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**Our Family and Significant Others Services Strategy**

**HMP Wealstun**

**January 2025 to 2026**

**Foreword by the Governor HMP Wealstun - Diane Lewis**

Welcome to the HMP Wealstun family and significant others strategy. Here we describe how we work with prisoners, their families and significant others, and with the community to deliver good support services .

Keeping and growing strong supportive relationships with family and those most important to prisoners is central to what we do at Wealstun, to help improve lives on release.

We want to make a positive impact on prisoners who stay at Wealstun, their children, family and those close to them.

We always welcome feedback and views on how we can improve.

Diane Lewis Gov Field

Governor Head of Reducing Reoffending

HMP Wealstun and strategy Lead HMP Wealstun

Support Champions – CM French and CM Trayhorn

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**Vision**

HMP Wealstun aims to support positive relationships that prisoners have with their families and significant others, which will improve life on release and reduce the negative impacts of imprisonment.

**What are we aiming to do?**

Firstly, what do we mean by family? We see family as either a relative, or a legal or significant person to a prisoner, recognising that families come in lots of different forms. For care-leavers, for example, this may be someone that provides a statutory service, friend or associate.

Often, families of prisoners are the unrecognised victims of their offending and are potentially a key influence in addressing offending behaviour. This strategy aims to:

1. Help reduce the likelihood of prisoners reoffending and returning to prison.
2. Reduce the potential negative impact of imprisonment on the wider family and significant others, particularly children.
3. Provide support and information to families, children and significant others of those in custody.

Family services approach and strategy is led by a member of the prison senior management team Susan Field, who is the Head of Reducing Reoffending, and championed by our Reducing Reoffending custodial managers CM Trayhorn and CM French. All are points of contact for family services issues and contactable through our family services functional mailbox. This strategy is also supported by our HMP Wealstun Care leavers strategy with reference to the needs of care leavers as a group who may need particular support. The strategy lead, Susan Field, is responsible for development of the strategy and services and monitoring delivery.

We will publish widely our strategy and monitor delivery and development through the family strategy meeting bringing together partners, monitoring information, family and prisoner views and recommendations and giving feedback to prisoners and their families on progress and development. This will include specific needs of those with protected characteristics including care leavers.

**Our family and significant other services**

**Keeping in contact and Visiting HMP Wealstun**

All our visiting and contact information is provided to prisoners and visitors in the form of an information booklet which is updated and maintained by Jigsaw, our family support service.



As a prison we prioritise staff and resources to ensure our visits timetable and mail system is always delivered as planned giving confidence and assurance to prisoners and their families.

We ensure fair and equal access for prisoners and visitors with protected characteristics with needs a reviewed and met as part of this and our prison wide equalities strategy.

We aim to ensure all families and visitors feel they are treated with decency and respect and their interaction with the Prison and staff is positive. We have feedback forms in the visitor’s centre and visits area and welcome thoughts on experience of visits.

We will ensure that family and significant others contact through telephone conversations, letters and visits is a prison priority and encouraged with care and dignity.

We have an excellent visitors’ centre open an hour before visits to welcome and support visitors providing;

* Toilets with disability access and baby changing facilities.
* Disabled parking
* Play facility inside
* Jigsaw’s Family support team on hand to support families and visitors on all visits days with any concerns or queries and particularly for those on a first visit. We hold social visits everyday apart from Monday and Wednesday morning.

**Arranging to visit a prisoner at Wealstun**

Visits are arranged by the ‘visits booking’ process which we regularly test for effectiveness.

By phone: 01937 444599 Monday - Friday (excluding bank holidays)

By the internet: [www.gov.uk/prison-visits](http://www.gov.uk/prison-visits)

[socialvisits.wealstun@justice.gov.uk](mailto:socialvisits.wealstun@justice.gov.uk)

**Extended visit days**

In addition to daily social visits, we hold regular extended family visits days. Prisoners can apply to take part with places granted following a Risk assessment to ensure safety of all. Prisoners can also invite a significant other such as Personal Advisor or social worker if a care leaver for example for those who may not have close family or friend.

We hold themes for these days building activities around them, welcomed particularly by younger visitors, such as sports, Jubilee celebrations and Arts and Crafts as recent examples.

**Facilities available when visiting**

Facilities in the visit’s areas include;

* Café serving hot and cold drinks and snacks
* Play facilities and play worker
* Visits Hall is part of the Breastfeeding Friendly scheme
* Gender neutral disability compliant toilet
* Baby change provision
* Hearing loop

**Breastfeeding Friendly**

Our Visitors’ Centre and Visits Hall are breastfeeding friendly. We understand the importance of breastfeeding and want to ensure that mothers feel comfortable breastfeeding in our Visitors’ Centre and Visits Hall when bringing babies to visit their fathers. We have signed up to the Breastfeeding Network Breastfeeding Friendly Scheme.

**Contact beyond visits**

* Letters – Family and friends can use letters to communicate. All letters received are reviewed and sent on to prisoners.
* E-mail a Prisoner - Familyand friends can send e-mails to prisoners using [www.emailaprisoner.com](http://www.emailaprisoner.com) Prisoners are also able to use this service.
* Icon

  Description automatically generatedPrisoner Voicemail - Family and friends can leave voicemails for prisoners to listen to and reply to using the PIN phones using [www.prisonvoicemail.com](http://www.prisonvoicemail.com)
* In Cell telephones– all prisoner cells have a phone for use with a prisoner’s pin phone number. These are for outgoing calls only.
* Social visits can also be held virtually through our ‘Prison Video’ system. <https://prisonvideo.com/>

**Contact arrangements for concerned families and others – safer custody hotline**

Friends / Family members who have concerns regarding safety of a prisoner within HMP Wealstun can contact the Safer Custody hotline –01937 444774 24 hours a day.

This is an answerphone service where concerns can be left, the answer phone is checked numerous times throughout the day with concerns acted upon and feedback given to those who raised the concern. During out of hours (4.30pm – 8.30am) these calls are diverted through to our control room, and duty manager informed. Feedback will be given to those raising concerns.

The effectiveness of the system is checked by our family team but families are also invited to feedback to the prison via the family services mail box.

**Emergency Contact**

For friends / family that are concerned about a prisoner and it is an emergency please contact the switchboard on ***01937 444400***

Who will contact the duty manager .

**Safeguarding**

Our Safeguarding policy ensures our approach is safe for all those involved with clear process and procedures to follow to keep all safe ensure any concerns are raised in the appropriate way. Our safeguarding lead is the Senior probation officer in the prison contactable via our OMU functional mail : [**OMU.Wealstun@justice.gov.uk**](mailto:OMU.Wealstun@justice.gov.uk)

We recognise not all family relationships are positive family members may sometimes be the direct or indirect victims of a prisoner’s offence such as domestic abuse. These individuals have the right to protection from their perpetrator and in all cases, permission should be sought from the victim and any relevant partner agencies before making contact. This will enable the victim/family unit to be supported in the community. E.g., Victim Liaison Officer or Local Authority Social Services.’ If you receive unwanted contact from a prisoner and you want this to stop, please contact the unwanted prisoner contact service on: 0300 060 6699

**Family and Prisoner family support services and activities**

Jigsaw - Family Support Services HMP Wealstun

Jigsaw are our family services provider here at Wealstun. With Jigsaw Family Support Workers and play workers in post who can support all prisoners and families. All aspects of the service is open to all families and includes;

* Information regards family support services across the Prison service and external agencies.
* Telephone, email, and face to face support for prisoners and their families on a wide range of issues.
* Visitor information booklet and additional support to first time visitors.
* Play worker support during all weekend and holiday visits.
* Extended visit days in partnership with the prison.
* Family Learning courses run throughout the year.
* Virtual Family Forums for families of those at HMP Wealstun
* Storybook Dads - fathers record a story for their child on CD in partnership with the Storybook Dads charity.

The family services team can be contacted on: 01937 444620

Or email: [FamilySupport.Wealstun@justice.gov.uk](mailto:FamilySupport.Wealstun@justice.gov.uk)

**Prison-wide approach to family and significant other support services**

We want everyone working in the prison to understand how they contribute to this strategy so that family is ‘the golden thread’ throughout custody. Further services include:

**Assessment of prisoners family needs when first arriving** - At Wealstun an outline Family support and services is given. We also encourage those with care experience to make themselves known for specific support as part of out Care leavers strategy.

**Prison officer Key worker** - All prisoners have an identified Prison officer Key worker supporting prisoners on all aspects of prison life and resettlement. We provide awareness and support to key workers in their role ensuring family is a focus of regular key work conversations.

**Working with families and other partners** Where possible and when appropriate, relevant staff should be willing to contact prisoners’ families or significant others to share important information. After ensuring safe guarding arrangements are adhered to. Partners and staff staff will also undertake to inform other HMPPS staff to inform them of important family and significant other issues . This information sharing should also be extended to relevant community based organisations around family services issues.

**Involve Prisoners families –** At times we will with consent involve families in supportfor prisoners particularly when prisoners may having difficulty coping this is managed through our safer custody team.

**We identify and support prisoners who do not receive visits -** We write to them offering a range of support services including assisted Prison visits information; enhanced phone calls; Prison visitors scheme (NAOPV) Bridge letter writing befriending project

**Substance Misuse service -** Our DART team in the prison involve family members in someone’s recovery and when planning for release where requested.

When preparing for release we consider family circumstances and needs signposting to relevant services and support. With also the option for views of families to be involved in resettlement plans where appropriate.

**Connecting and developing our services with the wider community**

HMP Wealstun mainly accommodates prisoners from West Yorkshire but also increasingly the wider Yorkshire and Humber area and beyond. We connect with community partners in support of our work here.

Key areas of work are:

* Representation on West Yorkshire Region Reducing Reoffending boards.
* Connecting with local family and adult services including safeguarding boards
* Working with regional charities in support of resettlement and family reintegration.

**Update on development plans from 2024 to 2025**

* We have brought in activities to suit needs of all ages of children and planning to add family visits days for those without children
* Reviewed our tea bar provision , brought in goody bags and continue to review. .
* We have developed our schools project which gives schools more understanding of the impact on children of having parents in custody .
* We have established care leaver forums and champions across the Prison

**Coming up for 2025-2026 our development plan priorities**

* Ensure our visits are inclusive of those with additional needs.
* Build on our culturally sensitive family and resettlement services delivery.
* Increase family learning opportunities in partnership with Local Authorities across West Yorkshire and our community living unit

* Review uptake and access to visits and video calls
* Build services for those without support in the community

To meet our priorities, we will commit to:

**Consultation and feedback with families and significant others**

* Regular virtual family forums for service feedback and evaluation
* Family survey delivered twice a year
* Family Strategy meeting to review complaints

**Consultation and feedback with Prisoners**

* Prisoner consultation forums
* Review prisoner complaints
* Include prisoner representation at the family meeting

**Learning and development**

* Perspective of the family understood by all staff and agencies working with prisoners and families improving our services



**We are keen to hear your views on all . If you would like to comment or feedback into our strategy, please contact us via the family services team:**

**01937 444620** [**FamilySupport.Wealstun@justice.gov.uk**](mailto:FamilySupport.Wealstun@justice.gov.uk)