immediately come back up.

My body ached all over. My muscles and joints were painful and ached continually.

I had my TV on but cannot remember anything I watched. I couldn't focus or concentrate on anything. I tried writing my mother a letter but I was shaking so much that I couldn't put the pen to paper.

These symptoms continued 24 hour a day and did not ease. It lasted about 3 weeks.

I can remember that the Staff helped me by giving me a continuous change of clothing and bedding. It was helpful that they praised me for giving up Spice and encouraged me to keep going through the detox. My family also told me that they were proud and my little brother cried on the phone to me and that helped me to carry on with my detox.

I didn't realise until then how much I was hurting my family by using Spice in jail.

It was the most awful thing that I had to go through but I am out the other end now.

## Appendix 2

### 10 profiles of families and their journey through IWW Compiled by a Family Intervention Mentor

#### Family 1

**Dad** – Aged 27 years (3<sup>rd</sup> prison sentence)

**Mum** – Aged 29 years (previous convictions)

**Child 1** female – 8 years    **Child 2** male – 6 years

Time on project (including community support) – 12 months

#### Presenting needs:

- Substance Misuse – dad and mum (both long term users of heroin - inject)
- Family relationships – Total breakdown between dad and his extended family
- Debt and finances – mum struggling to cope with on-going debt and the bedroom tax implementation
- Accommodation – locality issues in relation to recurring incidents at the family home involving mum's associates and dad's previous offences
- Accommodation – dad requires accommodation upon release
- Employment/Training – Both dad and mum requiring assistance to source opportunities
- Children experiencing emotional impact of dad's imprisonment
- Community issues – dad carried out offences against extended family members and friends of the children etc
- No communication between family and the school

#### Outcomes at time of roll-off:

- Family attended M-PACT (Family drug programme within the prison)
- Dad, his mother and two children completed family diaries – improving communication and promoting openness and honesty
- Both dad and mum were referred to Kaleidoscope and mum completed Peer Mentor programme
- Dad attended Kaleidoscope after issues arose in the community
- Mum and 2 children returned to reside with maternal grandmother affording a safe and secure environment
- Dad attended ROTL at Grew Enterprise, securing employment and accommodation with the organisation upon release
- Children engaged with dad at his ROTL secondment and were able to celebrate his success with the staff on site
- Both children received support via YISP and Barnardo's Advocacy Intervention.
- Family attended a Family Meeting and review where the children were afforded the opportunity to share their worries and wishes with their parents
- IWW linked in with the children's school and built a transparent and professional working relationship. The school, having gained a better understanding of the impact upon the children, developed a support package to ensure continuity of care when the family rolled off IWW IWW referred both children to Social Services as a result of potential harm and threats by individuals in their community associated with their

mother's offending behaviour. This also led to a referral to the South Wales Fire Brigade Community Safety Team who fitted fire-resistant apparatus to the home as there had been threats made by individuals in the community to petrol bomb the house. Gran's support and care ensured the safety of both children at this time.

- Both children were referred to CSOF upon roll-off for a continuation of support.

## **Family 2**

**Dad** – Aged 20 years (1<sup>st</sup> prison sentence)

**Mum** – Aged 22 years (Child Protection Register as a minor and history as a Domestic Violence victim during and after pregnancy)

**Child** (male) – 1 year. Dad fathered another child at age of 17.

Time on project (including community support) – 12 months

### **Presenting needs:**

- Accommodation issues with tenancy (mum). Experiencing repercussions from partner's victim and forced to reside with child at partner's parents' home.
- ETEV – Dad to access employment/training opportunities for release
- Child & Families – Lack of parenting skills both parents
- Substance Misuse – dad. Use of steroids and subsequent violence
- Mental Health – mum. Suffering anxiety and depression
- Family relationships were poor between mum and her extended family

### **Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Mum secured a new property in a safer area within the locality
- Dad gained an Electrical qualification to support future employment
- Mum commenced Dental Nurse Training and IWW helped her secure funding to cover course fees
- Mum was confident in accessing support for stress and anxiety with her GP and was referred to Bridgend Youth Service for counselling
- Mum was referred to and accessed support services of Women's Aid and gained an understanding of the importance of safeguarding her child
- Mum maintains her finances well and budgets for purchases
- Both parents engaged in Barnardo's parenting
- Mum's relationship with her family strengthened and they offered support at appropriate times
- Both parents attended Language and Play within the prison, resulting in the child feeling at ease with both parents and experiencing singing and playing together
- Mum accessed 1:1 support from IWW re The Freedom Programme and was able to share her experiences and draw support from another mum on the project in similar circumstances
- Mum ended her relationship with dad in order to protect her child

## **Family 3**

**Dad** – Aged 27 years (1<sup>st</sup> prison sentence)

**Mum 21 years**

**Child 1** Aged 2 years – spends majority of his time at paternal grandparents

Time on project – 18 months

### **Presenting needs**

- Poor parenting skills by both parents, lack of joined-up strategies
- Lack of family bonding between mum, dad and baby
- Lack of family relationships between mum and her extended family
- Substance misuse by both parents, linked to offending behaviour
- Loss of employment – dad

### **Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Mum experienced the death of her sister but worked hard to negotiate time off work and maintain her position and wages
- IWW secured a fund for a quality certificate to enable mum to continue practicing within a dental surgery
- Dad secured low level risk employment whilst in the prison and accessed employment at a number of organisations upon release
- Dad commenced the Duke of Edinburgh Awards with his teenage brother to maintain a family bond and increase confidence
- Mum was referred to Gwalia who assisted her in clearing a vast amount of debt
- After an IWW referral to Social Services, an Family Meeting was co-ordinated with Barnardo's, affording better family communication, an increase in family support for both parents and a clear plan for the care of their child.
- Dad completed a variety of substance misuse interventions
- Mum received support from Substance Misuse Mentor in the form of auricular acupuncture, reducing anxiety and recognising triggers to misuse.
- Community referral to Substance Misuse support for mum
- Dad saved £100 whilst in custody via the Credit Union
- Both parents successfully completed Agored Cymru Accreditation and gained confidence in dealing with their relationship issues in front of their child
- Dad did not rekindle relationships with old associates and complied with all Probation requirements.
- Both parents attended Language and Play within the prison, resulting in the child feeling at ease with both parents and experiencing singing and playing together

### **Family 4**

**Dad** – Aged 24 years (3<sup>rd</sup> prison sentence)

**Mum** – 25 years (2 other children with previous partner who is also in custody for offences of violence)

**Child 1** - Male 7 years

**Child 2** – Female 5 years

**Child 3** – Male 5 years (Dad's from previous relationship)

**Child 4** - Female. Born whilst dad was in custody

**Time on project** – 12months

### **Presenting needs:**

- Children experiencing emotional impact of dad's imprisonment
- Substance Misuse – long history of dad's misuse of a drugs including M-Cat and Cannabis
- The bond between father and his new baby needs to be built and maintained
- Loss of employment and wages (dad)

- Breakdown of relationships between dad and his young son (from a previous relationship)
- Emotional issues for mum in coping with a new baby and 3 other children
- ETEV assistance for mum to increase confidence and future employability

**Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Mum enrolled on an Open University Course
- Dad secured a recognised qualification in Painting and Decorating
- Dad was referred to Gwalia and he underwent the funded PTS and CSCS Training
- Dad secured employment upon release and refrained from returning to a lifestyle of selling illegal drugs
- Gwalia also accessed funding for dad to apply for a Provisional Driving Licence and subsequent lessons. This will further assist employment opportunities
- Dad engaged well with IWW Substance Misuse Worker whilst in Custody and maintained a level of motivation to refrain from future use. He passed all mandatory employment Drug Tests.
- Mum relentlessly visited dad at Parc with their new baby and through the attendance of Bathing Babies and Language and Play, they maintained a strong family bond.
- Dad proved to be non-confrontational and patient when communicating with his ex-partner over contact with his son. This paid off and his son now spends a great deal of time with the family.

**Family 5**

**Dad** – 24 years (4<sup>th</sup> prison sentence)

**Mum** – Aged 19 years

**Child 1** – male. Born a month after dad came into custody

Time on the project (including community support) 16 months

**Presenting needs:**

- Father/baby bond required
- Parenting skills by both parents and gain developmental understanding
- Dad to maintain a focus on his new family and prioritise their needs
- Mental Health issues (dad) – flashback from previous offence of Death by Reckless Driving
- Substance Misuse dad – long history of substance misuse linked to his offending behaviour
- Identifying suitable Employment (mum)
- Accommodation – mum and baby

**Outcomes time of roll-off:**

- Mum sought private rent accommodation near her family support and always prioritised her baby
- Mum attended relevant child care training and qualified as a Home Child Minder
- Dad progressed to low level risk employment within the prison
- Dad sought medical help for his low moods and depression and attends the GP as and when required
- Dad met all obligations with the Probation Service
- Dad worked closely with Substance Misuse Mentor whilst in prison and recognised that peer pressure will still exist on the community

- IWW Substance Misuse Mentor referred dad to Community Substance Misuse Support and set up a meeting between them prior to dad's release
- Both parents completed the Barnardo's Parenting Programme
- Mum maintained weekly family visits to the prison despite the financial burden
- The family attended Bathing Babies and Language and Play at the prison

### **Family 6**

**Dad** – Aged 24 years (Previous convictions drug offences)

**Mum 21 years** (History of domestic violence between mum and dad)

**Child 1** – Female aged 6 years

**Child 2** – Female aged 4 years

**Child 3** – Aged 3 years

Time on the project (including community support) 20 months

#### **Presenting needs :**

- Negative family visits at the prison
- Children on Child Protection Register due to neglect and emotional abuse
- Mum entered into another violent relationship and the children witnessed distressing events at their home
- Lack of boundaries and routines at home, poor parenting skills
- Poor school attendance and hygiene issues resulting in bullying. Also due to their inconsistent attendance, the girls lack of knowledge of the welsh language was having a major impact upon their relationships with their peers.
- Bedwetting by 2 children and home conditions observed as extremely poor
- Mums mental health and low moods
- Dad's aggression and frustrations within custody in relation to his children and their mother's new relationship.
- Previous domestic abuse between mum and dad, mainly witnessed by the eldest child
- Lack of good contact between all family members
- Mum's obvious low self-esteem and her non prioritising of her children's needs

#### **Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- IWW's continued liaison with the children's school and all safeguarding issues paramount to the process
- School attended the 1<sup>st</sup> UK custodial setting Parent/Teacher Event at the prison and dad heard his eldest child speak welsh for the first time with her teacher
- IWW's close liaison with Social Worker, affording a clear and transparent reporting of new information and feeding into the Core Group Meetings and reviews
- IWW arranged for Dad to be involved with the Child Protection Review meetings via conference call – the first time the authority had permitted this process
- Dad and his eldest child were able to liaise via a pilot skype initiative where she was able to relay her welsh speaking once again to dad. This was very emotional
- The girls were referred to and attended an animal centre to learn about caring for and understanding animal in a therapeutic environment
- The eldest child attended a community theatre project where after an initial reluctance to become involved, she blossomed into the dancing and speaking role and her family attended the theatre performance in the community
- All three children were referred to Barnardo's Advocacy Service and also YISP for emotional support

- After dad was released, the family experienced a Family Meeting and subsequent review where the children's feelings and wishes were heard
- Dad adhered to all Probation requirements upon release despite there being obvious friction between him, his ex-partner and her new partner. He avoided confrontation and was patient in reporting his concerns to the Social Worker and Probation.
- The children met with Princess Anne at a visit to HMP Parc where they behaved impeccably and it was clear dad had taken time to ensure they were turned out appropriately
- The children's school also attended the visit by Princess Anne to highlight the invaluable link between IWW and schools where children are affected by imprisonment of a parent or carer
- Mum was paired up with another female on the project who was also experiencing domestic abuse and they both completed the Freedom Programme with IWW, affording them peer support. Both mums learned about the effects of domestic abuse upon their children
- Dad also agreed to undertake the Freedom Programme with IWW, where he recognised his previous abusive and aggressive behaviour
- Over a period of time, dad worked closely with the children's school, IWW and Social Services and after a difficult and intense legal process, he became main carer for the children
- Dad secured a 3 bed property, affording them a safe, warm and comfortable environment in which to live. Dad took pride in decorating the flat himself
- The children's bed-wetting has ceased, attendance is now excellent and all three girls are thriving within the care of their father
- Dad has turned his life around and no longer associates with old acquaintances within the drug fraternity
- The children were referred to Women's Aid to engage in The Star Project which is designed to support children who have experienced domestic abuse
- The family commenced a family diary and for 10 months, this was completed whilst dad was in prison – ensuring that there was communication between dad and his daughters
- The family attended an Awareness Raising event at HMP Parc after release and dad was able to talk about the positive changes he has made and how he is now a proud father to his girls.
- After roll-off, dad and his three daughters were referred to New Leaves and accepted as suitable. They will experience the great outdoors over 3 days and 2 nights over half-term Feb, 2016.

### **Family 7**

**Dad** – 22 years (father died of heroin overdose when he was 7)

**Mum** – 20 years (no offending history)

**Child 1** – Male. The baby was born whilst dad was in custody. He was brought into the prison at just 4 days old.

Time on the project (including community support) 13 months

#### **Presenting needs:**

- Dad to try and establish and maintain a bond with his new born son
- Lack of parenting skills – both parents
- Deterioration of the relationship between dad and his foster father
- Lack of communication between mum and her father due to her relationship and pregnancy with the prisoner. Lack of relationship between both males

- Substance Misuse – Dad has a significant history of drug use and this relates to his offending behaviour
- Housing – mum was previously residing with the baby at her mother’s address but this is no longer available as her mother was selling the property
- The baby was born with reflux and this was a major strain on the young mum, denying her of sleep and quality time with her baby

**Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Mum secured private rent accommodation whilst dad was in prison, in time for his release, assisted by family members
- Mum’s father was contacted by IWW and he learned of the positive work the couple were carrying out and in particular how they were maintaining a family bond. He then agreed to meet with dad on release from prison and after a period of proving himself
- Mum successfully attended an interview to commence Teacher Training
- Dad worked hard to seek employment and undertook a few menial jobs, working long hours
- Dad was referred to Gwalia and was successful in securing an Apprenticeship with a major building and construction firm.
- Mum’s father lent dad a bicycle to get back and forth his placement and their relationship improved
- Dad and his foster father commenced a family diary which provoked open and honest communication but this eventually led to his dad visiting him at the prison.
- Dad engaged with IWW Substance Misuse Mentor and carried out sessions preparing for release: harm reduction and relapse prevention
- Both parents completed the Barnardo’s Parenting Programme

**Family 8**

**Dad** – 38 years (Long history of drug use, 62 previous offences, 9 times in custody)

**Mum** - 36 years (Alcohol Misuse)

**Child 1** Male 18 years

**Child 2** Female 17 years

**Child 3** Female 9 years

**Child 4** Male 4 years

Time on project (including community support) 14 months

**Presenting needs:**

- Dad still in a spiral of drug use within the prison
- Eldest daughter emotionally damaged through lack of contact through childhood with her father
- No relationship between dad and his eldest daughter
- Mum’s use of alcohol as a coping mechanism – already addressing this
- Lack of communication of family members, i.e. prison and community
- Loss of accommodation dad
- Mum’s loss of accommodation with her children
- Employment opportunities dad

**Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Dad and his eldest daughter commenced a Family Diary where they both spoke openly and honestly for the first time. This afforded a way forward for them

- The family were referred for M-PACT (family substance misuse programme within the prison) and successfully completed the programme, becoming very emotional and impactful at times
- After attending M-PACT, the eldest daughter ended a long term relationship when she recognised that despite trying to assist her partner in seeking help for substance misuse, he refused.
- Mum completed an accredited course at Kaleidoscope and was managing her alcohol intake
- Mum commenced studying for a Degree in Criminology despite the pressures of caring for the children
- Eldest daughter completed Childcare qualification at college and then progressed to volunteering with Barnardo's briefly. This then led to her applying to volunteer at HMP Parc where she has undergone the initial training.
- Dad and eldest son were offered places by Gwalia on PTS training
- Dad eventually secured employment after a period of job-hunting and continues to engage with Workways
- Dad made substantial in-roads in reducing his drug intake whilst in custody despite a long history of heroin use. His engagement with IWW Substance Misuse Worker proved pivotal in his moving to the Family Interventions Unit and subsequent Negative Drugs Tests whilst in custody
- Dad completed many family intervention programmes despite a long history of imprisonment and a previous unwillingness to accept support
- Mum took some pictures of the youngest son's first day at school (dad was still in custody). One picture which depicts perfectly the void of his father on his first day at school, is now used as at IWW awareness raising and training sessions
- The family attended an Awareness Raising Event at HMP Parc and promoted the intensive work that they have undertaken with IWW. They described their journey, facing the truth and being able to put the past firmly behind them

### **Family 9**

**Dad** – Aged 38 years (Indeterminate Prisoner, 5 previous prison sentences)

**Mum** – 44 years

**Child 1** Male 17 years

**Child 2** Male 11 years

**Child 3** Female 10 years

**Child 4** Female 4 years

Time on the project (including community support) 40 months

#### **Presenting needs:**

- Mum finding it difficult to cope with Child 2 challenging and aggressive behaviour
- Both parents to gain a better understanding of parenting skills
- Child 2 – school attendance and behavioural issues, reduction in hours and obvious lack of educational development
- Child 2 – Isolation and inability to develop appropriate peer relationships
- Dad – Indeterminate prisoner with indefinite plans for continued family engagement
- Dad – Long history of violent behaviour linked with domestic abuse in intimate relationships
- Dad – Support required for re-settlement after lengthy prison sentence of 5 years

- Previous Child Protection Issues thereby identifying potential barriers upon release in terms of contact for dad

**Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Dad and eldest son referred to Duke of Edinburgh Project at Parc
- Dad transferred to HMP Prescoed to commence a period of re-settlement and experienced residing in shared accommodation within the prison grounds
- Dad learned how to budget, prepare meals and contribute towards the upkeep of the house
- Dad improved his education and increased his employability skills during his sentence. He has a tremendous amount of qualifications ranging from Counselling, Food hygiene to Waste Management etc.
- Dad gained ROTL experience at a furniture renovation organisation whilst at Prescoed and was very highly thought of by his employers
- Dad was released to a Probation Hostel where he proved he was overcoming the challenges of residing in the community and this led to approval for him to be rehoused within a Local Authority property close to his family
- Dad was referred to Gwalia who assisted him applying to the Discretionary Fund for a cooker for his property and also assisted him with funding to complete a Small Tools Course and a CSCS qualification.
- Dad sought a sponsor for employment on the Railways prior to being released from HMP Prescoed and has great determination and belief in himself. He has been employed for the greatest part of his release – enabling him to fund the set up of his home and provide financially for his family
- Dad commenced a healthy eating regime during his sentence at HMP Parc and lost a total of 6 stone and he has continued this regime into his new life in the community
- Mum continues to enable their daughter to share time between them and ensures that all her medical appointments and follow-ups are carried out despite this being a great strain on a daily basis
- Dad has a long history of substance and alcohol abuse relating to his offending behaviour and worked with IWW Substance Misuse Mentor to identify the triggers and understand the subsequent change in his demeanour. He has been abstinent since his sentence at HMP Parc and continues to provide negative tests when required by employment legislation
- Both parents successfully carried out the Barnardo’s Parenting Programme
- IWW assisted mum in attending meetings at the school of Child 2 discussing attendance and behavioural issues. He was encouraged to be open and honest about his wishes and agree to adhere to a plan
- Child 2 and 3 were referred to Liberty Horses which led to Child 2 being able to access an animal sanctuary as alternative curricular hours in conjunction with his school plan
- Barnardo’s engaged with Child 2 in sessions surrounding his challenging and sometimes aggressive behaviour. Mum reported a noticeable reduction in incidents at home and calls from the school are now infrequent. School hours are increased and he has far healthier relationship with his peers both in school and within his locality
- Child 2 and 3 attended CAPI engagement workshops which afforded them the experiences of rock climbing, ice skating and bowling as well as a theatre trip
- Dad’s mother has been fully supportive of him throughout his periods of imprisonment and travelled extensively throughout the UK to visit him. She was grateful to IWW for this opportunity of support and offered to relay her experiences of “being the mother of a son in prison” and wrote a heart-felt story of her memories which was read out to professionals at an awareness raising event at the Prison

- Dad also prepared a personal reflection to share of his teenage negative attitudes and gradual reliance on substances resulting in the escalation of offending and inevitable imprisonment
- IWW liaised closely with Probation throughout Christopher's sentence and until roll off, providing support at 2 Parole Board hearings. IWW also provided feed-back at MAPPA meetings and were instigators in firstly setting up agreed supervised contact sessions between dad and his daughter. At a review meeting, having shared our observations and recommendations from a period of monitoring, the panel agreed for dad to now engage in unsupervised contact. He is now managed at Level 1, having proved his commitment to a reduction in risk.

### **Family 10**

**Dad** - Aged 22 years (1<sup>st</sup> term of imprisonment after breaching a suspended sentence)

**Mum** - Aged 19 years

**Child** Female 1 year old

Time on the project (including community support) 18 months

#### **Presenting needs**

- Breakdown of relationship between mum and dad
- Lack of parenting knowledge by both parents
- The need to maintain a bond between father and baby
- Anxiety and distress by dad's wider family members through separation
- Previous Substance Misuse (dad)
- Lack of ETEV opportunities for mum
- Housing issues - mum's private rent accommodation was sub-standard
- Child's health is currently poorly - possibly suffering from epilepsy
- Previous domestic violence between parents
- Social Services involved

#### **Outcomes at time of roll-off:**

- Mum worked with Flying Start Housing Officer and secured a new flat
- Dad was able to return home to his parents after release as the family relationship was maintained throughout his sentence and visits were well attended
- Parents engaged in Language and Play with their daughter and enjoyed being a family unit whilst in the prison environment
- Mum and dad engaged in 1:1 sessions of The Freedom Programme with IWW, fully exploring the effects of domestic abuse upon children
- IWW attended Child Protection Conference, Core Groups/CIN meetings and Reviews, sharing the information and observations gathered during their support sessions
- IWW was instrumental in the child being placed back on the Child Protection Register after the change of their Social Worker and a long period of no contact with the family
- Mum and dad completed a mediation session within the prison as a tool to bring them together to discuss old issues and find a way of moving forward. They both fed back that this was extremely productive and they agreed on a way forward
- IWW assisted dad in applying for more contact of his daughter and this led to overnight stays quite quickly. She soon settled within the new environment and enjoyed being with her extended family
- Both parents completed Barnardo's Parenting Programme

- Dad liaised well with Probation on release and communication remains good
- Dad has been psychologically/emotionally tested by the break-down of his relationship with his ex-partner and the on-going child protection issues. His behaviour has remained impeccable and his acceptance of drawn out legal processes has afforded him a more mature and sensible approach to issues out of his control.
- Dad is in full-time employment and is now settled back within his community.

## Appendix 3: The IWW 'story': Three family case studies

### Family 'A' Profile

Both parents were unemployed and had a long history of chaotic substance misuse, and in the case of the prisoner, offending. The family was not engaged with any support services at the time of joining IWW.

'Prisoner A' was classified as a Prolific and Persistent Offender and had served three previous prison sentences, each of which was drugs related. Upon joining the project, 'Prisoner A' was serving a 3-year custodial sentence. Chaotic heroin user pre- custody.

#### **'Mum'**

Ex-partner was struggling to take care of their two children and had been forced to move in with her mother due to her financial circumstances. A previous heroin user, she was in a period of abstinence on joining IWW.

#### **'Children'**

Two children (aged 6 and 8) were having difficulty at school and their teachers reported a number of attendance, attainment and behavioural issues. Further concerns had been raised in regard to their daughter's mental health.

#### **Prisoner - hopes on joining IWW**

"I've had a big breakdown in family relationships. I want IWW to help with my family, I want to move out of the area away from old friends and find a job"

#### **Prisoner - post IWW**

"All of my expectations and needs were met and for the children. It has given me a better understanding of how children's minds think and how to deal with problems that arise"

#### **Prisoner's mother**

" IWW has given X a boost, it has improved his self worth and shown him he has options. He seems encouraged."

#### **Family's pre IWW needs**

Substance misuse  
Employment  
Accommodation  
Mental Health  
Parenting  
Educational and emotional issues for both children

#### **Post IWW**

On exiting the IWW intervention, Prisoner 'A':

- Had not been reconvicted.
- Had achieved a number of qualifications.
- Was in full time employment.
- In suitable accommodation.
- Had achieved AGORED Cymru accreditation in Parenting skills.
- Was maintaining consistent contact with his two children (regular custody visits).
- Was engaged with a GP.
- Was abstinent from drugs.

#### **Mum**

- Had reduced debts.
- Had attended Barnardo's Parenting programme.
- Was living in her own property.
- Was still misusing drugs
- Family was referred to CSOF for ongoing support.

#### **Children**

- Had received intensive one to one support for emotional issues.
- Improved attendance and behaviour in school
- Receiving ongoing weekly one to one support from school after IWW exit.

## ***Prisoner A: the IWW 'journey'*** **Substance misuse**

### *'Prisoner A'*

- Completed one to one sessions with the IWW Substance Misuse Specialist covering harm reduction, overdose awareness, substance awareness and relapse prevention.
- He engaged fully and provided regular voluntary drug tests.
- Despite an initial 'blip' in which *'Prisoner A'* took cocaine following his release, he has remained in a state of recovery and continues to avoid old associates who were seen to be negative influences and potential triggers of a relapse.
- On release he was referred to Treatment and Education Drugs Service (TEDS) for community support but felt that he was focused and did not want to be around others who use or have used heroin previously to avoid relapse.

### *'Mum'*

- Had been abstinent from drugs for some time when joining Invisible Walls Wales.
- She embarked upon a peer mentoring course with GOALS, a local drug support agency.
- Despite this initial period of abstinence however, she relapsed towards the end of the intervention and was arrested for burglary along with her new partner. As a result of this she received a two-year suspended community sentence.

In addition to the work outlined above *'Prisoner A'*, his ex-partner and their daughter attended IMPACT together.

*'Daughter A'* reported that she had thoroughly enjoyed the sessions as they

allowed her to openly communicate and resolve past issues with her parents as a family. In relation to this, a number of sessions were undertaken with *'Daughter A'*. During these sessions she wrote a letter to addiction (see Appendix 1).

## **Employment**

### *Prisoner A*

- Long-term unemployed prior to sentence.
- IWW ETEV supported him to complete a Distance Learning course in custody and received support from Business in Focus.
- Through IWW ETEV support was appointed the role of head cleaner on prison wing and achieved a British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS) qualification.
- Engaged with IWW (ETEV) specialist to submit a CV to Grow Enterprise Wales (GrEW).
- Achieved Release On Temporary License (ROTL).
- Gained a placement opportunity through GrEW, which enabled him to gain full-time employment (and appropriate accommodation) as a cleaner on release.
- Through GrEW placement, was provided with 5 free driving lessons and achieved a forklift licence.
- On exit, was full time employed in construction.

### *'Mum'*

- Engaged with IWW ETEV to complete peer mentoring training with GOALS and complete a CV. Following this however she failed to engage with the employment support offered to her.

## Accommodation

- Prior to sentence, 'Prisoner A' was, 'sofa surfing and periodically in the family home'
- Through IWW he acquired a two bedroom flat with GrEW following release, in a new location and away from previous associates.
- At exit, he had moved with a new partner to their shared property. This property was seen to be suitable for the children to visit and he cited his new partner as a positive influence and role model for him.

## Finances and Debt

### 'Prisoner A'

- Gained full time paid employment on release.
- During sentence he saved twenty pounds a week through the Credit Union and accumulated £400 on release.,

### 'Mum'

- Had debts in excess of £5,000.
- With IWW support, her debts were reduced through written communication with debt companies and a co-tenancy agreement with her mother, alleviating the cost of bedroom tax. IWW liaised with Friends and Families of Prisoners (FFOPS) to reduce the family debt further. In addition,
- 'Prisoner A' contributed £10 per week to help his ex-partner with the children's costs and family debt. This money was earned through his work as a wing cleaner in prison.
- IWW assisted 'mum' to cover prison visiting costs.
- When she was unable to accompany the children to the prison, IWW staff 'taxied' and accompanied children to all visits to ensure continuity for children and 'prisoner A'.

## Mental health

### Prisoner A

- Suffered from depression and anxiety.

- IWW substance misuse specialist provided Auricular Acupuncture and relaxation between three and four times a week improving his insomnia and aiding relaxation. He stated that the therapy had also helped him to stop smoking.
- Following release he was anxious and feeling depressed. He recognised his alcohol intake was a problem and reduced intake with one to one support from FIM. He was also assisted to register with a local GP.

## Parenting skills and family relationships

Both 'Prisoner A' and his ex-partner had a limited parenting capacity on joining.

### 'Prisoner A'

- Attended Fathers Inside and completed Barnardo's Parenting Programme;

*'It's given me a better understanding of how children's minds think and how to deal with problems that arise'. It got me thinking about my children more and their needs... it gave me more skills on how to handle and observe children's behaviour....When I first started having my son he was a nightmare but I used effective ignoring and praise and it worked, with the routine I have in place now he behaves with me'.*

- Invisible Walls Wales worked to improve family relationships by ensuring the children attended regular lounge visits with their father at the prison.
- Children and 'dad' attended the Learning Together Club and reported how it was 'great spending time with him', and how much they enjoyed completing their homework with his assistance. 'Prisoner A' further arranged a cake for his son's visit on his birthday and transferred money to his mother so that she could buy a present on his behalf. The children also both visited the prison on father's day.

- The children attended a work placement at GrEW, giving them the opportunity to see their father's workplace and enabled them to play and spend quality time together outside of the prison.
- 'Prisoner A' stated that a key highlight of IWW was that it afforded him the ability to *'maintain contact with [the] children and build bridges with my family, especially my mum'*.
- He described how he had *'never known [Son A] so happy'* and that his relationship with his ex-partner's mother had improved since his release and their first Family Group Conference.

### Family Group Conference (FGC)

- Family A had 3 Family Group Conferences (FGCs) prior to rolling off the Invisible Walls Wales intervention.
- 'Prisoner A's' partner was initially unwilling to attend the FGCs and Invisible Walls Wales staff arranged for her to be represented by an advocate and she consequently attended.
- 'Prisoner A' stated that he benefited from the conference as he felt he was *'supporting [his] children, and getting an insight into what the children expect'*. He stated that *'it gave the kids more and they could say what they needed from me and I could tell them what my plans were, it's given me a better relationship with them and with my ex's mother.'*
- The FGC was used to agree a contact plan for 'Prisoner A' to see his children and resulted in him seeing them three out of every four weekends.

### Additional Support

A range of additional support services were provided to the family as a result of a series of events in and around the family home, which included death threats against the

children and a number of attacks made on the home.

- A child protection order was submitted to Social Services via Invisible Walls Wales and the Fire Service was liaised with to install a fire protection device to the post box.
- As a direct result of IWW intervention, it was decided that the children did not need to be placed on the Child Protection Register.

Invisible Walls Wales ensured that both children were offered a range of support and advocacy services following the events at the family home. It was arranged for the children to be visited weekly at school to ascertain their perceptions of recent events and to identify any potential support requirements. Invisible Walls Wales. IWW staff met with 'Daughter A' numerous times over the following weeks. She organised a series of arts and crafts activities that 'Daughter A' could complete whilst talking about her feelings and life at home and school. Activities during these sessions



Cup-cake nail art completed with 'Daughter A' while she discussed home with an Invisible Walls Wales support worker.

ranged from nail art to poster making.

- Through these sessions it was further found that 'Daughter A' had a number of issues relating to low levels of self-esteem and confidence.
- Subsequent sessions were used to complete a series of self-esteem and confidence building tasks.
- Work was consequently completed surrounding the different roles and responsibilities of adults and children as well as the ways in which

drugs and addiction affect people (see previous discussion of MPACT).

- *'Daughter A'* reported that these sessions made her feel much happier than in previous weeks and she felt safer at home and in the community.
- A series of one on one sessions were also completed with *'Son A'*.
- There had been issues with his behaviour at school and the sessions were used to explore his feelings and discuss various aspects of his home and school life. During the sessions they discussed topics including sharing feelings - completing a 'Colour My Feelings - exercise) and a made a family tree to facilitate family orientated discussion.
- *'Son A'* formed a close relationship with his support and advocacy worker and his father noted that *'he confided in her'*. This relationship was crucial during the turbulent period at the family home
- In addition, the working relationship between the children's school and Invisible Walls Wales allowed targets to be set in the advocacy and support sessions to address *'Son A's'* behaviour in school. Notably his attendance increased from ninety-two to ninety-six per cent over the duration of the intervention.

### **Obstacles**

Having been identified as a Prolific and Persistent Offender, *'Prisoner A'* was subject to a series of specific license conditions. On the weekend following his release, *'Prisoner A'* broke his 7pm-7am curfew. He had been visiting his children and once they were in bed went for a drink. He was present at an altercation in a local pub when an acquaintance glassed a woman. Although not involved directly in the incident, *'Prisoner A'* offered assistance to the woman as she

waited for medical services to arrive. Despite his intentions, he had broken his curfew.

At a later date, having been in the community for approximately 6 weeks, *'Prisoner A'* loaned his father £150. His father failed to repay him and as such he could not afford gas, electricity or food. He consequently decided to stay with a friend who lived locally, again breaking his curfew. It was further identified that *'Prisoner A'* had used cocaine since his release.

In addition, *'Prisoner A'* was unwell following his release and consequently missed work. This became a concern for Invisible Walls Wales and GrEW as he had reportedly been out drinking in the evenings on days when he had been absent from work due to illness. At one point his housing and employment were in jeopardy of being lost due to a failure to attend work. Following a review meeting with staff members from GrEW and Invisible Walls Wales, at which he received an official warning in relation to his behaviour, *'Prisoner A'* ensured he attended all probation appointments and employment as contracted. He acknowledged that he had been drinking excessively and that this was having a negative impact upon his mental and physical health. Having broken his curfew on more than one occasion he received an official warning from his probation officer.

Invisible Walls met with *'Prisoner A'* on a number of occasions during this period to remind him of the consequences of a potential recall for his children and family. In addition they worked to ensure he remained motivated to abstain from further drug use and attended work. Despite this initial 'blip' in *'Prisoner A's'* behaviour, he has continued to maintain regular contact with his children, abstained from drug use and has not been recalled to custody.

## Family 'B' Profile

### Areas of support

**'Prisoner B'** has a history of chaotic substance misuse and drugs related offending. He has two children who were placed on the child protection register and removed from his care by Social Services as a result of his, and his ex-partners heroin use. He was consequently unable to have visits with his children when he was referred to Invisible Walls Wales and could only contact them through supervised telephone conversations and letters. At the time of referral, his children were residing with his parents and younger brother.

**'Mum'** was serving a sentence at HMP Eastwood Park and is no longer in contact with the family having remained a chaotic heroin user.

### Prisoner - hopes on joining IWW

"I need to get contact with my daughters in the first place, I want custody of them. I need housing, out of X and away from my ex. I need a job, help with everything."

### Prisoner - post IWW

"We are now closer together, I see my daughters regularly, twice a week and I'm working with Social Services to get unsupervised contact."

### Prisoner's mum

"IWW has affected us in lots of aspects, my son is thriving -he is hungry for life. The help and support

### Family 'B' Pre IWW needs

Substance misuse

Employment

Accommodation

Mental Health

Parenting

Contact and access issues with children.

Emotional issues for eldest child

### Post IWW

On exiting the IWW intervention, *Prisoner 'B'*:

- Had been granted weekly contact with children, supervised by grandparents.
- Had not been reconvicted.
- Had achieved a number of qualifications.
- Was in full time employment.
- In suitable accommodation.
- Had achieved accreditation in Parenting skills.
- Was maintaining consistent contact with his two children
- Was engaged with a GP.
- Was abstinent from drugs.
- Was living a healthy lifestyle as a non smoker, member of a rugby team and daily gym attendance.
- Had returned to the prison to present a speech to professionals at the IWW awareness event.

### Children

- Had received intensive one to one to one support for emotional issues from Barnardo's.
- IWW engaged with SS and LAC reviews and the school.
- School reported improved wellbeing.
- School signed up to IWA to provide ongoing support daughters if required.

## **Prisoner B: the IWW 'journey'**

### **Accommodation**

- Securing suitable accommodation was seen as crucial in promoting *'Prisoner B's'* desistance.
- Prior to *'Prisoner B's'* release, his Uncle agreed he could live at his bed and breakfast. At the time, *'Prisoner B's'* relationship with his uncle was very fractured. Having seen *'Prisoner B'* engage with IWW, his uncle stated that he was however *'willing to take a chance on him'*. Since his release, *'Prisoner B's'* relationship with his uncle has improved considerably and his uncle stated that he now *'strive[s] to be a positive role model for him'*.
- However, *the* housing benefits would not cover the costs of the bed and breakfast. IWW liaised with the local housing authority to secure a Discretionary Housing Payment to cover the cost of his uncle's accommodation on a temporary basis until appropriate accommodation was found.
- Having secured this, IWW referred prisoner B to Wallich and he was subsequently allocated a flat at their Vesta project (an abstinence project in Bridgend). *'Prisoner B'* established an excellent relationship with the support workers at Vesta and was given a volunteer opportunity supervising a team of individuals who were maintaining Wallich properties.
- *'Prisoner B'* later returned to his uncle's bed and breakfast once he secured full time work and was able to pay for the accommodation with his wages.

### **Employment**

- Long-term unemployed prior to sentence.
- Throughout his time on the project, *'Prisoner B'* consistently engaged with the IWW ETEV staff. Whilst he was hoping to obtain a plumbing

apprenticeship through the Coastal Project, this was not possible due to funding complications that arose as he was already part of the Work Programme.

- He engaged with Working Links to attend several job interviews.
- Following his release, *'Prisoner B'* volunteered for Wallich and with the Integrated Offender Intervention Scheme (IOIS) where he helped run breakfast clubs and deliver substance misuse programmes.
- He went on to obtain a work experience placement with a local construction company. This later became a primary source of full time employment for him. He was required to register as self-employed in order to carry out this work and was assisted in doing so by Invisible Walls Wales.
- Having worked there for several weeks the company were unable to continue to offer him full time work forcing him to seek alternative employment opportunities.
- With the assistance of IWW, *Prisoner B* was successful in finding work and was offered a three month probationary period at Taylor Wimpey construction. He passed this probation period and due to his work ethic received three successive promotions (ground worker to site operative to labourer) each of which was accompanied by increased pay. He has continued to work full time for Taylor Wimpey and reports to be enjoying his employment.

### **Substance misuse**

- *'Prisoner B'* has a history of chaotic heroin abuse. When he was referred to Invisible Walls Wales he was receiving a methadone prescription. *'Prisoner B'* was so motivated to move to the T4 wing that he requested that his reduction process was accelerated, as he could not access the wing while receiving a script.

- *'Prisoner B'* later received one on one support from the IWW Substance misuse specialist to promote harm reduction, overdose awareness, substance awareness and relapse prevention. He also received acupuncture and engaged in a smoking cessation programme.
- *'Prisoner B'* has fully abstained from drugs and reports he has not been tempted to use them since his release. In addition he has not returned to smoking tobacco stating that he *'can't stand being around smokers now'*.
- While in HMP Parc he attended a number of one on one parenting sessions with an IWW Barnardo's worker. Staff case notes indicate that his 'understanding and motivation during these sessions was exceptional' and he later completed an AQA parenting qualification.
- *Prisoner B's* involvement with IWW enabled information relating to his significant progress in custody to be shared with Social Services, his family, children's school and at Looked After Children reviews. Over time, as he continued to engage fully with the project, confidence in his motivation to change grew amongst his family as well as the professionals with whom he'd been working. As a result, it was agreed that fortnightly visits with the children would be allowed.

### **Finances and Debt**

- *'Prisoner B'* set up a savings account in HMP Parc with assistance from IWW ETEV specialist to ensure he had some money when discharged from prison.
- An application for Jobs Seekers Allowance was also made, although *'Prisoner B'* only claimed benefits for a short time following his release. He is now financially stable working full time for the construction company Taylor Wimpey.

### **Mental health**

#### *Prisoner B*

- Upon release *'Prisoner B'* stopped taking anti-depressant medication. He was advised about the possible negative side effects of withdrawing suddenly but reported that due to his achievements, and the fact that he is using his time productively, he no longer experienced any symptoms of depression.
- In addition *'Prisoner B'* joined a local rugby team where he plays weekly and attends a gym most days.

### **Parenting skills and family relationships**

Prisoner B was not permitted visits with the children at the time of joining IWW.

- His mentor would supervise the visits and give feedback to Social Services regarding *'Prisoner B's'* ability to implement his new parenting skills. This feedback was consistently positive and a Family Group Conference was held to plan his contact arrangements with the children following his release.
- The Family Group Conference was successful and resulted in the formulation of a plan that allowed *'Prisoner B'* to have more frequent contact with his children in the family home on release, although it was required that this contact was still supervised by the designated Invisible Walls Wales worker.
- Following his release child visits continued to be successful and his relationships with both children were seen to develop significantly.
- A subsequent Family Group Conference was held and concluded that the Invisible Walls Wales worker was no longer required to be present for child visits and that supervision by *'Prisoner B's'* parents was sufficient.

## The children

There had been concerns surrounding potential emotional issues that *'Prisoner B's'* eldest daughter was displaying. It was felt that they could be the result of early trauma experienced whilst she was in the care of her parents when they were both using heroin.

- In response to these concerns an Invisible Walls Wales worker (via Barnardo's) undertook a number of one on one sessions with her on a weekly basis at school. The school later reported that her self-esteem appeared to have improved since her father was released from prison and regular contact with her established.
- IWW's engagement with the school was crucial in facilitating support, as well as arranging increased access for *'Prisoner B'*. The school was fully supportive of the work being completed as part of the intervention and a number of Looked After Children (LAC) reviews were held at the premises. Of note, *'Prisoner B'* attended a LAC review held shortly after he was released. He made valid contributions throughout and demonstrated apparent genuine concern for his children and their well-being. During this meeting it was reported that his daughters attendance, education achievements and self esteem had all appeared to have improved since he had been released and was having regular contact with her at the family home.
- *'Prisoner B's'* younger daughter is now attending the same school as her elder sister and Invisible Walls Wales ensured that the school was fully signed up to the Invisible Walls

Wales ACCORD. As such the school is aware of the family's circumstances and can continue to support the children appropriately.

Eldest daughter:

- Completed a childcare qualification
- Gained a placement at Women's Aid as Child Support Worker.
- Completed PSF volunteer training in HMP Parc. Awaiting clearance to commence as a volunteer.
- Acted as a peer mentor for the IWW project

Step-daughter

- Receiving ongoing one to one counselling from the School.

Step-son

- Offered a place on the Personal Track Safety Course.

## Family 'C' profile

**Prisoner C** was 38 at the time of joining IWW and had a long criminal career of drug-related offending (primarily burglary and theft) spanning 24 years, with 28 court convictions for 62 separate offences. He had spent 11 of the past 20 years in prison. He had a history of chaotic substance misuse having used Class A drugs, particularly heroin since his teens. He has one daughter with his ex-partner (aged 17 at the time of joining), and one son with current partner.

**'Mum'** was a recovering alcoholic with three children, one (the youngest) with Prisoner 'C' and two with her previous partner. She was also a victim of domestic abuse in her previous relationship with the two elder children's biological father.

**'Children'** eldest daughter lived with prisoner 'C's' ex partner. She was experiencing many emotional issues related to her father's continual imprisonment and drug use throughout her childhood, combined with the domestic abuse witnessed and time spent in refuge as a young child. The youngest child had a good relationship with his father (prisoner 'C') and no known issues. The middle two children had contact with their own father but had also witnessed the domestic abuse between him and their mother. The children's school was unaware of Prisoner 'C's' imprisonment.

### Prisoner -

*"The best part was the diaries. It started off contact between me and my daughter and got us talking and communicating. We never before had talked about what I'd done and how it affected her. She explained how she felt all her life and that was a big eye opener, it made me change my way of thinking."*

### Prisoner's daughter

*"Before IWW, mine and my dad's relationship was upside down. I only ever shared one birthday with him as he was in prison for all of the others. My life was a whirlwind of worry, anger and a million things going through my head. When IWW joined us as a family I would never have known that it would change us the way it has. After his release and 8 months down the line, mine and my father's relationship is unbreakable. My dad is now in work and in a stable home. I am now volunteering to support the families and children at Parc who are going through the same experiences".*

## Areas of support

### Family 'C' pre-IWW needs

Substance misuse  
Employment  
Accommodation  
Attitudes, thinking and offending behaviour  
Parenting  
Emotional issues for eldest child and step-daughter

### Post IWW

On exiting the IWW intervention, Prisoner 'C':

- Had not been reconvicted
- Had not returned to Class A drug use and was reportedly substance free.
- Had achieved a number of qualifications.
- Was in full time employment.
- Had obtained independent permanent accommodation.
- Had completed Fathers Inside, Parenting for Dads parenting qualifications
- Was maintaining consistent contact with his two children and two step-children
- Was engaged with a GP.
- Was abstinent from drugs.
- Had co-presented a speech with his daughter to professionals at the IWW awareness event.
- Received a letter from the Director at HMP Parc congratulating him on his achievements

### Mum

- Was studying for a degree in Criminology
- Completed an accredited peer mentoring course at Kaleidoscope
- Obtained private rental accommodation
- Was abstinent from alcohol

## Accommodation

- 'Mum' was required to move from the family property as the Landlord was selling. She subsequently sought alternative private rental accommodation. The new home is located in a good area, close to the children's school and is kept clean, and very well maintained.
- The eldest daughter split up with her ex-partner and was faced with having to seek alternative accommodation. She was given help by IWW to move to the new housing.
- Upon release, prisoner 'C' returned to the family home. He found it very difficult to readjust to family life and the relationship broke down. He was homeless for a short time and stayed with his mother and various friends. Following IWW referrals to both Gwalia and the Housing Officer at Probation, he secured a private rental. IWW offered to assist in refurbishing the flat but he declined.

## Employment

- Prisoner 'C' was long-term unemployed prior to sentence.
- Throughout his time on the project, 'prisoner C' consistently engaged with the IWW ETEV staff.
- During custody he completed drug and alcohol counselling courses, Criminology, A Diploma in Drug Solvent and Alcohol Abuse Counselling and Open University degree in Psychology.
- Following his release, 'prisoner C' obtained a volunteer placement at Kaleidoscope Drug and Alcohol support service.
- He was also offered a placement on the Arc Academy Personal Track Safety course, He declined this opportunity.
- He subsequently engaged with the Workways programme and after several unsuccessful interviews obtained full time employment as a retail stock assistant on a temporary contract basis.

- 'Mum' was progressing well on her BA degree in Criminology.
- She also completed an accredited course in peer mentoring in Kaleidoscope.
- The eldest daughter completed her Childcare qualification and subsequently obtained a volunteer placement at Women's Aid.
- During her time with IWW she was the only child participant to act as an 'Ambassador' for other child participants and took on the role of IWW peer mentor, supporting other children of prisoners.
- She then went on to complete both the Barnardo's Volunteer training and the PSF training in HMP Parc. At the point of roll off she was awaiting clearance to commence as a volunteer within the prison.

## Substance misuse

- Assistance to tackle his substance misuse problem was seen as crucial in promoting 'prisoner C's' desistance having been a Class A drug user for 20+ years.
- He has a long history of chaotic heroin abuse. When he was referred to Invisible Walls Wales he was using Opiates and Subutex on the unit. 'prisoner C' was so motivated to move to the T4 wing that he requested that he be prescribed opiate blocker. He subsequently tested clear for all drugs.
- Prisoner C and his daughter both completed M-Pact together.
- Prisoner C later received one on one support from the IWW substance misuse specialist to promote harm reduction, overdose awareness, substance awareness and relapse prevention.
- Prisoner C obtained an appointment with Kaleidoscope on release to interview as a peer mentor. He was assessed as suitable.
- Prisoner C has fully abstained from drugs and reports he has not been tempted to use them since his release.

## Finances and Debt

- Mum experiencing financial difficulties following her enrolment in full-time education on a degree course.
- Application made to Food bank for 'mum' whilst awaiting receipt of new benefits claim.
- IWW assistance given to eldest daughter to reduce debts and budget to clear rent arrears on moving to new property.
- 'All family members in receipt of eligible benefits.

## Mental health

- Prisoner C has a long history of suffering with anxiety and depression and has been on long term anti depressants.
- On release he engaged with a GP and also completed a nutrition and health course during custody to support a healthier lifestyle on release.

## Parenting skills and family relationships

- During his time in HMP Parc he completed Parenting for Dads and Father's Inside.
- The use of the family diaries between him and his eldest daughter enabled both to communicate for the first time regarding the impact his imprisonment had had upon her childhood and subsequent emotional wellbeing.
- Prisoner 'C' made a jewellery box for his daughter from matchsticks. This was given to her by the mentor.
- A lounge visit between prisoner C and his eldest daughter was the first time they had been alone together in seven years.
- Both prisoner 'C' and his daughter completed the M-Pact course together. This was the first time they had discussed his heroin addiction. The weekly visits between the two improved communication and strengthened their relationship.

- The Barnardo's Parenting course was offered to both prisoner and mum but both declined.
- Following his release the relationship between him and 'mum' broke down and there was a temporary gap in child contact. A Family Group Conference was offered but this was declined.
- A structured contact plan was subsequently agreed between the couple and consistent contact achieved.
- Prior to joining IWW, the relationship between prisoner 'C' and his eldest daughter had completely broken down. At the point of roll-off the relationship had strengthened greatly and both M-Pact and the Family Diaries proved pivotal in re-establishing their relationship to the extent that father and daughter were reportedly closer than they had ever been.

## The children

There had been concerns surrounding potential emotional issues that *'prisoner C's'* step-daughter was experiencing. At the time of joining the project, the school was unaware of prisoner C's imprisonment. At one point, the step-daughter stood up in class and announced 'My dad is in jail'. This led to subsequent concerns of bullying within the school. Following this, her biological father was also arrested and imprisoned for assaulting her step- mother.

- In response to these concerns, offers were made to refer her to the IWW YISP worker for one to one support. The younger son was also offered a referral to the Barnardo's under 8's support service. However, 'mum' was adamant that this was not needed and refused extra support.
- The school counsellor instead undertook several one on one weekly sessions with her at school.
- At the point of exit, no concerns were highlighted and the bullying issue had been resolved.

## **Appendix 4. Record of externally-facing visits and activities (to Sept. 2016) compiled by IWW Manager.**

- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2016 – HRH The Duke of Wessex will visit Parc to present awards to the children and families who completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme as part of their IWW journey.
- September 2016 – Welsh Internal Affairs – make contact with IWW to write and include a report on the success of the project in their next magazine which is sent to every politician in Welsh Government.
- August 2016 - HM Inspectorate of Prisons – Prison Life, Contact with family and friends – page 16, Parc featured as an exemplar of best practice.
- August 2016 – G4S Malta receive an invitation from the Her Excellency the President of Malta to develop a business plan for a new facility, outside the Maltese prison wall, based on the IWW model, to work with released offenders and their families in the community, this also includes a potential EM component.
- August 2016 – Singapore Correctional Services make contact to arrange a visit to Parc in Q1 2017, and a subsequent plan to present the IWW model (first seen at the ICPA Melbourne 2015) officially as a project for Singapore Corrections in 2017.
- August 2016 – confirmation received from BIG Lottery Fund that Barnardo's have been awarded a 1 million pound grant to deliver a 3 year project – Invisible Walls Accord – this is an off shoot of IWW, designed to enable schools to better work with children of offenders, developed by IWW G4S, with G4S as the lead strategic partner.
- July 2016 – Invited to be a member of the Parliamentary Review into family life in prison, led by Lord Farmer and commissioned by the Minister for Prisons. Report to Parliament due December 2016.
- July 2016 – Washington DC Connect – State funded project link with Parc to arrange a visit to learn more about IWW in Oct 2016, with a view to implementing its practice in a new prison in Washington State.
- July 2016 BBC Eye on Wales – national political radio programme – recorded at Parc, focusing on IWW and related issues – comments from Prisons Minister, Children's Commissioner for Wales, local MP's et al
- June 2016 – IWW and the Parc family model was presented on request to the Dutch Minister of Prisons and prison governors at an event in the Netherlands which also featured work from two Dutch prisons to replicate the model. G4S Netherlands in attendance. Subsequent request for the Dutch MoJ to visit Parc this autumn to further develop the model.
- June 2016 – IWW invited to take part in the Council of Europe forum on families of offenders – Zaandam, Netherlands.
- May 2016 – Invited to be part of a Ministry of Justice roundtable group regarding prison reform and the impact on children and families of offenders. Chaired by Anne Fox CEO CLINKS and reporting to the Prisons Minister.

- May 2016 – IWW presented with a commemorative plaque at the Buckingham Palace Garden Party celebrating the Diamond Anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme.
- May 2016 – IWW Keynote presentation at the International Conference for the Children and Families of Offenders in Texas.
- April 2016 – National screening of the Dads Behind Bars documentary filmed at HMP Parc on Channel 4 News. Viewed by over 3.4 million people live, and subsequent international spread of the item through social media.
- March 2016 – Her Excellency the President of Malta visits Parc along with the Chairmen of G4S Malta to meet IWW prisoners and families and see the Family Interventions Unit etc.
- January 2016 – IWW presented at Valletta Palace Malta, at the request of Her Excellency the President of Malta, and with the Maltese Minister for Justice et al.
- January 2016 – IWW and HMP Parc presented with the Investors in Families charter mark by the Minister for Prisons, at the House of Lords. The first and still only prison in the EU to attain the accreditation.
- **Selected events from previous years:**
  - Specific visit to Parc from the Justice Secretary and Dame Sally Coats to receive an IWW presentation and meet staff/prisoners.
  - International Corrections & Prisons Association - presentation of IWW – Melbourne Australia – subsequent partnership work with G4S HM Port Philip Melbourne to replicate aspect of the IWW model.
  - IWW features as an exemplar of good practice within the published report on Children and Families of Offenders – N Reed – Winston Churchill Fellowship International study of corrections.
  - IWW keynote address at the publication event for Action on Addiction – Royal College of Surgeons.
  - IWW keynote address – House of Lords – Safe Ground UK event.
  - Numerous positive mentions in Parliament, Hansard examples from local, national MP’s, the Justice Secretary and the Prisons Minister
  - Three Royal visits in the last 18 months. (HRH Princes Anne, HRH Prince Charles, HRH Prince Edward)
  - Over 60 UK prisons to date have visited Parc to learn about IWW and see our family model in practice... most recently HMP Berwyn – North Wales, which will be the largest prison in the UK – has dedicated a block and new manager to become their Family Interventions Unit based on the IWW model.
  - Invited to be a member of the UK Ministry of Justice ‘Policy Fellows at Large’ group – prison reform
  - Founding Member of the Welsh Government Cross Party Group of children and families of offenders.
  - Bishop to Prisons – Bishop of Rochester – commissions his parliamentary team to investigate potential to replicate the IWW parent/teacher evening prison intervention, in a number of English prisons close to Church of England schools.
  - IWW Keynote presentation Stockholm, Children of Prisoners Europe

- IWW private meeting with Swedish Justice Ministers to discuss replication potential
- IWW private presentation and meetings with the Ugandan Prison Service Director General, Director of Rehabilitation, and British Ambassador. Accompanied by G4S Uganda General Manager (Kampala)
- IWW model commissioned and delivered to senior prison service officials and managers – Republic of Ireland Prison Service.
- IWW model commissioned and delivered to senior prison service officials and local authority representatives, Isle of Man.
- IWW Keynote presentation at the National Prison Education Trust Conference
- IWW Keynote presentation at the National Independent Monitoring Board Conference

## Selected media reports referring to IWW

- ✚ <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/inside-wales-biggest-prison-unprecedented-11147052> Wales On Line, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016 - Inside Wales' Biggest Prison: unprecedented access to prisoners and their families
- ✚ <http://www.channel4.com/news/dads-behind-bars-teaching-inmates-to-put-kids-before-crime-parc-prison-andy-davies> - Channel 4 News – Dads Behind Bars
- ✚ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPbfX4DtP70> - Invisible Walls Wales
- ✚ <http://www.g4s.uk.com/en-GB/Media%20Centre/News/2012/03/28/Big%20Lottery%20Fund%20Award/> - G4S Big Lottery Fund Award 28 Mar 2012
- ✚ <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/press-releases/wales/archive/120328-prison-helps-gavin-to-paint-a-bright-new-future> - Big Lottery Fund, 28 Mar 2012
- ✚ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-17539577> - BBC News 29 Mar 2012, £3m to help stop HMP Parc prisoners re-offending
- ✚ <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/parc-prisons-invisible-walls-project-2034876> Wales On Line, Parc Prison's Invisible Walls project given £3m 29 Mar 2012
- ✚ <http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/working-with-families/service-providers-2/how-can-this-work-for-me/prisons> - Care for the family, Prisons, Invisible Walls Project 2013
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