

HMP & YOI Bronzefield

Family and Significant Others **STRATEGY 2023-2025**

# Contents. . .

* Director’s Message
* Facts and Figures
* Aims of the strategy
* Our Population
* Measuring Success
* Visits
* Safeguarding
* Interventions
* Feedback
* Birth and Mother’s Charter
* Development plan

Director’s Message. . .

Families and significant others can play a vital role in facilitating a safer and calmer atmosphere within HMP Bronzefield and following release into the community.

Our strategy to strengthen ties with families and significant others compliments our overarching commitment to operate a safe, secure and enabling prison for staff, prisoners and visitors. Meaningful and constructive relationships with families and significant others whilst in custody can reduce anxiety, mitigate the frustrations and isolation of imprisonment, and potentially reduce violence.

This strategy has been influenced by *the HMPPS (Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service) Delivering Effective Family Practise Operating Guidance.* The following quote is the opening paragraph to the guidance which firmly places families and their significant others at the centre of reform:

***‘Family and significant relationships are considered as a key means by which we can prevent reoffending and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational crime. Supporting a prisoner in a meaningful and constructive relationship with his or her family or significant others, should be a primary focus for anyone caring for those in custody who hope to achieve positive change and transform lives. HMPPS therefore has a moral and ethical responsibility to assist any meaningful and constructive relationship in preparation for their release.’***

This strategy is also influenced by the Lord Farmer report of 2017 *‘The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners’’ Family Ties to Prevent Re-offending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime,* and theStrengthening Prisoners’ Family Ties HMPPS Policy Framework.

When a woman comes to prison their family ties are likely to consist of their parent/s (who may have their own health issues), and their children (many of whom are in the care of their already struggling parents).

There is an ongoing interest in the relationship between prisoners and their families, both in terms of the role of family as a conduit to reducing reoffending and how offending behaviour impacts on children and families.

As mothers are predominantly viewed as primary carers family engagement has an important relevance within a female prison for both prisoner and families alike. There is strong evidence that shows working with families within a custodial setting develops benefits in terms of reducing reoffending.

Findings from several Resettlement Needs Analysis’ and relevant surveys (such as Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction) show that family circumstances and relationships in childhood have a strong influence on an individual’s future and their behaviour.

Prisoners contact with their families is an important factor in their transition back into society and is a significant factor to successfully reducing reoffending. Prisoners who maintain family ties within custody are more likely to secure accommodation and employment upon release resulting in a lower reconviction rate than those who receive no family support.

Most prisoners see their families as important to them and a significant means of support while they are in custody. Therefore, I and the staff team at Bronzefield are committed through this strategy in supporting our women to strengthen their ties with families and significant others.

**Jonathan French**

**Prison Director – HMP & YOI Bronzefield**

**FACT AND FIGURES**

* For **85%** of mothers in prison it is the first time they have been separated from their children for a significant amount of time.
* Only around **1 in 4** imprisoned mothers report that their children lived with their partner during their imprisonment.
* **Only half** of the women who had lived with or were in contact with their children prior to imprisonment had received a visit since going into prison.
* Maintaining contact with children is made more difficult for women in prison due to the distances they are held from their home area. This is on average, **66 miles**. This is due to the limited number of female prisons.
* At least **20%** of women in prison are lone parents before imprisonment, compared to **9%** of the general population.
* Of **69%** of prisoners who received visits, **41%** went on to re-offend within 12 months.
* Of **31%** of prisoners who did not receive visits**, 68%** went on to re-offend within 12 months. Ministry of Justice, Longitudinal Cohort Study 2013 – Hopkins and Brenton Smith

**FACT AND FIGURES**

* It is estimated that over **200,000** children each year are affected by parental imprisonment.
* There are no definitive statistics on the number of offenders who are parents, the number of children who have a parent in prison or what happens to dependents when parents are imprisoned.
* The odds of prisoners reoffending are **39% lower** for those who receive visits from a family member.
* Prisoners who improve their family ties are **less likely** to use class A drugs on release from prison.
* In 2021, **63%** of women reported having a child under the age of 18 and its likely many are single parents and thus have more caring responsibilities.
* **A quarter** of prisoners were formally in the care of the local authority. Yet the leaving care population represents about **1%** of young people.
* Only **5%** of children with a mother in prison remain in the family home.
* An estimated **24-31%** of female offenders have dependent children.

Aims of our Strategy. . .

* To reduce the risk of reoffending by ensuring relationships are not only maintained but strengthened by maintain contact and a feeling of purpose whilst in custody.
* To help prisoners forge a new identity for themselves, which is an important precursor to desist from crime, based on being a good role model to their children and families.
* To engage partners, parents and families who also need support, not just because of their key role they can play in rehabilitation, but also because of the hidden sentence they are serving.
* To understand that ‘good’ family contact has an important role to play, not only in supporting residents whilst they are in custody but also supporting their rehabilitation after release.
* To Reduce the risk of intergenerational offending.
* To embed the Motherhood Charter developed between Bronzefield, Peterborough and Dr Lucy Baldwin. This can be viewed at Annex A.
* To recognise and understand the unique needs of our diverse population such as foreign nationals, Care Experienced and those far from home to provide a bespoke service.
* To outline the provisions and interventions that HMP & YOI Bronzefield offer to both prisoners and families alike and to provide a framework that is dynamic. This will lead to improving outcomes and informing future developments and improvements to ensure that Family Engagement works for all prisoners within Bronzefield. Our development plan can be viewed at Annex B.

***In summary, this strategy will contribute towards improving outcomes for children of offenders, improving wellbeing for the whole family, reducing the risk of re-offending, and improving awareness and access towards key issues regarding family support.***

# Our Population. . .

HMP & YOI Bronzefield is a modern purpose-built prison for women that opened in June 2004 performing the function of a local prison and accepting prisoners direct from the courts.

HMP & YOI Bronzefield has an operational capacity of 527which includes a 12 bed Mother and Baby Unit and is run by Sodexo Justice Services.

# Measuring Success

# There are several ways that Bronzefield are held accountable to the service they deliver to the women in our care and our offers to families and significant others. These include;

# His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP). *Our latest inspection took place on 24th January – 31st January 2022.*

# Measuring the Quality of Prisoners’ Lives (MQPL) Date of Survey 23rd - 26th August 2021

# HMPPS Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s)

# Feedback

# **What Success looks like;**

* Reduction in the number of prisoners who do not maintain contact with the outside world whilst in custody.
* Mothers and grandmothers have a voice which informs our wider strategy.
* Women who are primary carers are supported to continue this role on release whilst in custody.
* Reduction in levels of violence and self-harm.
* Families or significant others are involved in our procedures such as sentence planning, resettlement planning and managing violence behaviour via the Challenge, Support and Intervention Plans.
* More prisoners return to their family home on release and continue to receive support.
* Staff understand the needs of women who are mothers and grandmothers and are confident to discuss this with women.
* Women with children over the age of 18 are not excluded in our strategy and continue to receive support.
* Care Experienced re-establish contact with their Personal Advisor in the community and access relevant services and support whilst in custody and on release.
* We understand contact with family members may be inappropriate and not beneficial to either the prisoner or their relative. They may be the victim of criminal activity or strong influencers provoking criminal behaviour.

# **Bronzefield’s Children, Family & Significant Other**

# **- Committee -**

# Our Children, Family & Significant Other Committee meet on a quarterly basis to review our delivery against, policy, HMIP expectations, prisoner & visitor feedback and is our commitment to continuous development in this area.

# **Terms of Reference**

* Maintain and build family ties through multidisciplinary prison representation
* To monitor and develop family services that help reduce the risk of re-offending
* Develop working partnerships with key stakeholders
* To develop and review a working action plan based on the strategy document
* Oversee the delivery of family services (HMIP compliance, MQPL and Survey/Focus Group Feedback)
* Increase engagement of prisoner’s families to ensure family members have a better understanding of what services are available within HMP Bronzefield.
* To analyse feedback from prisoners on family services through Key Worker sessions
* To provide pregnant prisoners with all the available information and support
* To monitor engagement with maternity and health care services
* To identify the prisoners most at risk and agree follow up action
* To provide ongoing support for mothers who have undergone separation
* To review safeguarding procedures from the reception process through to release

# **Agenda**

* Feedback from departments involved with Families, Children & Significant Others
* Perinatal Prison Update
* Family Support Worker Update
* Prisoners who do not receive visits
* Data sets
* Safeguarding Update
* Policy and Strategy Review
* External Partners
* Any other business

Visits. . .

**Visits Timetable inc. Legal Visits**

The Social Visits timetable is as follows.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Monday** | 1400 – 1500 | 1600 - 1700 |  |
| **Tuesday** | 1400 - 1600 | 1700 – 1800 |  |
| **Wednesday** | 1400 – 1600 | 1700 – 1800 |  |
| **Thursday** | 1400 – 1500 | 1600 – 1800 |  |
| **Friday** | 1400 - 1600 |  |  |
| **Saturday** | 0930 – 1145 | 1400 – 1500 | 1600 – 1700 |
| **Sunday** | 0930 - 1145 | 1400 - 1500 | 1600 - 1700 |

After consultation with the Prison Council, individuals, focus groups and surveys the Visits timetable has been reviewed. The new timetable includes longer visiting sessions and increased visiting slots.

The women can book their own visits via the pods on their landings.

Legal visits occur in the Visits Hall every morning, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and daily on Mondays and Fridays. Legal visits will be held in the new Video Link building as from May 2023.

**The Visits Hall**

The Visits Hall has capacity for 25visits at a time, with the women allowed up to 3 adult visitors at a time and unlimited child visitors.

The Visits Hall has a Cafeteria, called Vita Nova, which is very popular with the women and their visitors and offers a wide range of hot and cold freshly made food and beverages. We have now introduced table service to ensure visit times can be maximised with loved ones rather than queuing for refreshments.

**Extended Visits**

Visits staff will accommodate extending visits wherever possible and they are happy to support family ties in this way. It is common for visits to be extended to a whole afternoon, upon request, which both women and their visitors appreciate thoroughly.

**Family Learning**

Bronzefield offers a wide variety of learning and education opportunities that contribute to family learning. These include;

* Storybook Mums
* Peer Support
* Ofsted registered Nursery for children living on MBU
* Family Stay and Play activities
* Ante Natal education
* Pregnancy Wellbeing
* Health Visitor access
* Baby Massage
* Circle of Security
* Distance Learning
* English E1-L1
* Maths E1-L2
* ESOL Entry Level 1-3
* BICS cleaning and Hazards cleaning
* Art
* Healthy Living – L1
* Nutrition – L2
* Fitness Instructing – L2
* Employability Skills
* Catering Qualifications
* Hair and Beauty Qualifications

**Play Facilities**

The Visits Hall has a large Play Area for children where they can interact with their family. As well as the Play Area, there is the option for the women and their children to engage in activities at their table while on their visit, this includes drawing, colouring and games.

**Community Café**

In the external Visitors Centre, there is a Community Café where visitors can relax prior to or after their visit. The Café has a wide range of freshly made sandwiches and cakes and hot and cold drinks.

**Family Room**

Bronzefield’s family room is a child-centric, enriching play environment which is in the prison’s visiting area. It is designed to support positive interactions between children and their relatives; and to encourage more children, to visit more frequently, so that family relationships can be maintained, to support reduced reoffending.

The space contains defined play areas, for babies through to teens, opportunities for children and their parents to enjoy role play, art, construction, reading, games, and homework activities together. Building and sustaining family ties is not only a vital part of successful rehabilitation but it plays an important role in improving the life chances of the next generation.

There are separate baby changing facilities located at the back of the family room which all visitors/carers are welcome to use when needed. Essentials such as nappies and wipes are provided to use if required.

**Child Contact Visits**

Supervised contact visits are when a child spends time withsomeone close to them who they do not live with. Such visits are overseen by a professional or family member to ensure the safety of the child and to monitor what is in their best interests. The purpose of contact visits is to develop and maintain family ties and to provide a child with a sense of belonging.   Such visits are organised by our Family Support Worker to ensure that consistency is in place for both mother and child. Photographs are offered during these sessions to enable life story work.

The prison work with families and professionals where the children are “Looked After” by Children Services. The prison will advocate for the mother to be involved and be present at meetings where it involves children, she has parental responsibility for or where this is shared with a Local Authority.

**Purple Visits**

Purple Visits enables the women to have virtual visits for those visitors who struggle to come to Bronzefield. The women can book Purple Visits themselves and have regular 30-minute virtual visits regularly. These occur in a room within the Visits Hall that offers privacy and in the MBU unit as well as on the Houseblocks. This has proved very popular and successful with the women and has been used to facilitate virtual visits abroad.

**Prisoners who do not receive Visits**

Women who do not receive visits are identified monthly and offered several options for support.

The option for Purple Visit is always explored in the first instance and if this is not an option then Visits staff will support with the following;

The Official Prisoner Visit scheme will be implemented where women can apply for voluntary visitors to come in and see them.

We also work alongside Prisoner Penfriends who are an organisation that women can apply for to have external penfriends.

The option for extra phone is also available.

**Foreign Nationals**

Foreign National Offenders (FNO) represent the second biggest cohort of prisoners housed in the general estate and also has its own distinct estate, which is expanding. There should not be an assumption that because a prisoner is a foreign national and subject to deportation that they do not have family resident in the UK who can visit. It is important to facilitate a FNO’s contact with family who reside overseas. At Bronzefield we adopt a flexible approach for FNO’s to access the telephone and virtual visits to enable them to engage in meaningful contact with family resident in different time zones. FNOs are more likely to have family abroad which is an obstacle to ongoing family visits.

Every FNO will receive an airmail letter each week to correspond with family members abroad. If they are not receiving visits additional funds will be given to call home. Prisoners are encouraged to utilise Purple Visits where possible. Staff will work with FNO to try and identify whether a prisoner has a “significant other” in the UK if all family members are living overseas.

# Safeguarding. . .

**Safeguarding Policy**

Sodexo Justice Services operates by a Child Safeguarding Policy and an Adult Safeguarding Policy which reflect HMPPS Policy Frameworks. These also cover site specific processes for how to raise a safeguarding concern. If staff have a cause for concern for any child or adult that visit’s the prison, either in a social or official capacity staff have a duty of care to report these concerns to the relevant authorities and our processes will be followed accordingly. Please speak to a member of staff if you have something to report.

All women are interviewed at Reception when they arrive at prison. The staff will ask several safeguarding questions relating to their children or caring responsibilities for vulnerable adults and enquire who is providing ongoing care.

**Training**

All staff at Bronzefield will have undergone Safeguarding Awareness Training as part of their induction package. There are certain areas of the prison that require further in-depth training of safeguarding procedures. These areas include, Visits, Mother and Baby Unit, and Offender Management Unit. This training is facilitated by our Local Authority- Surrey to ensure the most relevant up to date training is being delivered to our staff.

**Family Support Worker**

Bronzefield has a dedicated Family Support Worker in post. Their role is to support mother primarily maintain contact with their children. Whether this be through liaison with Children Services to facilitate supervised contact session, or to advocate and liaise with family members about the visiting process. Our Family Support Worker is dedicated to assist mothers, care leavers and families get the advice they need.

**Pregnancy and Mother and Baby Unit**

Bronzefield has a dedicated 12 bed mother and baby unit, for mothers who are due to have their children whilst in prison. Placements are recommended through a multidisciplinary board which includes a Social Worker from the mother’s home area and decisions are made on the best interest of the child and the safety of the other mothers and children residing on the unit.

We have a dedicated Pregnancy & Mother and Baby Liaison Officer who sees all pregnancy women within 5 days of arrival into custody. The PMBLO will offer practical items required during pregnancy and also guide the expectant mother through the MBU application process if they wish to apply. As we are one of few female prisons to operate a Mother and Baby Unit, many women remain in our care from pregnancy to birth or separation and receive the same services i.e. access to a midwife and health visitor as they would in their local community. We also work closely with our partner, Birth Companions, who provide an invaluable service to women in our care both in custody and upon release.

**Care Experienced / Young Adults**

It is estimated that a quarter of prisoners were formally in the care of a local authority. Yet the leaving care population represents about 1% of young people.

Care Experienced are more likely to have experienced significant trauma and abuse and other disadvantage that can put them more at risk of violence, self-harm and suicide when in prison.

This can affect their ability to form relationships that will help them to desist from offending and settle back into the community after their sentence.

Those cared for in the local authority may have been denied visits or contact with their birth family members because of the risks associated with them reconnecting. However, reconnecting with their extended family and feeling someone cares about them might make a significant difference to their motivation to get through their sentence well and turn away from crime.

Care Experienced are identified by the Offender Management Unit through an initial screening process. They are then sent a questionnaire to gather further information about their support needs. These are then shared with the young persons Prison Offender Manager to ensure this is reflected within their sentence and care plans. Once they have been identified they will continue to receive bespoke ongoing support dependent on their needs. We actively try to re-engage prisoners with their Social Worker/Personal Advisor in the community for continued support whilst in custody and beyond release.

# Interventions. . .

**Story Book Mums**

Women at Bronzefield who have children are able to create and send a story disc to their children. Parents can bring comfort to their children and share the joy of storytelling from behind bars. We can help support less confident readers and the editing process means that even non-readers can take part. Participants are recorded reading a story with an audio recorder. We edit out any mistakes and add music and sound effects. The finished story is burnt to CD so that the child can hear the story being read to them.

**Childrens Birthdays**

We know this can be a difficult time for women in prison and we will identify opportunities to support women to celebrate these special occasions with their children within our Development Plan.

**Peer Workers**

There are a number of peer workers who provide emotional support to this group of women. Our Perinatal Peer Worker will support those who are pregnant, living on our mother and baby unit, have been separated from a child within the past 12 months or experienced a pregnancy loss in that time. Our Motherhood Mentor is a great source of support to all mothers and grandmothers at Bronzefield, listening and gaining feedback on how we can better support them.

**Family Days**

Family days and other planned activities help to improve positive relationships between prisoners and their children or other family members. Regular and good quality contact time between an offending parent and their children, may prevent them from reoffending, as the responsibility and impact of separation may be an incentive for them not to re-offend. Women at Bronzefield are able to apply for family days which bring together prisoners and their families outside their statutory visit entitlement often in more informal settings.

A risk assessment is conducted for any prisoner wishing to take part in special children’s visits dedicated to enabling prisoners to spend time with their children or events which includes children and their carers’. A separate assessment is conducted for prisoners’ subject to Safeguarding Children: Child Contact procedures. While it may be appropriate for a prisoner to have access to a named child under close supervision; irrespective of the prisoner’s wishes the primary consideration must be whether it is in the child’s best interests for the prisoner and/or child to take part in such a visit/event. It may be unsafe to allow the same prisoner general access to children.

Bronzefield are committed to offer at least 4 Family Days per year. This will be advertised in the Visits Centre throughout the year. Please speak to a member of staff for further details.

**Restorative Families**

Restorative Families is an intervention that is a family centred approach developed by the prison to bring family members together to repair harm or conflict. Meetings are facilitated by trained members of staff and must be a voluntary consented process for all involved. Meetings between the prisoner and family members/s are carefully planned and structured to address the unique circumstances initially raised. It is a space for concerns to be put forward safely and an opportunity for thoughts to be expressed. The aim is to reach and achieve a positive outcome together. At the end of the meeting a plan is written up which is owned by the family and is supported by the prison. Any referrals for a Restorative Family intervention are to be discussed with a member of staff or a Prison Offender Manager.

# Feedback. . .

**Meet the Director**

There will be an opportunity for visitors to meet the Director every 6 months. This is to ask for feedback to improve people’s experiences of visits. This is advertised on the Pod and through posters in Visits and the Community Café.

**Surveys**

Surveys are distributed to all women who receive visits and their visitors every 3 months to ask what improvements can be made, and for them to rate their experience. All feedback will be recorded and analysed through the quarterly Families and Significant Others Committee meeting for continued developments to be made.

**Prisoner Forums**

Each quarter there will be a prisoner form where women will be invited to attend to meet with visits staff and management to hear feedback and views on visits, and listen to ideas and new opportunities to maintain family ties.

**Website**

Details of visits to the Prison can be found on the HMP Bronzefield website <https://www.bronzefield.co.uk/home.html>

This website provides details of visiting times and how to get to HMP Bronzefield, as well as contact details to be able to contact the prison regarding any visits queries.

This strategy will be reviewed annually and updated through the prisons Families and Significant Others Committee.

**Key Staff and Contact Details**

**If you’re worried about a friend or relative in prison at Bronzefield please call our**

**Family Concern Line on 01784 425 794**

This voicemail is checked, and calls are logged daily during weekdays. Concerns are followed up by our Safer Custody Team within 24 hours.

If your concern is urgent or during a weekend please contact the switchboard on 01784425690 and ask to speak to the Duty Manager.

**Staff with functional responsibility for the delivery of this Strategy:**

Jonathan French **Director**

Vicky Robinson **Deputy Director**

Colin Panrucker **Reception, Visits & Operations Manager**

Emma Charalambous **Perinatal Services Manager inc. Mother and Baby Unit (DSL)**

Caroline Dixon **Family Support Worker**

Ben Moorhouse **Public Protection and Offender Management Unit Team Leader**

**ANNEX A**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Birth Charter** | **Mothers Charter** |
|  | **Pregnancy** | **Arrival** |
|  | **Pregnant women in prison should:** | **On arrival all women will:** |
| 1 | have access to the same standard of antenatal care as women in the community | be asked about their children and care arrangements, as well as their wellbeing around maternal separation  |
| 2 | be able to attend antenatal classes and prepare for their baby’s birth | be able to access key telephone numbers from their mobile on arrival, or assisted to attain key numbers  |
| 3 | be housed, fed and moved in a way that ensures the well-being of mother and baby | be allowed unlimited phone calls on reception to ensure the welfare of all of their dependants regardless of time of arrival |
| 4 | be told whether they have a place on a Mother and Baby Unit as soon as possible after arriving in prison | understand what support is available in relation to being a mother and information about how to access it, including facility to contact their children |
| 5 | have appropriate support if electing for termination of pregnancy  | be supported to inform their children of their reception into custody  |
| 6 |  | be provided a HMP specific Motherhood booklet and access to peer support via the Motherhood Mentors if requested  |
| 7 | be offered and supported through the application and decision-making process to apply for a Mother and Baby Unit place if they have a child in the community under 18 months in their care |
|  | **Childbirth** | **Visits** |
|  | **During childbirth, women should:** | **All women wanting visits will:** |
| 8 | have access to a birth supporter of their choice | be helped to prepare themselves and their children for visits and to understand the prison environment |
| 9 | be accompanied by officers who have had appropriate training and clear guidance | be allowed to see all of their children in a visit, regardless of the number, providing this is in the best interests of the children |
| 10 | be provided with essential items for labour and the early postnatal period | be able to freely play and physically interact with their children which will only be reviewed if and when security/safety issues arise |
| 11 | receive appropriate care during transfer between prison and hospital | have access to bookable private space for sensitive issues (such as final contact visits) and celebrations such as children’s birthdays |
| 12 |  | have access to family friendly interactive resources to enhance the visit experience for children of all ages and needs  |
| 13 | have access to at least four family days per year which is not determined by their IEP status |
| 14 | have their booked visits checked prior to a planned transfer and wherever possible, delayed to facilitate rebooking or enable contact with family to provide details in advance |
| 15 | be supported following difficult visits and welfare checked  |

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| --- |
| **Support** |
|  | **Women with babies in prison should:** | **Women with children will:** |
| 16 | be encouraged and supported in their chosen method of infant feeding | be considered for transfer to an establishment as close to their children as possible to ensure regular and meaningful contact  |
| 17 | be supported to express, store and transport their breast milk safely, if they are separated from their baby | know their legal rights and have access to family law advice  |
| 18 | be entitled to additional family visits | be supported through an individualised support plan to help them maintain or regain contact with their children |
| 19 | be given the same opportunities and support to nurture and bond with their babies as women in the community | be informed of their entitlements to ROTL to maintain family ties, including grandmothers |
| 20 | be able to access counselling when needed | be supported to engage with services in the community regarding their children such as schools and social services  |
| 21 |  | who are foreign nationals, will be provided with additional phone credit, airmail letters and support with Purple Visits to maintain contact with children overseas |
|  |  |  |
| **Resettlement** |
|  | **Women with babies in prison should:** | **Prior to release we will:** |
| 22 | receive appropriate resettlement services after release from prison | work collaboratively with mothers/grandmothers and agencies to determine what support is required  |

**Annex B**

# Development Plan. . .