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| **HMP Bure Family Strategy Policy** |
| **Unlocking Potential, Changing Lives** |
| March 2018 |

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### Introduction

*Maintaining family relationships is paramount in achieving a reduction in re-offending.*

*HMP Bure is committed to the fostering of good family relationships and the maintenance of existing relationships, in order to aid the resettlement of Residents. The prison aims to provide a framework that enables positive outcomes and interactions for children and families with a close family member in our custody. The impact of any custodial sentence is not only felt on the family member but also on the family and friends of the residents.*

*The primary purpose of a prison sentence is to punish the offender. However, given practical, financial, social and emotional effects of imprisonment, a prison sentence can also have punitive consequences for families outside prison. Resident’s families, particularly their children, are often termed the ‘innocent victims’ of crime (and punishment).*

*At HMP Bure due to the dynamics of the population “families” at times are also extended to the residents support network as part of their resettlement plans.*

*For a long time, residents’ families were also referred to as the ‘hidden’ or ‘invisible’ victims of punishment or crime, since the hardships they experienced were not immediately obvious.*

**What is the impact of imprisonment on residents’ families?**

Since every family is different (including who is considered to be part of a ‘family’), the impact of imprisonment is different for every family. Yet, research suggests that there are some fairly common experiences.

Over 10 million children in the world have a parent in prison and Action for Residents Families estimates that in the United Kingdom approximately 200,000 childrenhave a parent sent to prison each year.

The children of Residents are 3 times more likely to take part in anti-social and delinquent behaviour. Imprisonment can result in reduced family income, home and school moves, disrupted relationships, stigma and decreased social support. Each year in the United Kingdom more children are affected by parental imprisonment than by divorce. It is estimated that 65% of boys who have a father in prison will go onto offend themselves. This research shows that offending can be catastrophic to families and children; who are also being punished along with their parent (Action for Residents Families).

**Specifically:**

* Families experience emotional distress even with the loss of a loved one from the family home and/or family life: for example, families miss out on sharing family events such as birthdays and Christmas, or even simple family activities such as meals, with the imprisoned family member.
* Residents are stigmatised for their offence, and their families often are too. Families are seen as guilty by association even though they are legally innocent and generally have had no involvement in the offence. This stigma is sometimes referred to as stigma by association. This stigma makes the imprisonment even more difficult for family members, and it can also mean that families are treated negatively by other members of their community, or face negative treatment from colleagues, peers, the media and even friends and family.
* Following the imprisonment of a person, partners of residents are often forced to take on multiple roles and responsibilities, particularly where the incarcerated family member has previously had an active role in the household.
* Imprisonment tends to impose financial strain on the families of the residents in two ways: by decreasing the family income and by increasing family expenditure, due to costly visits and phone calls, and handing in money for their loved ones in prison. Prison can exacerbate existing socio-economic disadvantage.
* There are often particular difficulties associated with prison visiting. Visiting often involves a great deal of time, effort (both physical and emotional) and expense. Visiting can be quite an emotional experience, with both positive and negative feelings in the mix: for example, families usually enjoy seeing their imprisoned loved one, but due to the brevity of the visit saying ‘goodbye’ comes quickly, which can be distressing.
* Visiting can be particularly difficult for children, with poor facilities that are not ‘child friendly’ and confusing rules restricting how they can interact with their imprisoned family member; families often have to travel long distances to a prison, and are often reliant on public transport; visiting times may not be compatible with tea time and bed time routines, leaving children irritable or tired, which then may impact on school performance the following day.
* Stigma for the children of residents can be manifested in being bullied by classmates in school.
* Longer-term, children of residents are three times are more likely to engage in anti-social or offending behaviour than their peers who do not have a parent in prison.

**Why focus on Children and Families?**

Supportive families are a great resource for residents and they often play a vital role in helping an individual move away from crime. A supportive family can also provide effective protective factors for residents at risk of suicide and self-harm. Having a stable family to return to on release, can also encourage residents to engage in sentence planning interventions and maintain positive behaviour whilst in custody

Research on desistance from crime, also suggests that positive family ties can have an encouraging effect on the rehabilitation of offenders. Residents who had not received visits whilst in prison were 39% more likely to re-offend, compared to those residents who had received visits from family members (Action for Residents Families).

In some cases maintaining family ties may not be appropriate, possibly due to the risk of harm that a resident poses to the family. Safeguarding children and supporting victims should always be a priority in the work at HMP Bure supported by the National Probation Service and any other statutory authority deemed appropriate.

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| Levels of Restrictions for Child Contact | |
| Level One | Full restrictions apply. No contact with any child permitted All correspondence and telephone calls may be monitored subject to a risk assessment being carried out and regularly reviewed. |
| Level Two | Contact permitted with named child only via written correspondence. All correspondence and telephone calls may be monitored subject to a risk assessment being carried out and regularly reviewed. |
| Level Three | Contact permitted with named child only via written correspondence and telephone calls. Correspondence and telephone calls may be monitored subject to a risk assessment being carried out and regularly reviewed. |
| Level Four | No restrictions necessary, contact permitted with named child only via correspondence, telephone calls and visits. The resident may be allowed access to family visits with the permission of the Governing Governor following a further, individual risk assessment.  Routine monitoring of correspondence, telephone calls, general observations in the visits area. This level of contact applies only to those children that the resident has permission to have contact with. All other children will be subject to Level One restrictions. |

At HMP Bure the Children and Families Pathway, aims to ensure the interests of residents and their families are addressed through:

* Helping to maintain family ties, where appropriate.
* Improving parenting skills of residents.
* Provide advice and guidance to families and residents.
* Developing a family friendly focus in prisons and through our visitor centre.
* Involving the family in Resettlement decisions when appropriate

**Governance and Management of the pathway**

In order to ensure that the “family” remains the focus of our work towards the rehabilitation of our residents at HMP Bure, the commitments listed below will be monitored through the following processes:

* Reducing Re-offending meeting
* Establishments overarching action plan.

**Measuring our success in developing the Children’s and Families pathway**

* Residents Family Needs questionnaire
* Families experience questioner
* HMIP
* Resident MQPL

## Commitment at HMP Bure to Establish a Family Strategy

## Unlike some aspects of prison management, the role of families and how they can support positive outcomes does not neatly fit into one specific function. Effective family practice impacts in safer custody; public protection; decency, security management, reducing reoffending and so on. If a singular functional approach is taken there is a danger that any approach becomes marginalised or has a lesser impact on prisoners, families and significant others.

Family contracts commenced in October 2017 and run for 3-4years.

These services include conducting visits, visits play areas, refreshment services, visits centres, enrichment activities, family days, visits booking, family advice/engagement worker

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| **Initial HMP Bure Family strategy commitments 2018** | | |
| **Guiding Questions** | **Potential Resources/Examples** | **Commitment** |
| Do we understand the needs of visitors? | Holding regular meetings with visitors as well as visitor surveys will provide information which will help us to better meet the needs of our vistors | We will work with our visit’s provider Spurgeons and produce an annual visitors Survey.  We will hold regular Governors surgery’s in the visitor’s centre the dates of which will be published in the centre and throughout the establishment. |
| What is our Visitor centre like?  What’s it like to visit our prison? | We would like to create a centre which is welcoming and comfortable which enhances the experience for our visitors | We will consult with our visitors and Spurgeons and where possible use their experiences to develop/improve all aspects of visiting HMP Bure |
| What’s it like for a child to visit HMP Bure? | Are we as an establishment child friendly? Do we understand that visiting can be stressful and upsetting for the children? | We will develop the experience for children that visit HMP Bure. The provision of Children’s visits will be improved and be specifically child focused. |
| How will we keep track of how we develop the strategy? | Performance data, MQPL, HMIP, Farmer Report Overarching action plan. | We will create an action plan which will use all available data to develop the strategy so that’s it is part of business as usual throughout all Functions of HMP Bure. |

**Annex A**

**Available support/information for Children and families and professionals working with them**

**Action for Residents’ Families** www.residentsfamilies.org.uk – Action for Residents’ Families, works for the benefit of residents' and offenders' families by representing the views of families and those who work with them.

**AFFECT** – AFFECT provides services for the families of serious offenders and offers support groups to families in the south of England. [www.affect.org.uk](http://www.affect.org.uk)

**Inside Time –** www.insidetime.org.uk – this website gives visiting and other advice

**Pact (Prison Advice and Care Trust) –** www.prisonadvice.org.uk provides

Useful information on visiting and how visitors’ centres can help families.

**Residents’ Family Voices** is a web-based community which gives family members the opportunity to talk to each other.

http://residentsfamiliesvoices.blogspot.com

**Offenders’ Families Helpline 0808 808 2003** info@residentsfamilieshelpline.org.uk

www.residentsfamilieshelpline.org.uk

**Residents’ Families and Friends Service 0808 808 3444** info@pffs.org.uk

[www.pffs.org.uk](http://www.pffs.org.uk)

**SHARP (Support Help and Advice for Relatives of Residents**) **01743 245365** for free

**I HOP ( Barnado’s )** https://www.**i-hop**.org.uk

i-HOP is a one-stop information and advice service to support all professionals (working with children and families of residents) and all families of residents, bringing together useful information in one place