

The purpose, role and impact of 'Through the Gate' mentoring in the resettlement of prisoners and well- being of their families

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Abstract

This thesis synthesises the findings and implications of three empirical research studies undertaken between 2002 and 2017 to examine the role, purpose and impact of mentoring relationships on the desistance journey of male ex-prisoners, with a particular focus upon the importance of ‘through the gate’ continuity of contact upon the outcomes achieved. The third study within this portfolio of research focuses upon Invisible Walls Wales (IWW), a mentoring service for prisoners and their families and expands the emphasis to shed light upon the impact of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring delivered within a multi-agency context on the lives of ex-prisoners, their families and children.

A review of the available literature is provided regarding the role and purpose of mentoring individuals in the Criminal Justice System, together with research evidencing the impact of the mentoring relationship upon recidivism and the intermediate outcomes achieved on the offender’s desistance journey. Previous research highlighting the impact of family relationships on resettlement outcomes and likelihood of re-offending is also examined, along with a review of the existing literature exploring the impact of mentoring, family interventions and multi-agency support upon prisoners’ families and children.

Each of the three studies represents a process and impact evaluation utilising a quasi-experimental, mixed methods approach to examine ‘through the gate’ mentoring initiatives received by adult, male prisoners, and in the case of the third study, by their families and children. The findings of the first two studies together indicate that establishing a mentoring relationship prior to release is a key factor in encouraging post release continuity of contact, which effectively bridges the gap between custody and community. Further, ‘through the gate’ mentoring support appears to have had a positive impact upon intermediate outcomes of rehabilitation such as reduced substance misuse, improved accommodation and employment outcomes and is also indicated as a factor in reducing reconviction, particularly where pre-release cognitive behavioural and motivational work has been carried out by professionally trained staff. The third and final study within the portfolio moves beyond a focus on the individual offender to also evidence the impact and effectiveness of a ‘Whole Family’ approach to mentoring delivered within a multi-agency context on prisoners’ families and children. Findings indicate unprecedented high levels of sustained, productive ‘through the gate’ contact with all family members and improved outcomes for all recipients, particularly the children, as shown by a reduction in factors linked to the risk of intergenerational offending. Finally, the ‘Whole Family’ approach was also associated with profound shifts in the paternal identity of many prisoner mentees, triggering a

strong motivation to change and commitment to family life that was frequently sustained following the prisoner's release and over the longer-term.

By comparing the findings of these three studies, this thesis provides new evidence regarding the effectiveness of mentoring delivered within a multi-agency context, both for supporting ex-prisoners to progress on their desistance journey and in improving the lives of their families/significant others in the community. Taken together, these studies offer important implications for policy and practice, indicating that, 1) mentoring, when delivered 'through the gate' and incorporating cognitive-motivational support can represent a critical 'lynchpin' in the delivery of successful resettlement services, 2) where appropriate, mentoring should take a 'Whole Family' approach and be delivered to prisoners and their families/significant others as a holistic unit, and 3) mentoring should be delivered within the framework of a multi-agency service context to effectively meet the wide and varied needs of all mentees.

To conclude, the successful outcomes achieved for prisoners and all family members by the Family Integration Mentors in IWW together with the pro-social shifts achieved in prisoners' internal narrative, also raise a bigger question regarding the importance of a 'Whole Family' approach as representing a core element of all rehabilitation and resettlement work with offenders.

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Chapter One: Introduction and background

1.0 Introduction

This document synthesises the findings and implications of three research studies undertaken between 2002 and 2017 to examine the role of ‘through the prison gate’ mentoring relationships in the resettlement and rehabilitation of male ex-prisoners. Each of the three studies, in which the candidate played a leading role in fieldwork, analysis, report writing and publications¹, evaluated mentoring initiatives delivered within prison and continuing into the community. A common thread running through all studies is the emphasis upon the role of the mentoring relationship and its influence upon offenders’ motivation and cognitive change as factors in their desistance journey. The focus of the third and most recent study (Clancy and Maguire, 2017a, b) moves beyond looking at benefits for the individual offender to investigate the role and effectiveness of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring delivered within the context of partnership-based support in improving outcomes for prisoners’ families and children.

The findings of each of these studies have already made a substantial contribution to the literature on the impact of mentoring relationships upon prisoners’ resettlement and motivation to desist from offending, as well as levels of social inclusion and their family functioning. The most recent of them², which emphasises the importance of helping prisoners to sustain and enhance relationships with their families and children, is having a growing impact on policy and practice in the UK and elsewhere. Its evidence has been used in a House of Lords report (Farmer, 2017) and is informing the development of ‘Whole Family’ support and services in the UK to improve prisoners’ parenting skills and the quality of relationships with their children and families - with a view ultimately to reduce the risk of intergenerational offending.

By synthesising the findings of these three studies together, this thesis offers new insights into the mechanisms underpinning mentoring services with male prisoners and their children and families and draws out some important implications for practice by providing a deeper analysis of the key

¹ See Appendix 4 for a detailed description of the candidate’s role in each study and associated publications.

² Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2017a) ‘Prisoners’ children and families: Can the walls be ‘invisible’? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales’. University of South Wales; Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2017b) ‘Prisoners and their children: An innovative model of ‘Whole Family’ support’. *European Journal of Probation* 2017, Vol. 9(3) 210–230; Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2021) ‘He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man’: The Impact of a Specialist ‘Family Wing’ on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers. *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 2021, Vol.60. (1) 101-121.

ingredients for a 'successful' mentoring relationship. The value of 'whole family' support is emphasised, for improving continuity, voluntary service engagement and resettlement outcomes following release from prison; in improving the lives of prisoners' families and children; and in positively influencing the culture and practice of partner agencies in the community.

1.1 Background

Resettlement services for prisoners on release in the UK have varied in quality and scale according to the government policy of the time, but their main focus has traditionally been upon addressing the practical needs of individuals; principally accommodation, employment and assistance with accessing benefit payments (Maguire and Raynor, 2006). However, the publication of '*Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners*' (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002) helped to build a more comprehensive and complex picture of the needs of ex-prisoners, particularly those serving short term sentences, who tend to experience the greatest level of social need and the least post-release support (Maguire and Raynor, 2006; SEU, 2002). The report's recommendations were subsequently translated into policy in the government's '*Reducing Re-Offending National Action Plan* (Home Office 2004), which aimed to strengthen the focus upon reducing re-offending by addressing seven key 'pathways' to successful resettlement.³ This policy emphasised not only the practical circumstances of offenders but also the importance of attention to the internal agency and motivation of the offender to change; this was mainly reflected in the seventh pathway of the strategy, 'Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour'. Importantly, for the first time, the strategy directed attention to the significance of prisoners' families for their resettlement and rehabilitation, articulated in the sixth pathway, 'Children and Families of Offenders'.

A number of resettlement strategies and interventions have since been developed and implemented to address the two above-mentioned pathways, which are the main focus of this research. Many of these have included the use of 'mentors' (or differently labelled supporters with similar roles – see Chapter Two). Such interventions include peer mentoring schemes (in prison and in the community), programmes in prison and 'through the gate', mentoring as a stand-alone service, and mentoring to support engagement with other interventions (Taylor et al., 2013). However, despite its increasing popularity, research on mentoring and its impact remains limited in depth. While several studies have examined the relationship between mentoring and reoffending rates (e.g., Jolliffe & Farrington, 2007;

³ The seven resettlement pathways outlined in the Home Office (2004) Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan were: 1) Accommodation; 2) Education, Training and Employment; 3) Mental and Physical Health, 4) Finance, Benefit and Debt; 5) Children and Families of Offenders; 6) Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour and 7) Drugs and Alcohol.

Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2006), research into the mechanisms underpinning the mentoring relationship and any impacts that it has on the lives of offenders or their family members, is sparse (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014). Similarly, a Rapid Evidence Assessment of the intermediate outcomes of mentoring concluded that:

“There is a lack of good-quality research evidence on the impact of mentoring projects with offenders.... There is very limited evidence that mentoring programmes can increase coping abilities, ***improve family and peer relationships and reduce pro-criminal attitudes.***” [Taylor, 2013:2 emphasis added].

Furthermore, while there is also growing academic and policy recognition of the potential benefits of improving family contact and relationships during the sentence, (as evidenced by Lord Farmer’s review in 2017, which concluded that, “*good family relationships must be a golden thread running through the processes of all prisons*” (2017:8)), empirical evidence of the effectiveness of the various kinds of family-oriented interventions remains limited. Roberts et al. (2017) conducted a systematic literature review evaluating the effectiveness of family interventions in prison; all reviewed evidence was from the U.S, the majority of studies were descriptive, and only two identified reductions in re-offending rates among participating prisoners (Hagan and King, 1992; Keiley, 2007). They concluded that there was little empirical evidence regarding the efficacy of family interventions in the prison environment. Moreover, most of the effectiveness literature has focussed mainly on potential benefits in terms of reduced re-offending. Evidence about benefits for children and partners is even more sparse; indeed, the impact of family interventions on prisoners’ children is often inferred simply from evidence of change in the fathers (Halsey et al., 2002; Wilson et al., 2010). It is this lack of empirical evidence about the broader impact of mentoring relationships on prisoner resettlement and the mechanisms underpinning a ‘successful’ mentoring relationship, combined with the need for more evidence regarding the value of ‘Whole Family’ support, that this research portfolio addresses.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The overall purpose of this portfolio of research is to synthesise the findings of three published research studies to throw more light on the impact of the ‘through the prison gate’ mentoring relationship delivered in the context of multi-agency support upon prisoners and their families. The research has two overarching aims:

Aim 1

To explore the purpose, role and impact of ‘through the gate’ mentoring upon the resettlement and rehabilitation of ex-prisoners.

Specific research questions addressed under Aim 1:

- What is the role and purpose of the mentoring relationship with prisoners?
- How important is ‘through the gate’ continuity of contact in the resettlement of ex-prisoners?
- What impact does the mentoring relationship have upon the desistance journey?

Aim 2

To seek evidence about the impact of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring delivered within a context of multi-agency support on the lives of ex-prisoners, their families and children.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The remainder of this thesis is structured into six chapters. In Chapter Two, a review of the literature on the purpose, role and impact of mentoring in relation to adult prisoners is provided. Particular attention is paid to factors affecting offenders’ level of engagement in the relationship, with a focus upon the importance of ‘through the gate’ continuity of contact. A review of the literature pertaining to the impact of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring and multi-agency partnership working upon outcomes for the families and children of prisoners is provided in the second half of the chapter. Chapter Three provides a summary of, and key findings from the evaluation of the Focus on Resettlement programme (FOR), which represents the earliest study in this portfolio of research. Chapter Four describes the evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS), and Chapter Five discusses the results and conclusions drawn from the evaluation of the Invisible Walls Wales intervention, which represents the third and final study in the portfolio. Chapter Six provides a discussion of the key findings and implications of the three studies, situated within the context of the extant literature. Chapter Seven

concludes the thesis by drawing together the evidence from each of the three studies and considering how this collectively adds to the current knowledge base regarding the role and impact of mentoring delivered within a multi-agency context upon adult prisoners and their families.

Chapter Two: Review of the literature

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the current, peer reviewed literature on the role and impact of mentoring in relation to adult prisoners. The literature is examined to clarify firstly, how mentoring can be defined within this context, what different types of mentoring are undertaken with prisoners and what evidence exists for its impact upon the desistance journey. Evidence regarding the mechanisms underpinning a successful mentoring relationship with prisoner mentees, with a particular focus on ‘through the gate’ continuity of contact, is also considered. The second half of this chapter expands the focus to include a review of the evidence base in relation to the role of family relationships in the desistance journey. Relevant literature examining the impact of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring delivered within a multi-agency partnership context is examined, along with a review of the available literature in relation to improved outcomes for prisoners’ family members, including their children.

2.1 Defining the purpose of the mentoring relationship: What is a ‘mentor’?

The concept of mentoring is not new, indeed ancient Greek history tells the story of how ‘Mentor’, the loyal friend of Odysseus, was entrusted with the care of Odysseus’s son, Telemachus. The word ‘mentor’ has since come to mean a ‘loyal, wise, trusted teacher and friend’ (Dondero, 1997: 881). An examination of the available literature on mentoring reveals multiple definitions of the mentor/mentee relationship and indicates that it can take many forms. Different types of mentoring can include (but are not limited to) peer mentoring; volunteer mentors; paid professional mentors; youth mentoring; faith-based mentoring; mentoring as a befriending service; mentoring as an extension of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) for the purposes of increased monitoring and surveillance and mentoring in the workplace/education system (Chui and Cheng, 2013; Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014; Jolliffe and Farrington, 2007; Stacer and Roberts, 2018; Tarling et al., 2004). The terms used to describe mentoring can also differ, and often the terms befriending and mentoring are used interchangeably (Mentoring & Befriending Foundation, 2011b). However, according to the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, the main difference between the two can be attributed to the time limited and goal-focused nature of mentoring in contrast to the more informal relationship developed by ‘befrienders’ where goals are not necessarily clearly defined, time-limited or the main focus of the relationship (MBF, 2011b).

Holmes et al. (2010) state: 'mentoring is best described as a series of complex interactions between two individuals who have as their primary purpose the growth of the mentee' (2010: 336). Similarly, St James-Roberts et al. (2005) in their evaluation of Youth Justice Board mentoring schemes assert that, 'mentor programmes involve a trusting relationship in which a more experienced person helps, and provides a role model, for someone who is less experienced' (2005: 8). Tolan (2008) identifies four key characteristics of mentoring services: 1. Interaction between two individuals over an extended period of time; 2. the mentor possesses greater experience, knowledge or power than the mentee; 3. the mentee is in a position to imitate and benefit from the knowledge, skill, ability or experience of the mentor and; 4. the absence of role inequality that typifies other helping situations and is marked by professional training, certification or pre-determined status differences. As a result of the variation in the nature of the mentoring relationship and the multiple definitions which exist to describe it, the outcomes/measures of its success can also vary, depending upon the form it takes. However, for the purposes of the current study, the primary focus will be upon the use of professional paid mentors with adult prisoners in a 'through the gate' context from prison into the community.

Narrowing the parameters to the Criminal Justice context, Taylor et al. (2013) conceptualises the mentoring relationship as falling across three key dimensions. The first relates to who does the mentoring (peer or non-peer-led), the second focuses upon where the mentoring takes place (in prison, in community or through the prison gate) while the third examines how it links with other interventions (whether delivered as a stand-alone service or a package of support with other services). As Taylor et al. (2013) indicate, even within the CJS context, the mentoring relationship may vary considerably and consequently, one consistent definition does not exist. A report by Aitkin (2014) for the Centre for Social Justice states that, 'mentoring is a voluntary relationship of engagement, encouragement and trust. Its immediate priority is to offer support, guidance and practical assistance to offenders in the vulnerable period around their release. Its longer-term purpose is to help them find a stable lifestyle in which accommodation, employment, ties with family and friends, and a growing two-way relationship with the mentor all play their part in preventing a return to re-offending' (2014:12). Similarly, in their Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) of the intermediate outcomes associated with mentoring of ex-prisoners specifically, Taylor et al. (2013) state that there is a general acceptance that mentoring in this capacity involves: 1. a process in which a professional or a voluntary worker provides support and assistance to the person being mentored, 2. an imbalance of experience or expertise, but a relationship that is anchored in mutual respect and trust, and 3. provision of support that is ongoing rather than "one off". Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service

(HMPPS, 2019) defines mentoring as ‘a one-to-one non-judgmental relationship’ in which ‘an individual (mentor) gives time to support and encourage another (mentee)’.

Overall, within this context, the multiple definitions taken together imply that the main aim of mentoring is to provide offenders with positive role models who offer advice and from whom they can learn. The importance of the mentoring relationship in providing practical support to address the dynamic criminogenic needs of offenders such as substance misuse, homelessness and unemployment, together with social and emotional support to boost an individual’s ‘internal agency’ (Maruna, 2001) or belief in their own strengths and ability to desist from crime, are all implied by the various definitions described above. Finally, the ability of the mentoring relationship to encourage the development of pro-social relationships and embeddedness within family and community are also emphasised as a fundamental function of the mentor/mentee partnership.

Although the three studies comprising this portfolio do not explicitly seek to clarify understanding regarding the definition of mentoring, the studies offer some insight into the purpose of mentoring, as mentors in each of the schemes sought to provide both practical and emotional support to mentees. The third study in the portfolio emphasises the significant positive impact a ‘Whole Family’ approach to mentoring can make upon family relationships and family functioning. Further, as will be discussed in Chapter Six, the pro-social relationships developed played a crucial role in facilitating the development of social capital and improved community engagement amongst mentees (see Chapter Six for a more detailed discussion of the purpose and nature of the mentoring relationships developed by each of the schemes evaluated).

2.1.1 Mentoring in the Criminal Justice System: social welfare or surveillance?

Integration of mentoring within the Criminal Justice System raises complex issues surrounding its definition and purpose. Some even maintain that it represents a departure from having a benevolent focus upon the well-being of clients (Buck, 2018) to extend the control and reach of the CJS over their lives (Hannah-Moffett, 2000 and 2002; Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014). This ‘coerced rehabilitation’ (Maguire et al., 2019) has blurred the lines between the traditional role of the mentor as a ‘trusted teacher and friend’ (Dondero, 1997) and the mandatory requirements of the criminal justice system, where in some circumstances, mentors are required to report non-compliance, extending their role from one of social care into one that includes surveillance and social control (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014). Increased client caseloads, the ‘corporatisation’ of the voluntary sector services (Corcoran, 2011) and greater emphasis upon the goals of the criminal justice system - i.e., to reduce risk of harm

and re-offending - have resulted in the phenomenon termed, 'penal drift' (Maguire et al., 2019). This represents a dilution of the social welfare ethos and individualised, client-led approach traditionally associated with the delivery of mentoring services by the voluntary sector. As Hucklesby and Wincup (2014) note, 'transferring mentoring into the coercive and punitive environment of the criminal justice system results in a departure from the very principles and values, which are the basis of its usefulness elsewhere' (2014:373). Indeed, the candidate's finding that the use of Probation Officers as community mentors in the Phase Two pathfinders resulted in considerably lower levels of voluntary post release contact compared with Phase One appears to offer some support for this argument. This issue will be taken up further in Chapter Six. In the meantime, to assess the impact of this shift upon the ability of mentors to develop a 'voluntary relationship of engagement, encouragement and trust' (Aitkin, 2014:12), it will first be necessary to examine the key factors influencing the mentoring relationship, while also clarifying exactly what is meant by a 'successful' and/or 'effective' mentoring relationship.

2.2 Key factors influencing the mentoring relationship

The multiplicity of mentoring services being delivered across the CJS, combined with the lack of a consistent definition and/or purpose, has resulted in a similar lack of clarity regarding the mechanisms for its success; how do mentors achieve success with their clients and indeed, what constitutes a successful relationship? As outlined at the start of this chapter, while it is important to recognise the many ways in which mentoring can be delivered, the focus here is upon the use of paid, professional mentors to support the resettlement of adult, male prisoners. Nonetheless, even within this narrow parameter, there are multiple, possible variations in the context. For example, the mentoring relationship may begin in prison and continue 'through the gate' post release into the community. Alternatively, mentors may meet prisoners following release only, or restrict the relationship to the custodial sentence. The mentoring service may be delivered as a stand-alone service, or as is more often the case, as part of a holistic package of pre and post release interventions. Moreover, the focus of the work may be to address purely practical issues such as housing/employment/substance misuse, it may be to provide emotional support and a 'listening ear', or the relationship could also incorporate more structured cognitive behavioural counselling to address thinking skills and motivation. Notwithstanding the timing and focus of the mentoring relationship, the type of agency delivering the service may also affect the relationship fostered (Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006; Lewis et al., 2003a, b). It is therefore important to consider whether the mentors are employed by a third sector agency or a criminal justice agency such as HMPPS and how this influences the focus of the work and the engagement and continuity of contact with mentees. As will be seen in Chapter Three, the evaluation

of the FOR programme identified key differences in both the issues prioritised in mentees' action plans and in the extent of post release contact achieved by mentors employed in the voluntary sector compared with those working for the Probation Service. The implications of these findings regarding the nature of the mentoring relationship developed with voluntary as opposed to statutory service providers and subsequent mentee engagement for both policy and practice are discussed further in Chapter Six.

Many schemes also utilise ex-offenders themselves (peer mentors) to deliver the mentoring service. It is argued that peer mentors have a specialist role to play as 'identity models' in that they are living proof that a life of crime can be turned around (Maruna, 2001). They are often better able to engage those harder to reach individuals who may decline support from professional mentors, dismissing them as unable to understand their life experiences (Cook et al., 2008; Devilly et al., 2005). Further discussion of the benefits and drawbacks regarding the use of peer mentors is provided below in section 2.2.1.

2.2.1 Influence of the type of agency delivering mentoring support upon the mentoring relationship

Mentoring services can be delivered by a range of service providers across the private, statutory, and voluntary sectors and may utilise paid, professional mentors, volunteers and/or peers. Regardless of the type of agency providing the mentoring however, engagement with mentoring is always voluntary. The services studied within this portfolio span private, statutory, and voluntary providers, in some cases working in partnership. This raises broader questions about, for example, possible 'net widening' as Hucklesby and Wincup (2014:375) write, a voluntary service being delivered by a statutory provider 'brings a group not currently subject to supervision under the gaze of the state'. Further discussion of how this may impact upon the nature and focus of the service provided and the willingness of mentees to engage is provided in Chapter Six.

Many services are also delivered by faith-based agencies, particularly in the United States, but as the focus of the studies included within this thesis is upon the role and impact of professional paid mentors, literature pertaining to faith-based services will not be included. However, due to the widespread use of peer mentors in the UK and the recent policy focus upon increasing their numbers (HMPPS, 2021) the role of volunteer mentors and peer mentors will briefly be reviewed.

Hucklesby and Wincup (2014) examined three projects, which utilised mainly volunteers to deliver the mentoring service. The fact that the mentors weren't paid and were volunteering their time to help,

was viewed positively by the mentees as this was seen as 'altruistic' and the resulting mentor/mentee relationship was perceived as more 'natural', 'informal' and 'relaxed' (2014:378). This echoes the findings of Robinson-Edwards et al. (2020) who found that mentors' voluntary status was used as a means to emphasise their 'genuine care... Essentially, they provide time and expertise in return for no financial gain' (2020:494). However, some have argued that volunteer work cannot comfortably exist within the criminal justice context. Prison policies have been found to be a particularly challenging aspect of the mentoring experience within the custodial context, impacting the contact time available for the mentor-mentee relationship due to delays caused by prison processes and regimes and security checks (Crawford, 2006).

A type of volunteer mentor often used within custodial settings, and which may circumvent some of these issues, is the peer mentor. The then Justice Secretary, Chris Grayling stated in 2012 in his speech to the Centre for Social Justice regarding his proposals to reform rehabilitation:

"When someone leaves prison, I want them already to have a mentor in place to help them get their lives back together. ...Often it will be the former offender gone straight who is best placed to steer the young prisoner back onto the straight and narrow"

(Justice Secretary Chris Grayling, November 20th, 2012).

A number of research studies have indicated that offenders may be more willing to engage with a mentor if they can relate on an experiential level (Cook et al., 2008; Hunter and Kirby, 2011). Further, peer mentors are cheap. In a climate of increasing cutbacks and pressure to 'do more with less' (speech by the then Conservative MP Philip Hammond, 27th November 2009) peer mentors have been shown to be a useful adjunct to the work of professionals within the CJS (Cook et al., 2008; Hutchinson et al., 2006). However, high turnover and attrition, combined with a lack of requisite skills, have been identified as potential issues when delivering peer mentoring (Boyce et al., 2009). Additionally, Buck (2014) warns that ex offender peer mentors may experience exclusion in prison and community settings, including restrictions on undertaking mentoring. Further, the evidence for their effectiveness in reducing reoffending is limited. Nevertheless, Shinkel and Whyte (2009) concluded in their evaluation of 'Routes out of Prison' that peer mentoring offered grounds for 'cautious optimism' that this type of 'through the gates' peer support can have a positive impact on the resettlement of short-term prisoners. An impact evaluation of St Giles Trust's Through the Gates Project (2009), whereby accommodation support (on or prior to release) and other practical support services (ETE and substance misuse) was delivered by a mix of ex offender and professional mentors to returning prisoners, found that mentored clients had a lower reconviction rate than the comparison group, and 40% lower than the national reoffending rate (Frontier Economics, 2009). Indeed, the Target

Operating Model for probation services recently published in England and Wales (HMPPS, 2021) sets out plans for investing in a 'more equitable, diverse and inclusive' criminal justice system. The model advocates employing volunteer peer mentors to offer enhanced support to people on probation and those returning to communities from prison (2021: 62-68), together with establishing a national role to drive an evidence-based approach to peer-led work (ibid:155).

The use of professional, paid mentors within the criminal justice context is another approach used to deliver support and through-care on release. Research clarifying whether mentors from statutory service providers compared with voluntary services are more effective is limited. However, Lewis et al. (2003a, b) reported in their evaluation of Phase One of the Home Office's Resettlement Pathfinders that offenders leaving prison as members of 'probation-led' projects were significantly more likely to receive high continuity of service and continue the mentoring relationship upon release than those from 'voluntary-led' schemes. Furthermore, the same study also found that those from Probation-led schemes reported statistically significantly higher levels of positive attitude change than prisoners accessing the voluntary sector-led mentoring schemes. The authors conclude that this was perhaps attributable to the finding that mentors from voluntary services tended to focus more upon accommodation and substance misuse issues in their assessments, while the probation-led schemes were more likely to prioritise thinking skills and employment/education and training (ETE). The evaluation of Phase Two of the Resettlement Pathfinders in which the candidate played a leading role, is the subject of Chapter Three below. The candidate was not involved in the evaluation of the first phase.

HMP Greenock in Scotland embraced continuity by utilising prison officers to provide prisoners with support during their sentence and for six weeks post release. The role of the prison officer as a TSO was not reported to have represented a barrier to the prisoners in engaging with the service. Indeed, the evaluator recommended that:

"The quality relationships that exist between officers and prisoners, and which are fundamental to maintaining safe and orderly prisons, should be positively used to act as a change catalyst from which individuals can build towards improving their life chances."
(Cochrane, 2014: 47).

Findings from the evaluation indicated that both prisoners and community partners viewed the project positively, and just over a quarter (26%) of prisoners engaged for the full six weeks post release period, with female prisoners significantly more likely to engage than males. However, little

information was provided regarding the interim outcomes of the service upon its users and the project did not significantly impact upon return to custody rates over the short term⁴.

Taken together, the above findings appear to indicate that while the type of agency employing the mentor may influence the focus of the work carried out, the ability to establish a relationship of trust with the mentee appears to be key and comes down to the interpersonal skills and knowledge of the individual mentor themselves. As noted by McNeill and Weaver (2010) those supporting people with criminal histories to desist need to be, “persistent, hopeful, flexible, and realistic.”

In a similar vein, Dowden and Andrews (2004) undertook a meta-analytic study to identify staff skills which improve the effectiveness of rehabilitative work with offenders. These skills were defined as ‘Core Correctional Practices’ (CCPs) and relate to use of authority; appropriate modelling and reinforcement; the use of a problem-solving approach, and the development of relationships characterised by openness, warmth, empathy, enthusiasm, directiveness and structure. Although this research relates to the work of statutory supervisors (Probation Officers) with offenders, one could argue that such skills are required by mentors working in a voluntary capacity to maximise the potential of the relationship to facilitate effective resettlement upon release. Further support for the importance of individual practitioner skills is provided by the work of Miller and Rollnick (1991), which emphasises the significance of motivational interviewing, prosocial modelling and reinforcement (see also; Trotter, 1993) in assisting offenders to identify dissonance between their current behaviours/lifestyle and their life goals and aspirations.

2.3 Continuity of care ‘through the prison gate’

Recent years have seen an increased recognition of the significance of the reintegration journey faced by prisoners from prison to community ‘through the gate’. A series of key reports in the early 2000s (Halliday 2001; the Carter review, Home Office 2003; NACRO, 2000; and Social Exclusion Unit, 2002) highlighted the problems many short-term prisoners experienced upon release back into the community, with little practical or emotional support from services. The subsequent passing of the Crime Reduction Act in 2003 meant that a much larger proportion of prisoners became subject to statutory supervision after release. This was followed by the introduction of the ‘Custody Plus’ sentence, from 2007, which consisted of a shorter prison sentence followed by a lengthier period of compulsory supervision in the community. The aim of this approach was to produce a ‘seamless’

⁴ Two-year re-offending data was not available at the time of the evaluation completion.

transition between the two stages of the sentence, as offenders subject to Custody Plus were 'case managed' by National Offender Management Service (NOMS) staff. More recently, the programme of offender management reforms triggered by the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda (Ministry of Justice, 2013) and the Offender Rehabilitation Act of 2014 have resulted in virtually all prisoners being required to receive statutory supervision of at least 12 months upon leaving custody, regardless of sentence length.

While mentoring may often commence after release, existing evidence suggests that it can be most successful when the relationship commences during custody and continues 'through the gate' into the community following release. For example, in their evaluation of the second phase of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS), a 'through the gate' mentoring scheme for short sentence, substance misusing prisoners, Maguire et al. (2010) found that mentees who received between two and six contacts after release were reconvicted at a significantly lower rate than a control group of those who did not maintain contact.⁵ This led them to conclude that, "one of the most important elements in the effective resettlement of prisoners is maintaining meaningful contact with them after release" (Maguire, et al., 2010:78). In their evaluation of the seven resettlement pathfinders, Lewis et al. (2003a, b) found that mentees who had benefitted from 'high'⁶ as opposed to 'low' levels of activity with their mentors prior to release were more likely to maintain the relationship after the sentence, although this association did not reach statistical significance. Johnson and Larson (2003) suggest that mentors who begin contact prior to the inmates' release may have more success in maintaining connections with them after release. A review of the evidence on reducing reoffending conducted by the Ministry of Justice also concluded that mentoring is also most likely to be beneficial when the relationship between the mentor and the mentee is sustained over a period of time rather than just involving only one or two sessions (Ministry of Justice, 2013).

Duwe (2012) identified that 'continuity of care' from custody to community was a key element in the successful reintegration of ex-prisoners in his evaluation of the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP), a prisoner resettlement initiative, which aimed to improve the case management process from prison to community and increase community service uptake amongst participants. Findings indicated that participants in the MCORP were significantly less likely to reoffend

⁵ The evaluation of the first phase of TSS had been led by the candidate and carried out by herself and two other staff from the Home Office's Regional Research Team in Wales, as discussed in Chapter Four and Appendix 4.

⁶ 'High activity' in custody was defined as five or more actions undertaken with the mentee, while 'low activity' was defined as two or fewer activities undertaken with the mentee during custody.

than those in the control group. Furthermore, MCORP participants were significantly more likely to access employment and housing, reported improved levels of social support and were more likely to engage in community service programmes.

Regardless of the form mentoring takes, 'through the gate' continuity and collaboration between the CJS and community-based services appears to be key. Research has shown that an integrated approach works best for significant reductions in re-offending, such as using mentoring as one of a number of interventions with offenders, in addition to provision of support with education and employment and behaviour modification programmes (Mentoring & Befriending Foundation, 2011b). This conclusion finds support in a UK evaluation of seven resettlement pathfinders conducted by Lewis et al. (2003a, b), which concluded that mentoring can be more effective when combined with pre-release interventions for mentees. Their results showed those prisoners who had accessed the mentoring alongside the cognitive motivational programme 'FOR' A Change during their sentence, showed significantly greater levels of attitude change than other prisoners and were also more likely to maintain post release contact with their mentors than their counterparts in the same prison who had not completed the programme. These findings are supported by those of the Phase Two evaluation, the first study in this portfolio (Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006). Further, a reconviction study of the Phase One participants indicates those prisoners who had completed the 'FOR' programme and maintained post release contact with their mentors were significantly less likely to be reconvicted than programme completers who had not maintained post release contact. These findings imply that work beginning in prison which addresses cognitive motivational deficits and thinking skills is most effective when combined with practical, individualised support, 'through the gate' (Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006; Lewis et al., 2003a, b; 2007). As Brown and Ross (2010) conclude,

"Mentoring can only work if community-based agencies are able to create and sustain the commitment of mentors, and if correctional programmes are oriented towards creating the basis for effective participation by releasees. Establishing relational connections to the community requires that correctional programming takes into account the relational needs of women offenders and institutions seek a greater degree of engagement with ordinary community members" (2010:230).

2.4 Outcomes of the mentoring relationship; what do we mean by success?

When assessing the effectiveness of mentoring, the importance of viewing desistance from offending as a 'journey' rather than a 'one off' event has been emphasised. Farrall (2002) notes:

“The desistance literature has pointed to a range of factors associated with the ending of active involvement in offending. Most of these factors are related to acquiring “something” (most commonly employment, a life partner or a family) which the desister values in some way and which initiates a re-evaluation of his or her own life...” (Farrall, 2002: 11).

The positive influence of the mentoring relationship in helping to achieve intermediate outcomes such as improved pro social networks, practical support to achieve employment, housing and abstinence from drugs, together with a more positive self-narrative, can all combine to move the offender further along on their journey to desistance (Maguire et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2013). Therefore, when assessing the efficacy of mentoring, it is important to not only focus on rates of reoffending, but also to determine its impact upon these so called, ‘intermediate’ outcomes, which are associated with lower levels of re-offending and the living of a ‘good life’.⁷

2.4.1 Mentoring and desistance: The importance of identity and social capital

Regardless of the type of mentoring being delivered, the social capital fostered in mentees through their relationship with mentors has been identified as a key outcome associated with a ‘successful’ mentoring relationship. Social capital represents the relationships an individual has with family, friends, wider social networks and the community, and can refer to the practical, emotional and financial help offered by friends and families. The importance of building social capital in any offender’s journey towards reduced recidivism is central to the work of desistance theorists who emphasise the significance of social connectedness as critical in the desistance journey (Maruna, 2000; McNeill and Weaver, 2010). Indeed, research with offenders who have successfully desisted from crime indicates that being believed in by others is an important factor in their continuing desistance from crime (Rex, 1999). As Maruna and Farrall (2004) note, secondary desistance can occur when:

“First, the person finds a source of agency and communion in non-criminal activities. They find some sort of “calling” -- be it parenthood, painting, coaching, chess or what Sennett (2003) calls “craft-love” -- through which they find meaning and purpose outside of crime... The second part of our desistance formula, like that of Lemert’s deviance theory, involves societal reaction. The desisting person’s change in behavior is sometimes recognized by others and reflected back to him in a delabeling process”. (Maruna and Farrall, 2004:28).

⁷ The ‘Good Lives’ rehabilitative framework posits that a good or fulfilling life is attainable when an individual possesses the internal skills and capabilities (agency), together with the external support and resources (structure) to achieve primary human needs, (which include relatedness (romantic and family relationships) and community (connection to social groups) in a socially acceptable manner (Ward & Maruna, 2007; Ward & Stewart, 2003).

Therefore, it may be surmised that mentors can assist in the function of this positive ‘reflection’ as mentees are able to begin see themselves in a pro social light through the relationship with their mentor. Indeed, Robinson-Edwards et al. (2020) found in their study of arts mentors (where mentors focused upon developing artistic talent and creativity in imprisoned mentees), that mentoring effected a deep shift in the intrinsic identity of the mentees as the service, ‘provided opportunities to help mentees move beyond the criminal labels that have been applied and to rebuild mentees’ confidence, not only in their ability as artists, but as citizens’ (2020:494). These findings are echoed by those of the third study in this portfolio. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, the qualitative analysis of the IWW interview data with fathers (Clancy and Maguire, 2021) indicated that the family focused interventions delivered to prisoners and their children on the Family Intervention Unit (FIU) in HMP Parc supported imprisoned fathers to relate more meaningfully to their children. These interactions helped to improve the father/child bond, and in many cases, created a turning point in renewing or even beginning their commitment to fatherhood. This shift in self-perception and personal narrative towards taking on a more paternal role was interpreted as representing an important step along their desistance journey. Indeed, as noted by Burke (1991) and later by Dyer (2005), the restrictions imposed by imprisonment can prevent many from enacting their role as fathers leading to a weakening of the paternal bond and subsequent expression of paternal identity. As Maruna (2001) asserts, one of the ways of changing self-identity is by taking on new pro-social roles, which has been strongly linked to desistance (see also; Cursley, 2012; Maruna & Farrall, 2004).

Further support for the ability of the mentoring relationship to, ‘bridge social capital’ (McNeill and Weaver, 2010) has been highlighted by Brown and Ross (2010a) who comment upon the relational strength of mentoring as one of connectivity and helping to build social relationships. Similarly, Tolland and Malloch (2019) found that emotional support was given equal importance to practical support by mentees when describing how their mentor had helped them. Lewis et al. (2007) also reported that over half of mentees interviewed post release cited the emotional support, or ‘someone to listen or talk to’ as the most helpful aspect of the mentoring experience. However, Brown and Ross (2010a) note the importance of recognising the relationship as being not with just anyone, but with the mentor in particular as representing a departure from negative peer and/or familial influences.

“It was the social status of the mentor as a pro-social person with deep roots in the pro-social community and civil society that provided benefit” (Brown and Ross, 2010a: 220).

Indeed, Visher (2004) found that while family relationships were associated with improvements in employment and drug use among ex-prisoners upon their return to the community, they also emphasised the potential for family members to represent a negative influence upon the returning

offender, with more than 25% of participants recorded as having at least three family members with a substance abuse problem. As Covington (2002) notes, 'in order to create change in their lives, incarcerated women need to experience relationships that do not repeat their histories of loss, neglect and abuse' (2002: 130).

However, while these findings appear to offer strong support for the relational benefits of mentoring, this is not echoed in some other studies. In their rapid evidence assessment of intermediate outcomes associated with mentoring, Taylor et al. (2013) reported mixed results when assessing whether mentoring helped to improve relationships and mentees' stock of social capital, concluding there was:

"Very limited evidence that mentoring programmes can increase coping abilities, improve family and peer relationships and reduce pro-criminal attitudes." (2013:1).

2.4.2 Intermediate outcomes of mentoring; homelessness, unemployment and substance misuse

In their evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS), a 'through the gate' mentoring initiative for short term, substance misusing prisoners, Maguire et al. (2010) found substantial improvements in mentees' accommodation, employment and substance misusing status following their engagement with the TSS service. The authors concluded that these improvements came about largely as a result of the TSS mentors acting as a 'bridge' between prison and the community and facilitating uptake and engagement with other services. However, in their multi-site evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Re-entry initiative (SVORI) in the U.S, Lindquist et al. (2008) reported mixed results. While participants reported significantly improved employment and substance misuse outcomes compared with those who did not participate, largely attributed to increased access to services pre and post release, the initiative did not appear to affect accommodation status, familial or peer relationships, or physical/mental health. Conversely, Burgess et al. (2011) found in their study of 'Women in focus', a mentoring service for women on community orders that the service successfully increased engagement with accommodation, domestic abuse and addiction agencies. Other studies have shown mentoring reduced levels of aggression and drug use among mentees (Parsons et al., 2008; Tolan et al., 2008) and similarly, Reingle Gonzalez et al. (2019) found that 'peer' re-entry specialists assisted mentees to seek support for substance use and mental health conditions, housing and employment. Further support for the value of mentoring provision upon substance misuse outcomes can be found in the literature relating to substance misusers exiting Therapeutic Community (TC) treatment, with some studies indicating that the provision of mentoring aftercare was as, or even more effective in preventing and reducing relapse than initial TC treatment alone (Vanderplasschen et al., 2013).

An evaluation of the Greater Manchester-based pilot Intensive Alternative to Custody programme, which provides mentoring services for young offenders (aged 18-25) and focused on employment as a key outcome reported that just over one in four participants on the pilot achieved employment, estimating the benefit-cost ratio for the programme at 1.26 (Cox and Cook, 2011). Routes out of Prison (RoOP) is a 'through the gate' project which aims to provide a 'bridge' between the prison and the community for prisoners by developing relationships with 'life coaches' who assist them to engage with community-based services upon release with an emphasis upon addressing practical issues such as employment, housing and substance misuse (Schinkel et al., 2009). Results indicated that positive change was achieved across all outcome measure relating to accommodation, benefits, substance use, and domestic abuse. Similarly, Lobb et al. (2011) found that 51% of mentees in the Northeast Offender Mentoring Pilot had accessed education and training opportunities following their engagement with the service and 16% had found employment. Furthermore, Bauldry et al. (2009) found in their evaluation of the Ready4work mentoring initiative that participants who met with a mentor at least once were twice as likely to obtain a job as those who were not mentored.⁸

2.4.3 Mentoring and recidivism

Claims about the success of mentoring within the criminal justice context are often expressed in terms of its ability to achieve reductions in re-offending. However, due to a number of different factors, there is a lack of robust research evidencing its effectiveness with adult prisoners in this respect. Firstly, a key aim of mentoring is often to facilitate access to a range of service providers and the mentoring itself is frequently delivered alongside other programmes/interventions. It is therefore very difficult to isolate the impact of the mentoring relationship from other services and support the mentee may receive. Secondly, the vast majority of mentoring schemes are voluntary, which makes it very difficult to design evaluations utilising a randomised approach. Impact evaluations are therefore likely to be prone to the issue of 'selection bias,' whereby it is virtually impossible to distinguish the degree to which any outcomes are attributable to the mentoring intervention as opposed to other factors such as offenders' motivation (Taylor et al., 2013). Many of the studies examining the impact of mentoring provision are also hampered by the lack of a robust comparison group, small sample sizes and/or are largely qualitative in nature. Finally, much of the research in relation to the impact of mentoring upon reducing recidivism has focused upon youth mentoring services.

⁸ The implications of these findings in relation to the service's impact upon desistance from offending are discussed in section 2.4.3.

One of the most thorough investigations of the effectiveness of mentoring was conducted by Jolliffe and Farrington in 2007. Based on their meta-analysis of 18 studies, seven were shown to have produced a statistically significant positive effect and reduced re-offending by 4 to 11%, although they noted that 'mentoring was only successful in reducing re-offending when it was one of a number of interventions, suggesting that mentoring on its own may not reduce re-offending' (2007:3). The authors further conclude that 'mentoring is a promising, but not proven intervention to reduce re-offending.' (2007:8). Key characteristics associated with successful mentoring schemes (defined as those that had the largest effect on reducing reoffending among the schemes identified as statistically significantly reducing recidivism) were: 1) duration of meetings between mentors and mentees were longer, 2) meetings occurred at least once per week and 3) mentoring was delivered as part of a package of interventions which included behaviour modification and ETE programmes. However, it is important to note that the beneficial effects of the mentoring relationship were found to be relatively short-lived, tending to 'wear off' quite quickly once the relationship had finished. Similarly, in their evaluation of Ready4Work⁹, Bauldry et al. (2009) found that mentored participants were 35 percent less likely to have reoffended within a year of being released (with a slight further decline in recidivism among those who continued service engagement for an additional month) when compared with non-mentored participants. However, although these findings are encouraging, the study also indicated that once the relationship between mentoring and programme retention was taken into account, mentoring in and of itself did not affect outcomes. The authors concluded that this indicated the effects of mentoring are principally associated with increased programme retention and thus more positive outcomes. Furthermore, while retention with the mentoring programme was shown to improve outcomes, with mentored participants 60% more likely to remain in the programme and twice as likely to find successful employment as non-mentored participants, frequency of contact was not found to be significant factor in either programme retention or likelihood of finding work.

Similar conclusions were reached by Lewis et al. (2007) who assert that mentoring may benefit ex-prisoners post release to engage with people who are able to provide individualised, needs-led, practical and emotional support. The implications of these encouraging findings may be linked with increased engagement and retention with services, which has been shown to be facilitated by the mentoring relationship. A HMIP inspection of resettlement services conducted in 2016 concluded that mentoring brings about "a greater level of cooperation with supervision than anticipated" (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2016:45).

⁹ 'Ready4work' was a US based partnership initiative between community and/or faith-based agencies to provide ex-prisoners with targeted case management, employment services and mentoring.

Support for the positive impact of mentoring upon reoffending among high risk, violent offenders is provided by Braga et al. (2009). The authors conducted an evaluation of the Boston Re-entry Initiative (BRI), which targeted high risk, violent offenders, half of whom were gang members. The desistance literature has highlighted gang members as a group representing a particular challenge to policy-makers and practitioners working to reduce re-offending, due to the negative, pro-criminogenic influences of gang peers (Thornberry, 2003). This study benefitted from the construction of a comparison group using propensity score matching. The results indicated those in the intervention experienced a 30% lower risk of recidivism compared with those who were not mentored. These findings led the authors to conclude that, “effective gang violence prevention policy should focus on developing programs that facilitate prosocial transitions for gang-involved inmates after release” (2009: 429).

2.5 Strengthening prisoners’ family relationships: Improving outcomes for prisoners?

The value of maintaining family ties during a prison sentence has been well established in the academic literature for some time (Losel et al., 2012; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Williams, 2012) and more recently has started to become a prominent topic of discussion in policy discourse. Indeed, a recent review of prisoners’ family relationships commissioned by the UK Ministry of Justice concluded that families represented the ‘golden thread’ running through the processes of all prisons (Farmer, 2017:8).

However, the bulk of these studies have focused principally on the benefits of continuing family relationships for the prisoner, particularly in relation to his/her effective resettlement upon release. For example, a series of Home Office resettlement surveys implemented in the UK found that prisoners visited or supported by family members while in prison had considerably lower reoffending rates than those who were not (May et al., 2008; Williams et al., 2012). Another study conducted in the USA indicated that ‘visitation’, particularly by spouses or partners, had a ‘small to modest’ effect in reducing recidivism (Mears et al., 2012). Improved resettlement outcomes for those with closer family ties may in part, be due to the assistance these prisoners receive with accommodation, employment and finances from family members upon release. 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 once reintegrated into the community. In addition, studies examining the impact of family-related interventions such as parenting programmes and relationship counselling

have found increases in prisoners' self-esteem, problem-solving and relationship skills, improvements in behaviour in custody, and reductions in substance misuse (Boswell and Poland, 2008 and 2011; Carlson, 2001; Einhorn et al., 2008; Hunter et al., 2013; Klein and Bahr, 1996; Wilczak and Markstrom, 1999; Wilson et al., 2010).

In understanding the importance of family contact to the effective resettlement and rehabilitation of prisoners, a body of research has developed which points to the importance of these relationships in facilitating an individual's stock of social capital (Farrall and Calverley, 2006; Laub and Sampson, 1993). As discussed in section 2.4.1, those with higher levels of social capital are more likely to desist as they have more to lose in terms of relationships that are important to them. These relationships further influence an offender's core 'personal narrative' or 'sense of self' from that of a 'criminal' or 'drug user' to, for example, one of 'family member' or 'parent' (McNeill and Weaver, 2010; Maruna, 2001).

However, research also indicates that the emphasis upon maintaining family ties during the sentence can be a burden to family members in the community (Jardine, 2017). Condry (2007) emphasises the financial and emotional costs to family members of male prisoners arising from travelling long distances for visits, combined with the cultural stigma of having a close family member in prison. Condry (2007) refers to this familial experience of stigma as the 'web of shame' (see also, Comfort, 2008; Light, 1993; Light and Campbell, 2007).

2.6 'Whole Family' mentoring and multi-agency support: Improving the lives of prisoners' families?

As noted above, much of the literature in this field has focused upon the benefits of mentoring interventions to the prisoners only. Mentoring is often an important element of 'Whole Family' support and yet, despite the extensive literature highlighting the needs of families and children affected by parental imprisonment and given the potential benefits mentoring has to offer in view of the importance of trusting, long-term and supportive relationships between adults and children (Sieving et al., 2017), there is little empirical evidence of its use and impact upon this vulnerable group (Clancy and Maguire, 2017a, b).

Some promising findings are however, reported by Jucovy (2003) in an evaluation of the Amachi Mentoring program, designed to support the children of imprisoned parents in the U.S., which indicated that longer-term engagement with mentors was associated with a higher self-worth and more positive outlook for the future. A second evaluation of the Mentoring Connections program, for

children aged between 4 – 16 years old with a parent in prison (Shlafer et al., 2009) found that more frequent contact with a mentor during the first six months of the relationship was associated with a reduction in externalising symptoms (aggression, anti-social behaviour) and internalising symptoms (depression/anxiety). However, both studies also reported a high rate of attrition from the mentoring relationship, which the authors highlight as a cause for concern as this may reinforce a perception held by the children that adults are not trustworthy and may let them down (Shlafer, 2009:517). Further, even where mentoring services look to work with the family rather than focusing solely upon the prisoner, such initiatives have tended to focus on working with the child alone rather than with the prisoner, child and community carer as a holistic family unit. Indeed, a concluding recommendation made by Shlafer et al. (2009) was that mentors should endeavour to involve the parents of child mentees in the mentoring relationship. The third study within this portfolio (Invisible Walls Wales) goes some way to addressing this gap, by offering mentoring and multi-agency support equally to the prisoner and his family members, including the children.

Widening the net to look beyond mentoring at prison-based ‘Whole Family’ interventions and support, some evidence is provided by Lösel et al. (2012), which aimed to determine the factors that best predict ‘good resettlement outcomes’ for whole families (ex-prisoners, their partners and children). The researchers found that high quality contact and frequent communication between prisoner and family, the father’s participation in parenting courses and social support to both parents from family and friends, were associated with better resettlement outcomes for all core family members – including, for children, better adjustment, fewer conduct problems, more pro-social behaviour, and fewer educational difficulties and experiences of bullying at school. Similarly encouraging findings were reported in a UK study by Woodall and Kinsella (2017), which found that child friendly ‘play visits’ contributed to an increased willingness among children to visit their father, reduced children’s anxiety and improved father/child engagement during the visit, reportedly helping to increase intimacy and bonding in their family relationships. However, it is not known whether these benefits were sustained over the longer term and once the father was released from prison. These positive outcomes seen in prisoners’ children were also echoed by Scharff Smith and Jakobsen (2014) who concluded that family support within prison can alleviate children’s anxiety and help them better adjust to the difficult situation of their parental imprisonment. Indeed, as will be outlined in Chapter Six, the third study within this portfolio builds upon these findings to evidence the impact of IWW family support for children and families both during the sentence and for the six months following the father’s release into the community, evidencing improvements in children’s emotional well-being, behaviour, school attendance, and peer relations (Clancy and Maguire 2017a, b).

An evaluation of the Barnardo's 'ECHO' initiative conducted by Gill and Deegan in 2013 also indicated that work in the community with prisoners' children can have a highly beneficial effect. The ECHO services encouraged workers to spend time talking directly to children about their relationships with their fathers and their feelings about prison and reported significant improvements in family relationships and in some children's emotional wellbeing, behaviour and/or school attendance (Gill and Deegan, 2013). Additionally, a UK evaluation of the Community Support for Offenders' Families (CSOF) service, which provided a range of support and assistance to partners and children – in about half the cases without meeting the parent in prison – found that levels of stress had decreased for 74% of the adult service users, and self-esteem had increased for about half of the children (Barnardo's, 2015).

2.6.1 'Whole Family' support: the importance of multi-agency partnership working

Mentoring is rarely delivered as a stand-alone service and frequently draws upon the services of partner agencies to address the needs of mentees. Indeed, multi-agency partnership working is widely acknowledged to be the most effective way to tackle a range of social justice issues including those related to the wellbeing of vulnerable families (Carter et al., 2005; Paylor, 2010). Allen and Harris (2011) found that where multi-agency working is effectively integrated, a range of positive outcomes for children and young people can be achieved including, improved self-confidence, engagement with learning, increased school attendance, reduced stress and improved coping mechanisms. The authors concluded that:

“Multi-agency work can make an important difference to young people and is able to reach children and young people in contexts of risk and vulnerability” (2011:415).

Recent years have seen a growing policy drive to ensure an inter-agency approach underpins service delivery for agencies working across a range of social justice issues affecting families, such as domestic abuse¹⁰ and adult and child safeguarding¹¹. Milbourne et al. (2003) noted that collaborative

¹⁰ Domestic Abuse: The Criminal Justice Act 2003 (CJA) established Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in each of the 42 criminal justice areas of England and Wales. These arrangements are designed to protect the public, including victims of crime, from serious harm by sexual or violent and other dangerous offenders; MARACs are meetings where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

¹¹ Safeguarding: Section 43 of the Care Act requires every Local Authority to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) for its area. Representatives required to attend are those from the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups in the Local Authority area and the Chief Officer of Police in the Local Authority area.

approaches are considered better able to address the multi-faceted, complex needs that families present with and are more likely to achieve positive outcomes by delivering services that are less fragmented.

To conclude, while there is a growing amount of research examining the role and impact of family focused support to prisoners and their families and results offer encouraging findings, it is on a relatively small scale, often restricted to the period of imprisonment and to a great extent focuses upon the benefits to the prisoners themselves. As Codd (2008) notes, this is usually because of the ethical and practical barriers in accessing the children and families of prisoners, leading to the conclusion that prisoners' children are the 'still forgotten victims' (Woodall and Kinsella, 2017; Light and Campbell, 2006).

2.7 Summary and conclusion

To summarise, the mentoring relationship may take many forms and can be applied across a broad range of contexts, for different purposes and with many different types of mentees, which makes defining and evaluating the efficacy of the 'mentoring relationship' a difficult task (Taylor et al., 2013). However, the overarching consensus seems to be that it offers mentees the practical support and space to be able to not only develop their social and relational capacity, but also bolsters their sense of self belief or agency, which desistance theorists assert is critical in reducing re-offending over the longer term (Maruna, 2001; McNeill and Weaver, 2004).

The literature also offers some insight into the influence of agency type delivering the mentoring service upon the focus of the work carried out, with voluntary sector services placing a greater emphasis upon practical support compared with the more cognitive-motivational focused approach of statutory service providers. Further, while peer-led and voluntary sector services may have fewer barriers to overcome in terms of initial engagement with mentees, the important factor in continuity of contact and sustained post release engagement seems to relate more to whether the relationship commenced prior to release and continued 'through the gate' into the community. Of critical importance too are the interpersonal skills of the individual mentors and their ability to develop a relationship of trust and mutual respect with mentees regardless of who is delivering the service.

From 2018, these were replaced with Safeguarding Partners in each locality, with representatives from the local authority; the clinical commissioning group for any area that falls under the local authority; and the chief officer of police for any area that falls under the local authority.

The efficacy of the mentoring relationship in reducing recidivism is still not clear. While a number of reconviction studies have been completed, results have been mixed and the majority of the more robust reconviction studies have been undertaken with youth mentees¹². Therefore, while some studies offer encouraging findings, (one of the most definitive, a meta-analysis conducted by Jolliffe and Farrington in 2007 indicated a reduction in recidivism of between 4 – 11%), the impact upon adult mentees, though promising remains inconclusive.

One issue is that mentoring is often used to facilitate access to a range of service providers and the mentoring itself is frequently delivered alongside other programmes/interventions. It is therefore very difficult to isolate the impact of the mentoring relationship from other services and support (Taylor et al., 2013). Mentoring services also tend to be delivered on a voluntary basis and therefore mentee samples are likely to be subject to selection bias, with the more motivated and treatment ready likely to be participating, further complicated by a lack of robust comparison groups and small sample sizes in many cases. However, the evidence for positive direction of travel in relation to intermediate outcomes associated with reoffending, particularly employment and to a lesser extent, housing, substance misuse and social and relational capital, indicates reasonable cause for optimism that mentoring is likely to contribute to a reduction in re-offending. One possible explanation for these positive outcomes seems to be the function of the mentoring relationship in increasing retention with services over time, with the length of time over which the mentor/mentee relationship takes place deemed more influential to success than the frequency of contact.

What can also be inferred from the literature is that mentoring appears to be most effective when delivered as part of a 'package' of support, comprising cognitive behavioural and motivational interventions commencing in custody combined with the practical and emotional support of mentors 'through the gate' and delivered within a multi-agency partnership context. Moreover, an enhanced focus upon addressing cognitive and motivational factors (as noted above, more often a feature of mentoring by statutory service providers such as Probation) appears to reap more rewards in relation to higher levels of criminogenic attitude change.

Turning to the relevance of the family relationship in the desistance journey, there is strong evidence to indicate the positive and significant impact of families in improving resettlement outcomes. While this has resulted in increased attention from policymakers and practitioners aimed at improving

¹² A number of reconviction studies have also been completed with faith based mentoring services, however these have not been included in the review as the focus is principally upon the use of paid professional mentors with adult offenders.

prisoners' family ties and a proliferation of family interventions being delivered across the prison estate, this can also prove burdensome to families as they are often viewed as only a 'cog' in the wheel of resettlement. The vast majority of studies focus solely upon the benefits to the prisoners themselves, while few evidence whether any outcomes are sustained and have translated into behavioural change following the prisoners' release into the community. The lack of attention which has been paid to evidencing the impact of mentoring and family interventions upon the families and children has resulted in a marked gap in the literature regarding the outcomes of 'Whole Family' mentoring and support for prisoners' families, particularly following the prisoner's release to the community. It is this lack of evidence regarding the impact of such support upon families and children, which the third and final study in this portfolio addresses.

Chapter Three: Evaluation of the Focus On Resettlement (F.O.R) - A Change resettlement programme

Clancy, A., Hudson, K., Maguire, M., Peake, R., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. and Kynch, J. (2006) *Getting out and staying out. Results of the Prisoner Resettlement Pathfinders*. Bristol: Policy Press.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the evaluation of the 'FOR – A Change' programme, conducted as part of the Home Office's Phase Two Resettlement Pathfinders between 2002 and 2003, and which represents the first study undertaken in this portfolio of research.¹³ As lead researcher on the project, the candidate was responsible for co-ordinating fieldwork, designing the methodology and research tools, collating all data from the Parc site and analysing data from each of the three sites. The candidate was also lead author in the research publication. See Appendix 1 for the full publication and Appendix 4 for a detailed description of the candidate's role in the study.

3.1.1 Phase One Resettlement Pathfinders

This second phase of the research was preceded by an earlier 'Phase One' of the Resettlement Pathfinders, which was rolled out by the Probation Service in 1999 as part of the 'What Works' series of initiatives funded under the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme. The aim was to evaluate a range of new resettlement approaches for Automatic Unconditional Release (AUR) prisoners (serving less than 12 months in prison) and released at the time without statutory supervision or support. This initial phase comprised seven Pathfinder projects, which aimed to provide a more effective, 'through the gate' service for short-term prisoners. This first phase of the Pathfinders was evaluated by Lewis et al. (2003a, b, 2007) with summaries of the study also published elsewhere (Raynor, 2004a and 2004b; Maguire and Raynor, 2006).

The findings of this first phase of the research, which have already been referred to in the review of the mentoring literature presented in Chapter Two provided important indications of the differences in continuity of post release contact and criminogenic attitude change between mentees engaging with Probation and voluntary-led schemes. Briefly, results indicated that significantly higher average

¹³ The contents of this chapter represent a summary of the full report contained in Appendix 1 and referenced above.

rates of continuity were achieved by the probation-led projects, and by prisoners who had undertaken the FOR programme. Positive changes in attitudes and beliefs were also associated with probation-run projects and with participation in the FOR programme, where continuity of mentor/mentee contact was higher.

3.1.2 *The Phase Two study*

Phase Two of the Pathfinders was extended to also include young offenders (YOs) and Automatic Conditional Release (ACR) prisoners (i.e., those serving twelve months or more and subject to statutory supervision in the community) and included three of the original Phase One sites (Parc, Hull and Lewes). The second phase evaluation represents the first study within this portfolio of research (Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006). This phase of the research provides an important addendum to the first phase evaluation and includes a one-year reconviction analysis of Phase One participants¹⁴, the results of which will be discussed in section 3.5 below.

The key aims of this research were (i) to undertake a process evaluation to examine the nature and quality of the 'through the gate' resettlement arrangements in place for those accessing the intervention across the three study sites; and (ii) to conduct an interim outcome evaluation to assess the impact of these arrangements upon measures of effectiveness: namely change in criminogenic attitudes, levels of voluntary post release contact among Automatic Unconditional Release (AUR) prisoners¹⁵; compliance with statutory supervision orders among Automatic Conditional Release (ACR) prisoners¹⁶; and post release service uptake. A one-year reconviction study was completed by Dr Jocelyn Kynch several years after the Phase Two process and interim outcome evaluations were concluded in 2003; the findings were published together as a complete evaluation in 2006, with the candidate as the lead author.¹⁷

¹⁴ It is important to note that the reconviction element of the Phase Two study was completed by Dr. Jocelyn Kynch, two years after the completion of the Phase Two evaluation.

¹⁵ AUR prisoners represent 'short sentence' prisoners, serving less than twelve months and who were not subject to statutory supervision on release.

¹⁶ ACR prisoners represent those serving over twelve months and who were subject to statutory supervision on release.

¹⁷ Clancy, A., Hudson, K., Maguire, M., Peake, R., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. and Kynch, J. (2006) 'Getting out and staying out. Results of the Prisoner Resettlement Pathfinders'. Bristol: Policy Press.

3.2 The 'Focus On resettlement' (FOR – A Change) Programme

'FOR - A Change' (also known as FOR, which stands for 'Focus on Resettlement') was a short 12-week prison-based cognitive motivational programme combined with a three-month post release mentoring element intended to bridge the gap in resettlement support from prison to community. The intervention was designed to increase the motivation and agency of prisoners to voluntarily access support and services, reduce their offending, and ultimately to successfully resettle and reintegrate into the community. See Appendix 1, Chapter One for a full description of the FOR intervention across each of the study sites.

3.3 Aims and Objectives

The evaluation comprised a process and interim impact evaluation, which together aimed to:

- Assess the delivery and implementation of the FOR programme and post release resettlement processes in place in each of the three prisons;
- gather and examine the views and experiences of a key stakeholders in the process, including project staff, prisoners and members of community-based agencies;
- assess impact upon interim indicators of the resettlement process, namely criminogenic attitude change, continuity of contact and change in employment and accommodation status and self-reported substance misuse in advance of a full reconviction study.

3.4 Methodology

A mixed-methods, quasi experimental design was utilised to achieve a holistic picture of the processes and interim outcomes of the interventions. The main sources of research data were analysis of projects' Case Management Records (CMRs) and OASys data; interviews with participants, staff and external stakeholders and use of the CRIME PICS II psychometric instrument completed by participants before, during and after taking part in the project. Each of which is outlined in more detail below and apart from those indicated in notes 18 and 19 all were conducted by the candidate:

- Routine completion by members of the three Pathfinders of a case management record (CMR) for each prisoner joining the FOR programme, using a form specially designed for the purpose by the research team. This included post-release as well as pre-release activities.
- An OASys assessment completed by the projects for each participant.
- Administrations of CRIME-PICS II in prison, before and after prisoners attended the programme, and subsequently a third administration, where possible, after release.

- Interviews with all members of the pathfinder teams in the three sites, including the ‘community links’ responsible for the post-release stage of the resettlement process.
- Telephone interviews with representatives of 24 agencies providing post-release services to offenders.
- Pre-release interviews with 163 prisoners who participated in the FOR programme.
- Interviews with 71 prisoners after their release.
- Observation and rating of video recordings of 47 group and individual sessions of the FOR programme.¹⁸
- Interviews with six senior policy managers from the Prison and Probation services.¹⁹

In addition, reconviction data for all offenders who took part in the Phase One Pathfinders, and randomly selected comparison groups of short-term prisoners from the same establishments a year or so earlier, was drawn from the Home Office Offenders Index, and the results were analysed by Dr Jocelyn Kynch in 2005 to produce one-year reconviction outcomes for the original seven pilot projects. See Appendix 1, Chapter Five for details of the reconviction analysis undertaken.

3.5 Key findings

A brief summary of the key findings is presented in this section. See Appendix 1, Chapter Six for a qualitative analysis of implementation and delivery processes. Appendix 1, Chapters Three and Four describe staff and offender perspectives of the intervention, while Appendix 1, Chapter Five provides results of the CMR and Crime-Pics II analyses, which relate to continuity of contact, post release activities and change in criminogenic attitudes. Finally, a full and detailed description of all reconviction analyses and findings arising from the Phase One Pathfinders is also provided in Chapter Five of the publication.²⁰

Overall, the results of this research indicated that participants achieved positive change in criminogenic attitudes and level of perceived life problems, changes which were sustained following release into the community, along with improvements in employment, accommodation and self-reported substance misuse. Finally, while the reconviction analysis showed no overall measurable difference between the intervention and comparison groups, there were some positive findings. Probation-led programmes achieved significantly lower reconviction rates than their third-sector

¹⁸ This element of the study was completed by Dr Maurice Vanstone and Dr Peter Raynor.

¹⁹ These interviews were completed by Ms Julie Vennard and Professor Mike Maguire. The reconviction element of this study was completed by Dr Jocelyn Kynch.

counterparts, while participants maintaining post release contact with mentors had significantly lower levels of reconviction than those who failed to make or maintain contact.

3.6 Limitations of the study

When interpreting the implications of the study's findings it is important to note several methodological limitations. Firstly, it was not ethically or practically possible to construct a matched comparison group. Participation in both phases of the Pathfinders was voluntary on the part of prisoners and they were to a certain extent, a self-selecting sample. It cannot therefore be assumed that those who took part were representative of the whole prison population and they may represent a more motivated and 'treatment ready' sub sample of the broader population by virtue of their agreement to participate. Although time and resource constraints prevented project staff from gathering information on prisoners who did not join the schemes, staff involved in the recruitment process reported that one of the main reasons for not taking part were perceptions on the part of the prisoners that they did not have any resettlement problems and/or did not need help from the scheme on release. Some support for this is found in the relatively high scores that participants showed in risk and need assessments and the problem profiles undertaken indicate the sample comprised offenders with high levels of need and associated risk of reoffending.

Furthermore, Case Management Records (CMRs) were required to be completed by project staff and while they were generally well completed, a certain amount of data was missing, particularly in relation to post release activities. In addition, OASys and CRIME-PICS II assessments were not completed on every participant. It is important to consider the possibility that these missing data may distort some of the findings. Finally, post release prisoner interviews and third administrations of CRIME-PICS after release, were completed with only 71 of the 163 prisoner participants interviewed in prison. It is possible that by virtue of being contactable by the research team and willing to attend a post release interview, these 71 represented a more settled group in the community and were more likely to have desisted from crime than the 92 ex-prisoners who failed to re-interview.

3.7 Conclusions

Briefly, the implications of this research are that 1) 'through the gate' contact and support appears to be a key factor in reducing reconviction, particularly where pre-release cognitive motivational work has been carried out by professionally trained staff such as Probation and, 2) mentoring can represent an effective resettlement service when thinking and motivation are addressed as well as practical

needs. See Appendix 1, Chapter Seven for a full discussion of the conclusions and implications of the findings.

Chapter 4: Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS)

Clancy, A., Lane, J. and Morgan, B. (2006) *Moving Forward with Mentoring: An Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme in Wales* Welsh Assembly Government.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the second study within this portfolio of research, the evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme in Wales (Clancy, Lane et al., 2006). As lead researcher on the project, the candidate was responsible for designing the research methodology, co-ordinating and undertaking fieldwork at each of the sites and was lead author in all interim and final reports. See Appendix 2 for the full report²¹ and Appendix 4 for a detailed description of the candidate's role in the study.

This 12-month evaluation was undertaken between 2004 and 2005 and represents a study of the first phase of the scheme. A second evaluation of TSS was undertaken by Professor Mike Maguire and Professor Katy Holloway in 2010,²² the candidate was not involved in the second evaluation.

4.2 The Transitional Support Scheme (TSS)

A brief description of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS) is provided in this section, however for a detailed overview of the intervention see Appendix 2, Chapter Two of the final report.

TSS was developed in an attempt to provide support to those not yet subject to statutory supervision on release (prisoners serving less than 12 months). TSS was piloted across four Welsh prisons (HMPs Parc, Swansea, Cardiff and Prescoed) in addition to HMPs Altcourse, Eastwood Park and Styal in England. The Transitional Support Scheme (TSS) aimed to provide 'through the gate' mentoring support for short sentence, substance misusing prisoners for up to 12 weeks following their release from custody.

²¹ The contents of this chapter represent a summary of the full report contained in Appendix 2 and referenced above.

²² Maguire, M., Holloway, K., Liddle, M., Gordon, F., Gray, P., Smith, A., et al. (2010). Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS): Final Report to the Welsh Assembly Government.

As with the FOR programme, mentors were expected to enhance the motivation of offenders to address their offending behaviour through the application of cognitive/motivational techniques during their meetings with mentees. This service differed from the other two mentoring initiatives included in this portfolio of research as it was delivered as a stand-alone mentoring service and was not preceded by a custodial 'thinking skills' programme such as the FOR programme (see Chapter Three and Appendix 1) or as a multi-agency package of interventions for the whole family as provided by IWW (see Chapter Five and Appendix 3). A full description of the TSS intervention across each of the sites is provided in Appendix 2, Chapter Two.

4.3 Aims and objectives

The key aim of the evaluation was to identify 'what works' via a thorough assessment of project design, implementation (including the context in which the project operated), delivery and interim outcomes. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Identify the rationale for the scheme and to gather information on how it was implemented and developed.
- Assess the impact of the scheme on changes in criminogenic attitudes, levels of post release contact and service uptake.

4.4 Methodology

The study utilised a mixed methods approach comprising qualitative interviews with staff, participants and community partners to provide insight into staff and participant experiences of the intervention along with data regarding levers and barriers to service delivery. Quantitative data was also gathered via the administration of CRIME PICS II assessments pre and post release to provide indication of change in participants' criminogenic attitudes and levels of perceived life problems, together with collation and analysis of project records (see Appendix 2, Chapter One for a full description of the methodology used). Each of which is described briefly below, the candidate was involved in all aspects of the methodology:

- A quantitative analysis of case management records (CMRs) completed by the mentors for each prisoner joining the TSS scheme. A total of 98 CMRs (containing an overview of pre and post release activities) were analysed.

- The administration and analysis of CRIME-PICS II (99 pre-release CRIME-PICS and 37 post release CRIME-PICS).
- 26 interviews with TSS staff (mentors and managers) and prison staff across the three scheme sites (North, West, South Wales and Gwent).
- 31 telephone interviews with representatives of agencies who provided post-release services to offenders.
- Pre-release interviews with 30 prisoners who had agreed to join TSS.
- Post-release interviews with 29 prisoners who had contact with the TSS (up to three months after their release) 21 of whom had also been interviewed pre-release.

4.5 Key findings

A brief overview of the main findings relating to the interim impact of TSS are presented in this section. See Appendix 2, Chapter Three for a full discussion of the implementation and delivery processes evaluated, while Appendix 2, Chapter Four presents findings from the analysis of qualitative data regarding staff and participant perspectives of the service. Appendix 2, Chapter Five presents the findings in relation to the potential effectiveness of TSS as measured using the proxy indicators of level of voluntary post release contact, change in CRIME PICS II scores, referrals and service uptake, change in accommodation and employment status and self-reported substance misuse and offending.

One of the main aims of the TSS scheme was to engage with participants for up to 12 weeks post release and assist with resettlement by making referrals to a range of community-based agencies designed to meet each individual client's needs. Success in maintaining post release contact is therefore an important factor to consider when assessing the impact of the scheme. The principle of support 'through the gate' was clearly evidenced by mentors in both schemes. When referrals were made to the TSS several weeks in advance of a release date, mentors tended to visit the client at least twice prior to their release. However, CMR data indicate that some clear differences emerged between the two schemes in relation to levels of voluntary post release contact achieved. Almost three-quarters (73%) of G4S participants had at least one face to face contact with mentors post release compared with only 36% of DAWN CMRs, indicating that mentors had met participants once or more in the community. Mentors in the G4S scheme were also more likely to achieve higher frequency of contact than DAWN mentors. These findings echo those of Lewis et al. (2003a, b) which found higher continuity of contact was achieved by mentors working for statutory service providers.

Positive change was achieved by both schemes in participants' criminogenic attitudes and perception of life problems. However, statistically significant results were only attained by the G4S TSS scheme.

Moreover, qualitative data gathered during participant interviews indicated that many of those who were successfully coping with resettlement problems stated that their experience of the mentoring scheme had helped them to do this. Similarly, of the 97 per cent of interviewees, who claimed that they had not offended since release, 64% felt that the TSS mentor had helped them on their road to desistance

4.6 Limitations of the study

It is important to note that due to the lack of a comparison group and small sample size used in the study, the analysis and conclusions should be interpreted as indicative rather than conclusive. As participation in the TSS scheme was voluntary on the part of prisoners, it cannot be assumed that those who took part are representative of the whole prison population.

Similarly, those who were contactable for post release interviews with researchers may represent a qualitatively different group than those who were not contactable. Those offenders who agreed to be interviewed (post release) are more likely to have been actively engaged with TSS, settled in the community and there may be an increased likelihood that they have desisted from crime. Those who proved to be "too hard to reach" may have had very different experiences and contact with TSS. It may also be argued, however, that participants remaining in contact with TSS did so because they needed more assistance and guidance than those who did not (as was indeed indicated by the initial CRIME-PICS 'P' scores). Regardless, the absence of a comparison group limits ability to generalise from the findings, and it is not possible to say whether outcomes achieved were due to the scheme and not the individual differences of participants.

In addition, scheme staff rather than the researchers collected part of the data for the study, with the researchers depending upon CMRs filled in by mentors. Although these records were well completed on the whole, there was a certain amount of missing data, particularly in relation to the CAIS DAWN scheme. However, it appears that most failures to conduct assessments or fill in records were caused by pressures of time – and that there was no systematic bias in data recording at an individual level. Finally, it was not possible to complete CRIME-PICS II assessments on every participant and there is the possibility that these missing data may distort some of the findings.

4.7 Conclusions

Overall, the implications of the findings evidence the positive impact of trained mentors in assisting ex-prisoners to resettle, with levels of unemployment, homelessness and self-reported injecting poly drug use falling among participants of both schemes.

The finding that statistically significant results in criminogenic attitude change were only attained by the G4S TSS scheme may lend support to the need for increased frequency of community contact with participants as was achieved by G4S in comparison with the DAWN scheme. The greater focus in the G4S training for TSS staff to concentrate upon clients' motivation through motivational interviewing techniques could also have been a contributory factor to their success in facilitating significant criminogenic attitude change and increased post release contact. These findings highlight the need for consistent, high-quality training focusing upon both the practical needs and cognitive motivational deficits of offenders to ensure both the integrity of scheme delivery and to assist clients to maintain their commitment to change.

Chapter 5: Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales (IWW)

Publication 1: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2017a) *Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales*. University of South Wales.

Publication 2: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2017b) 'Prisoners and their children: An innovative model of 'Whole Family' support'. *European Journal of Probation* 2017, Vol. 9(3) 210– 230.

Publication 3: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2021) 'He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man': The Impact of a Specialist 'Family Wing' on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers. *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 2021, Vol.60. (1) 101-121.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses upon the third study in this portfolio of research, a five-year evaluation of the Invisible Walls Wales (IWW) scheme, which ran from 2012 until 2017. As the lead researcher on the project, the candidate was responsible for designing the methodology and research tools, undertaking all fieldwork and data analyses, and co-authored as lead author all interim and final reports. The candidate was also lead author of two peer-reviewed journal articles. See Appendix 3 for the full report (publication 1) and two published peer reviewed journal articles (publications 2 and 3) relating to this study. Appendix 4 provides a detailed description of the candidate's role in the study.

5.2 The IWW initiative

IWW was a multi-agency 'through the gate' initiative based in HMP and YOI Parc, Bridgend in Wales, which aimed to improve relationships between prisoners and their families during custody and on release, improve participants' quality of family life and community inclusion, reduce re-offending by the father, and reduce the risk of intergenerational offending. IWW adopted a 'Whole Family' approach, to provide support to offenders, partners and children for up to 12 months pre-release and six months post-release. Key elements of the project were the Family Interventions Unit (FIU – the first of its kind in a male prison in the UK), which represented a 'fathers only' wing focused upon the reparation and maintenance of family relationships, the Interventions Led Visitors Centre (ILVC), through-the-gate casework by Family Integration Mentors (FIMs), and key partnerships with community-based agencies. A full and detailed description of the intervention is provided in Appendix 3, Chapter One of the evaluation report.

5.3 Aims and objectives

The main aim of the research was to evaluate the effectiveness of IWW in terms of (a) quality and effectiveness of organisational processes and practices, and (b) impact on prisoners and their families. The research therefore comprised two distinct elements; a process evaluation and an outcome evaluation. The aims of each are 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.

5.4 Methodology

A mixed-method, quasi experimental methodology was adopted to provide a holistic picture of service delivery and interim impact, comprising analysis of IWW records; interviews with participants, staff and external stakeholders; focus groups with, and pictures drawn by, children; and a number of psychometric instruments completed by adult participants and teachers of IWW children before,

during and after taking part in the project. Each of which is described briefly below:

- 205 interviews with IWW prisoners.
- 116 interviews with comparison group prisoners.²³
- 93 interviews with IWW family members.
- Two focus groups with IWW and CSOF children.²⁴
- 78 practitioner interviews (G4S, Barnardo's Cymru, Gwalia, Bridgend County Borough Council and Youth Offending Service).
- 177 Outcome Measurement Scaling tool assessments²⁵ for prisoners and family members.
- 172 Outcome measurement Scaling tool assessments for IWW children.
- 58 School Attendance Records (pre and post IWW).
- Crime Pics II assessments (IWW participants: n=82 Wave 1, n= 64 Wave 2 and n= 59 Wave 3; Comparison Group participants: n=76 Wave 1 and n=40 Wave 2).
- 146 Family Star Assessments.
- 72 matched (pre and post IWW) maternal Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) and 46 matched paternal SDQ questionnaires.
- 79 Teacher SDQs were completed soon after a family joined, and 71 on exit.

During the five-year evaluation, the candidate immersed herself in observation of the project and for much of the time was based within the IWW office on the prison wing observing the day-to-day delivery of the project and collating data. See Appendix 3, Chapter Two of the main report for full details of the methodology.

²³ 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.

²⁴ Community Support for Offenders' Families is jointly funded by Barnardo's and HMPPS to provide support in the community for the children and families of offenders.

²⁵ An outcome measurement tool was developed, 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.

5.5 Key findings

A summary of findings is provided in this section. See Appendix 3, publication 1²⁶ - Chapter Four for discussion of the implementation process and issues related to service delivery and publication 1 - Chapter Five for analysis of quantitative data relating to the impact and effectiveness of IWW. A detailed analysis of the qualitative data in relation to the impact of the initiative on paternal identity and family relationships is provided in Appendix 3, publication 3.²⁷

Overall, IWW provided participants with an enhanced quality and greater frequency of family contact during the prison sentence compared with prisoners not participating. The family mentors helped to facilitate this contact, often acting as a conduit for improved communication between fathers in prison and their families. Qualitative analysis of interview data indicates that the opportunity to interact as a family and for prisoners to enact the role of 'good dad' improved family relationships and for many, acted as a 'catalyst for change' reinforcing prisoners' commitment to their role and identity as fathers.

Interim impact evaluation indicated there were unprecedented high levels of voluntary post release contact between prisoner mentees and the family mentors. Records also indicated improvements in the accommodation and employment status of both (ex-)prisoners and adult family members, together with marked reductions in substance misuse of both prisoners and adult family members in the community. Statistically significant positive change was recorded in 'Family Star' parenting scores for both prisoner and family participants along with positive change in prisoners' criminogenic attitudes and perceived life problems as measured by the CRIME PICS II tool.

There was also evidence of positive impact upon factors associated with the risk of intergenerational offending, with improved child wellbeing at home and in school as measured by the SDQ tool completed by parents and teachers, improved school attendance and attainment and a fall in the number of children requiring support from Social Services.

²⁶ Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2017a) 'Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales'. University of South Wales.

²⁷ Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2021) 'He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man': The Impact of a Specialist 'Family Wing' on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers. *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 2021, Vol.60. (1) 101-121.

5.6 Limitations of the study

A full reconviction study has yet to be published²⁸ and it is therefore too early to say what impact IWW has upon recidivism rates of prisoner participants. Nonetheless, interim outcome indicators of effectiveness are very encouraging; particularly in relation to the degree of criminogenic attitude change achieved among IWW participants compared with the comparison group of non IWW participants. However, while the authors are able to draw some conclusions with regards to the efficacy of IWW in achieving this change during the sentence, the difficulties associated with following up a comparison group of ex-prisoners in the community preclude the authors from being able to distinguish whether the sustained change observed in the IWW participants following release was attributable to the intervention. Similarly, it was not possible to construct a comparison group to match the family members and children in the community, however the triangulation of multiple sources of data provides some reassurance that the positive outcomes achieved were as a result of the 'Whole Family' support provided.

A significant difficulty arises when attempting to identify which aspects of the IWW 'package' was responsible for the outcomes achieved. Disentangling the effect of the interventions provided on the Family Intervention Unit (FIU) with the multi-agency support provided by community partners and the work of the Family Integration Mentor (FIM) is virtually impossible. However, the qualitative data from both stakeholders, prisoner participants, their partners/family members and the children enables some reasonably firm conclusions to be drawn regarding the aspects of the project most valued by those receiving it.

Finally, participation in IWW was voluntary and therefore those willing to take part may not be representative of the wider prison population. Similarly, those who remained contactable for follow up in the community may represent a more successful, settled group than those who did not. However, only ten prisoner participants 'dropped out', with only two of the ten voluntarily disengaging post release and therefore it is possible to be reasonably confident that findings are representative of the IWW prisoner cohort as a whole.

²⁸ Data for a full reconviction study has been prepared by the candidate and submitted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Data Lab for analysis. Unfortunately, delays to MoJ data processing have occurred as a result of the Covid pandemic and results have not yet been returned to the candidate for inclusion in this thesis.

5.7 Conclusions

Findings indicated that the initiative had a significant positive impact on the lives of the prisoners and families, particularly the children who participated, and has had a major effect nationally (and internationally) on thinking, policy and practice in regard to improving outcomes for the children and families of prisoners.

The high levels of post release engagement achieved with all family members corroborates previous research demonstrating 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 (Lewis et al., 2003a, b; Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006, Clancy, Lane et al., 2006; Maguire et al., 2010). The implications of this finding will be discussed further in Chapters Six and Seven. The success of the IWW project in sustaining productive ‘through the gate’ contact with whole families builds on this earlier research to show that similar principles apply to prisoners’ partners and children. The work of the family mentors, both before and after the father’s release, played a major part in bridging the gap between prison and community and this support facilitated positive outcomes for all participants, including positive change among prisoners’ children in factors associated with the risk of intergenerational offending.

Furthermore, qualitative data gathered indicated that one of the key factors influencing the internal agency of the offender and his motivation to desist was reported to be the improvement in familial contact during custody and subsequently, the father/child relationship, facilitated by the Family Integration Mentor (FIM).

The successful ‘Whole Family’ outcomes achieved lends support to the argument that agencies should not work with the prisoner alone, but should aim to address the social, practical and emotional needs of all family members by working holistically with the family as a unit. Further, such work with families should not be viewed simply 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, key to which is the need for close partnerships and collaborative working between prisons, schools and other agencies working with vulnerable families and children.

Chapter Six: Discussion

The overarching aims of this research portfolio are to add to the academic knowledge base regarding the role and impact of mentoring upon the resettlement and rehabilitation of male ex-prisoners and to examine whether, and how, 'Whole Family' mentoring delivered within a multi-agency context can improve outcomes for their families and children. The three studies (five publications) within it have each individually already contributed to knowledge, policy and practice and their enhanced collective contribution will be considered in Chapters Six and Seven.

6.1 The purpose and focus of the mentoring relationship

As noted in Chapter Two, a large body of literature exists to describe the multiple definitions of, and varying purposes for which a mentoring relationship may be used. While mentors may deliver their services to a broad range of people across different contexts, the general consensus appears to be that a mentor represents a positive role-model to the mentee to offer advice and support, and someone from whom they may learn. Within this capacity, mentors may offer both practical and emotional support, while some may also seek to undertake more therapeutic, cognitive behavioural and motivational work to address deficits in mentees' attitudes and thinking skills. When considering the role, purpose and subsequent focus of the mentoring relationship, a key issue to consider is, 'who does the mentoring?' Principally within the Criminal Justice System (CJS) context, mentor services tend to be delivered by statutory, third sector and/or peer-led services.

The three schemes evaluated within this portfolio offer an opportunity to explore the mentoring relationships developed by both statutory service providers and third sector services (but not peer-led services) with prisoner participants and in the case of the TSS, offers a specific focus upon short-term substance misusing offenders - a particularly 'hard to reach' client group. All three also indicate the value of mentoring taking place within the framework of a multi-agency partnership. Both FOR and TSS schemes represented a combination of private, statutory and third sector agencies. While IWW mentors were all employed by G4S (the large private company with the contract to run HMP Parc), they also operated within a wider partnership context spanning statutory and third sector services. Regardless of whether a private, statutory or third sector agency provided the mentoring however, it represented a voluntary service for all mentees. IWW mentors also worked with the whole family as clients rather than the prisoner alone, thereby providing insight into the broader potential for mentoring services delivered in a multi-agency context to achieve a range of outcomes with

prisoners, community caregivers and their children (see section 6.4 for a full discussion of these outcomes).

Across the three schemes (FOR, TSS and IWW), all mentors evidenced examples of cognitive behavioural, motivational, practical and emotional forms of support in their work with mentees. FOR mentors in Hull, Lewes and Parc sites for example, were responsible for completing session 13 of the programme in the community if it had not been undertaken while still in custody. This session focused upon reviewing and enhancing participants' motivation around the time of their release, while also emphasising how to link up with agencies for practical support (principally housing, employment and substance misuse) and all FOR mentors offered support in the form of referrals and assistance to link up with these services. The nature of referrals made tended to reflect the socio-demographic composition of the area in which the scheme was delivered. In Lewes and Parc for example, referrals for accommodation were most common, likely reflecting a shortage of housing in those areas, otherwise referrals were most likely to be made to employment and drug support agencies. Regardless, of the type of practical support offered, all 13 FOR mentors across the three sites stated that their principal aim was to continue the cognitive motivational work undertaken on the FOR programme during custody and ensure that mentees remained focused on achieving their goals once in the community. Despite this, there was a distinction between the statutory and Third Sector service providers within FOR, with increased emphasis on cognitive motivational support (reflected both quantitatively in data derived from OASys scores and qualitatively during participant interviews) by mentors in the statutory led services in Parc and Hull (a mix of Probation staff and prison officers) compared with those in Lewes (a mix of Third Sector, Probation and prison staff).

Conversely, when asked to describe the key aims and purpose of their role, many of the mentoring staff on the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS) emphasised that their priority was to assist with practical problems upon release and saw helping clients to link up with community-based agencies to address issues such as drug use, homelessness and unemployment as vital. TSS staff also placed great importance upon 'being there' as an emotional support and listening ear for their mentees. Interestingly however, they also stressed the importance of mentees commencing their engagement with a certain degree of motivation from the outset. Nonetheless, while the TSS emphasis was certainly much more on the emotional and practical welfare of their mentees as opposed to the cognitive motivational focus highlighted by FOR staff, they also saw their role as functioning to enhance clients' motivation on release. In fact, again there was a clear difference in focus upon cognitive motivational work between those employed by G4S and the mentors employed by the

NACRO/Dawn partnership. This variation in emphasis regarding cognitive motivational work and practical assistance, supports earlier findings of Lewis et al. (2003a, b) who similarly noted the tendency for Third Sector mentors to focus more on the provision of practical support, while mentoring delivered by Probation Officers (or those with a probation background) was more likely to prioritise addressing attitudes and thinking skills via the application of cognitive motivational techniques.

These findings pose some important questions regarding the reasons for the differing approaches taken when delivering mentoring and indeed, the finding that OASys assessments were completed differently by staff in the voluntary sector compared with those working for a statutory service provider is an important one which requires further exploration. In particular, to what extent is the focus of the mentoring work influenced by 1) whether a service is provided by an agency in the statutory or voluntary sector, 2) the broader culture of the agency delivering the service, 3) the background and training of individual mentors, and/or 4) the specific aims and culture of the mentoring service itself, regardless of the umbrella agency under which it operates? The individual studies within this thesis did not explicitly set out to answer these questions, and instead have focused upon the outcomes achieved by the different approaches taken (see sections 6.2 and 6.3 below). However, these are important factors to consider when developing a service. By comparing each approach side by side, this thesis has shone a light upon the nuances surrounding the nature and focus of the mentoring relationship developed, recognising this as an important area for future research.

The Invisible Walls Wales (IWW) scheme represented an entirely different type of intervention to both FOR and TSS, as the mentor saw the whole family as their client rather than just the prisoner alone. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the focus on family, the key priority identified by mentors was the need to address parenting problems with both prisoner and community caregiver mentees. Employment, family relationships and substance misuse were the next most commonly identified issues. Accommodation came much further down the list of priorities and may be reflective of the fact that many of the IWW prisoners were still supported by their families in the community. IWW prisoner participants would therefore be more likely to have assistance with accommodation and/or could return to the family home, thus corroborating research linking closer family ties with improved resettlement outcomes (Williams et al., 2012), particularly in relation to having accommodation and/or employment on release (Niven and Stewart, 2005a).

IWW mentors also stressed the importance of possessing skills to undertake cognitive behavioural and motivational work with their mentees and spoke at length about challenging their beliefs and creating cognitive dissonance to motivate their clients, particularly in relation to the misalignment of their criminal behaviour and substance misuse with their values and goals to be a 'good dad' and 'family man.' Further, the inclusion of the family was found to be key to enhancing the motivation and engagement of IWW prisoner mentees, as reflected by the high IWW engagement rate and positive outcomes achieved, further discussion of which will be undertaken in sections 6.2 and 6.3 below.

The broader focus of the IWW work also necessitated that mentors had the skills and knowledge to work with children and family members and for this mentors specified that they needed to fundamentally be a 'people person', with interpersonal skills and knowledge of vulnerable families key to the success of their role. As discussed in Chapter Two, research indicates that the individual skills of professionals working with offenders, (which one could argue would also apply to paid mentors working with vulnerable families) is critical to achieving positive rehabilitative outcomes (Dowden and Andrews, 2004; McNeill and Weaver, 2010; Raynor, 2014).

The benefits of working within a multi-disciplinary team were also highlighted, as specialised knowledge particularly in relation to substance misuse and child safeguarding was also required. Therefore, while IWW mentors were certainly the 'lynchpin' of the service and case managed the whole family, their role was supported and enhanced by the parenting and child advocacy work undertaken by Barnardo's and the Youth Inclusion Support Worker, a 'through the gate' substance misuse specialist and two housing and employment specialists (G4S, prison-based and Gwalia in the community). A Local Authority Social Worker also oversaw the clinical aspect of the IWW work for the whole team and ensured that both adult and child safeguarding requirements were met (see section 6.4 below for a detailed discussion of the outcomes achieved by the IWW multi-agency partnership).

However, the value ascribed to the various types of post release support differed to some extent between mentors and mentees. As noted above, mentors in the FOR and IWW schemes in particular, emphasised the provision of cognitive-behavioural and motivational support as one of the main functions of their role. By contrast, the purpose most valued by their mentees was, 'just having someone to talk to'. Indeed, this emphasis upon the importance of emotional support and on the trusting, non-judgemental relationships they had formed with their mentors and the sense these gave them of 'being believed in', came through strongly in participant interviews in all three projects.

These findings echo those of Tolland and Malloch (2019), who noted the importance of emotional support to mentees. They also replicate earlier findings of the Phase One Resettlement Pathfinders (Lewis et al., 2003a, b; 2007) which found that participants rated 'peace of mind' and 'someone to talk to' as the principal benefits of engagement with the scheme. This also highlights the value mentors can have in boosting social and relational capital in a group of people who may never have experienced a positive, supportive relationship in their lives. This lends support to the work of desistance theorists who note the importance of connecting with and being believed in by others as critical to the process of secondary desistance from crime, whereby any positive change in behaviour is reflected back in a 'delabeling process' (Maruna and Farrall, 2004:28).

Findings from the IWW project also emphasise the importance for agencies to recognise the needs of prisoners' family members. Interviews with community caregivers highlighted the loneliness many felt during the period of imprisonment and spoke of how they valued both the practical assistance and emotional support offered by IWW mentors. As Jardine (2017) notes, the emotional and financial costs of imprisonment can be hugely burdensome for families and many in the community are left feeling alone and subject to the cultural stigma of having a family member in prison, experiences referred to by Condry (2007) as the 'web of shame' (see also Comfort, 2008; Light and Campbell, 2007). Thus the 'Whole Family' approach taken by IWW mentors addresses an important gap in current service provision for prisoners' children and families.

6.1.1 Mentoring in the CJS: Social welfare or surveillance?

As discussed in section 2.2, a key issue for debate is the influence of close links with the CJS upon the traditionally social welfare driven values of mentoring and whether the salience of such links risks turning a relationship built on trust into one of surveillance and control (Hannah Moffett, 2000; 2002; Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014; Maguire et al., 2019). When considering the role and purpose of mentors within the CJS, the studies contained within this portfolio each suggest that this does not necessarily have to be the case, indicating the mentoring relationships developed by both statutory and voluntary sector services were largely successful in developing and maintaining the trust and engagement of ex-prisoners.

For example, while engagement with the IWW service was voluntary, the service was delivered within a CJS-dominated context and environment: IWW mentors were all employed by a statutory service provider (G4S) and were based within the prison. However, this did not appear to be a barrier to engagement with mentees and did not detract from the social welfare goals of the mentors, a concern

about such schemes raised by some writers (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014; Corcoran, 2011). Indeed, qualitative data indicates that even where mentors raised child safeguarding concerns with Social Services, the close relationships already established with the family, and the context of care within which this was done, did not hinder mentees' continuing participation and in fact served to 'break down' some of the misconceptions prisoners and their families had about engaging with Social Services. So, although IWW mentors certainly incorporated elements of 'surveillance' (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014) into their role, evidence indicates they were still able to maintain a role of 'trusted teacher and friend' (Dondero, 1997). These findings also serve to highlight the other side of the surveillance coin, namely that 'extending the reach' of the Criminal Justice System (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014) through positive, trusting relationships between mentees, mentors and those working in close partnership to deliver multi-agency support can yield positive outcomes, both by addressing the needs of recipients and in improving relationships and subsequent engagement between mentees and agencies traditionally viewed with suspicion and distrust.

Similarly positive views were expressed by mentees who had accessed the G4S services in both the FOR and TSS schemes and while there was an increased focus upon cognition in the mentoring work delivered by statutory providers, there did not appear to be a difference in the level of trust or support established across the two schemes. These findings lend support to the recommendations of Cochrane (2014) who did not find the use of prison officers to be a barrier to the post release mentoring relationship and recommended using the positive relationships developed between prisoners and their Through-care Support Officers (TSOs) during the sentence as a 'change catalyst' post release. However, while the individual relationships developed with those who chose to maintain contact were characterised by trust and support, the use of Probation Officers to fulfil the FOR mentoring role in Parc may have represented a barrier to some, with the stigma of 'Probation' causing some short-term prisoners to decline post release support. This appears to contradict the earlier findings of Lewis et al. (2003a, b), who reported much higher levels of voluntary contact in the Probation-led Parc site during the Phase One Pathfinders. However, a critical difference between the two phases is evident in the 'throughcare' arrangements at Parc, an issue which will be explored in more detail as influencing levels of continuity of contact in section 6.2 below.

6.2 Continuity of contact as a mechanism for success?

As evidenced during the evaluation of FOR (Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006), while successful relationships were built with Probation Officers in the Parc site, (where their role was diversified to act as community FOR contacts) their success in achieving voluntary post release contact with short-term

prisoners was much lower than their voluntary sector counterparts in Hull and Lewes. However, those ex-prisoners who did sustain contact with their mentors did markedly better than those who did not. Qualitative data from participant interviews corroborate this to a certain extent, as some, although certainly not all, participants commented that they felt more supported and it had positively changed their view of Probation.

Nonetheless, as reflected in the levels of lower voluntary post release contact, the stigma represented by Probation was too much for some to overcome and this had contributed to their disengagement. These findings are in contrast to those of the Phase One pathfinders (Lewis et al., 2003a, b) where voluntary contact rates achieved by the Probation run scheme in Parc was markedly higher. However, a key difference appears to be, that mentors in Phase One were responsible for delivering the pre and post release phases of the FOR work, whereas responsibility for community support in Phase Two was handed over to community based FOR trained Probation officers. Further, levels of voluntary post release contact were substantially higher in Hull compared with the other two sites, and again the critical difference appears to be the post release arrangements in place, with Hull staff responsible for delivering the community element of support. This suggests that the important factor in maintaining continuity of contact may be establishing a relationship with the mentee prior to release, rather than the type of agency delivering the service.

Earlier research by Lewis et al. (2003a, b) indicated that participants who had completed the FOR programme during custody scored significantly better on measures of criminogenic attitude change (prior to release) than participants who had not completed the programme. The Phase Two FOR evaluation sheds some further light upon this using the results of a one-year reconviction study of Phase One participants. Overall, offenders who took the FOR programme did no better than those in the matched comparison group. However, FOR programme completers did better with post-release contact than without it. Indeed, one of the clearest differences in reconviction rates, visible in all projects except Parc (where numbers were low), was between prisoners who had contact with mentors after release and those who did not. Mentees who maintained continuity of contact after release were reconvicted below their predicted rate, while those who had no contact were reconvicted at a rate six percentage points above that predicted.

It is emphasised that these findings should be treated with caution as the number of FOR participants was small and one-year predictions and comparisons between one-year reconviction rates are less reliable than those analysed over two years. Nonetheless, these findings have important implications

with regards to the delivery of pre-release interventions and indicate that work completed while in prison may not be enough on its own to achieve reductions in reoffending upon release and should instead be followed up by support in the community.

Findings from literature relating to the use of through-care support for residents exiting Therapeutic Communities (TC) also indicate that continuity of care is a key factor contributing to improved outcomes. A number of studies show for example, that when in-prison TC treatment is offered in conjunction with a community aftercare intervention, this produces the best results in terms of reducing recidivism and drug relapse, outperforming any other substance misuse programme for offenders (De Leon, 2010; Jensen and Kane, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2012).

Finally, although continuity was not used as an outcome measure of effectiveness in the evaluation of IWW, the extraordinarily high level of post-release engagement achieved with prisoner participants was far in excess of rates achieved in previous studies (Lewis et al., 2003a, b; Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006, Clancy, Lane et al., 2006) with a 93% completion rate across the whole cohort and 88% of prisoner participants completing. Whether this highly successful voluntary contact rate was achieved as a result of the length of time mentors worked with prisoners prior to release, or because of the close relationships they built with their families is unclear. However, qualitative data gathered during participant interviews suggests it may be a combination of both. Mentors also emphasised the importance of being integrated with their mentees from an early point by having the IWW office on the wing and also described how acting as an intermediary between family and prisoner helped establish the relationship of trust. These perceptions were mirrored in the qualitative data gathered during prisoner participant interviews indicating that, “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” (Clancy and Maguire, 2017a:112). Moreover, qualitative data indicates that the multi-agency support offered by the IWW project to all family members both during the sentence and following the prisoner’s release was highly valued by mentees and contributed to the perception that the service was comprehensive enough to meet all of their needs, further contributing to ongoing levels of engagement.

It therefore appears that rather than focusing upon the ‘who’ is establishing the mentoring relationship, the important question should instead be ‘how’ is the mentoring relationship being established? Taken together these findings underline the value of establishing a relationship with

mentees prior to release and ensuring continuity of care continues ‘through the gate’, thereby supporting the earlier findings of, for example, Duwe et al. (2012); Lewis et al., (2003a, b) and Maguire et al. (2010). Further, the findings of IWW also build upon these earlier studies to indicate that the benefits of engaging with the whole family as opposed to the prisoner in isolation, within a context of collaborative, multi-agency working, offers great potential with regards to ensuring continuity of contact. This is most strongly evidenced by the extremely high levels of voluntary engagement among all IWW participants, both during the sentence and following the prisoner’s release into the community.

6.2.1 Continuity of contact: Mentoring as a ‘bridge’ to other services

When discussing continuity of contact as an interim outcome of the mentoring relationship, Maguire et al. (2010) note that, “one of the most important elements in the effective resettlement of prisoners is maintaining meaningful contact with them after release” (2010: 78) implying that continuing engagement is necessary to support the desistance process once in the community. One of the mechanisms by which mentoring can achieve this is through the support mentors provide to link up and engage with community support services, effectively acting as a ‘bridge’ to other forms of support (Maguire, 2010; Schinkel et al., 2009). Indeed, Bauldry et al. (2009) assert that the benefits of engagement with mentoring services may principally be associated with increased service uptake and programme retention, rather than the mentoring itself and as concluded by Jolliffe and Farrington (2007), mentoring appears to be most effective when delivered as ‘multi-modal treatment’ alongside other forms of intervention or support. All three of the mentoring approaches evaluated in this portfolio of research integrated the mentoring service as a ‘package’ of support with other services.

For example, the FOR post release mentoring service was complemented with the 12 week FOR A Change cognitive motivational programme prior to release, whereas TSS also endeavoured to commence work with mentees while still in custody to ensure links were established with community services prior to release. Perhaps the best example of the ‘multi-modal’ approach, however, is provided by IWW, whereby prisoner participants (alongside their families) experienced up to 12 months of family interventions on a Family Integration Unit (FIU) or ‘fathers-only’ wing in custody and via the intervention-led visits in HMP Parc. Similarly, adult caregivers in the community also separately benefitted from mentoring support alongside a parenting program delivered by Barnardo’s, housing and employment support from Gwalia, and specialist substance misuse mentoring where required, while the children accessed age-appropriate interventions delivered by both Barnardo’s and a Youth Inclusion Support Worker. The benefits of multi-agency, partnership working within the social justice

remit are well established (Robinson and Clancy, 2021; Thom et al., 2013) however, as mentoring is rarely delivered as an isolated service, this makes identifying the benefits of mentoring in and of itself very complex. A further complication, which limits the extent to which substantive conclusions may be drawn, is the lack of a comparison group for the community participants (and children) in IWW. The practical and ethical difficulties associated with matching a comparison group of community participants precluded this from being achieved.

6.3 What impact does the mentoring relationship have upon the desistance journey?

As noted in Chapter One, desistance is not a 'one off' event and is instead a journey upon which many intermediate outcomes of success will be achieved along the way (Farrall, 2002). Therefore, the success of a mentoring relationship should not simply be judged in terms of whether or not the mentee re-offends, but also in its impact upon intermediate outcomes associated with the desistance journey, which will now be explored in this section.

6.3.1 Intermediate outcomes of mentoring; addressing unemployment and homelessness

Both FOR and TSS were targeted towards addressing the needs of short-term offenders, who are the cohort of prisoners with the greatest level of need, often receive the least post release support and are often released from prison in a worse position than when they entered (Maguire et al., 1997; NACRO, 2000; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). A number of studies have linked lack of stable accommodation with an increased risk of recidivism (Petersilia, 2000; Solomon, & Waul, 2001; Travis et al). Unemployment is also known to be a risk factor for re-offending (Kempiner & Kurlychek, 2004; SEU, 2002). Both schemes aimed to improve the practical situations of mentees upon release, particularly in relation to their accommodation, employment and substance misusing status and any improvements can therefore be used as indicators of effective resettlement work.

Positive outcomes were achieved in the employment and accommodation status of mentees across all three schemes. Findings from the FOR study for example, indicate that there was a significant reduction in the number of prisoners being released into homelessness and unemployment. This pattern was replicated in findings from the TSS study, indicating a similar decline in homelessness and unemployment. The findings paint an encouraging picture and may indicate that the pre-release integration work commenced by mentors to assist mentees in securing accommodation and employment upon release paid dividends in reducing the numbers released as homeless and/or unemployed. However, as noted above, the absence of a comparison group and the likelihood that

those we were able to follow up were more representative of a settled group in the community (with a higher percentage of offenders not in contact post release likely to have been homeless) limit the extent to which we can draw substantive conclusions. These findings lend support to other studies however, such as that by Maguire et al. (2010), who also noted a positive pattern of accommodation and employment outcomes in their evaluation of the TSS service (see also, Lindquist et al. (2009); Williams et al. (2008)).

Turning to the IWW project, an even more positive picture emerges, as not only was there a reduction in homelessness across both prisoner and family member participants, but the unemployment rate more than halved across all participants (with 74% unemployed prior to prison, falling to 36% on exit). Although those followed up are likely to represent a more settled group, it may be possible to be more confident in drawing conclusions from these results. As will be recalled, 93% of all participants and 88% of prisoner participants completed the intervention (i.e., remained in post release contact for up to three months) and so are representative of the vast majority of participants. However, as we were unable to establish a comparison group for all participants, it is difficult to say whether these individuals would have experienced these positive outcomes regardless of their participation. Nonetheless, these findings not only provide indicative evidence of a positive impact upon the accommodation and employment status of participant, but also of the benefits of working with the whole family – in particular, how improved resettlement outcomes may be achieved through a strengthening of family ties during the sentence (May et al., 2008; Niven and Stewart, 2005a; Williams et al., 2012).

6.3.2 Mentoring and substance misuse

Change in levels of substance misuse has been used as an outcome measure in a number of studies to date and results indicate that mentoring may have a positive impact in this regard, largely through promoting and encouraging links with other services (Maguire et al., 2010; Reingel, Gonzalez et al., 2019; Schinkel et al, 2009). Self-reported substance misuse was used as an outcome indicator in all three studies. Post release interviews with FOR participants indicated that of the 72% of individuals who reported experiencing a substance misuse problem prior to joining FOR, all reported still experiencing issues following release. However, 80% of those interviewed reported that FOR had exerted a positive impact upon their use and they had subsequently reduced consumption and/or had changed their drug of choice to a less harmful option and/or had limited their use to Class C drugs, principally Cannabis.

Findings from the evaluation of TSS replicate this pattern of harm reduction, with 69% of participants reporting that TSS had exerted a positive impact upon their addiction and there was a similar marked decline in the use of Class A drugs and/or polydrug use. These findings corroborate the findings of Maguire et al. (2010) in their evaluation of TSS, which showed significant improvement in participants' use of substances post TSS. The results are also indicative of the positive direction of travel indicated by participants in the SVORI evaluation (Lindquist, et al., 2009).

It is also important to reiterate that while both FOR and TSS participants continued to use drugs and/or alcohol on exiting, the harm reduction gains achieved should be interpreted as a positive outcome. Indeed, these findings serve to illustrate the journey of desistance as participants may not shift directly from 'user' to 'non-user' and instead take smaller steps towards achieving their new identity of abstinence. However, as with the caveats applied to both the accommodation and employment outcomes discussed above, these findings must be treated with caution; by virtue of the ability to contact these individuals and their willingness to attend the interview, they were likely to lead more stable, settled lives than those it was not possible to make contact with.

The results for the IWW project are even more positive, with 89% of prisoner participants assessed as having a substance misuse problem on joining the intervention, declining to just 20% still using substances on exit. While the proportion of family members assessed as having a drug or alcohol problem on joining was much lower at 15%, this fell to just 5% on exit. Although it is difficult to be certain, (in the absence of a comparison group) whether the IWW project alone had exerted such a positive impact upon the substance misuse problems of its participants, it is possible that the project together with the 'Whole Family' approach taken meant that users' families were more informed and educated about the issue. This may have resulted in families feeling more confident to address their loved one's drug/alcohol use and intervene more effectively in the event of any 'slippage' back into old habits. The 'whole family' approach thus helped family members to take a more active role in their loved one's rehabilitation and recovery and by working closely with IWW staff and partners, family members also took on an element of 'positive surveillance' in their role. The trust fostered through their relationship with the mentor and drug worker enabled them to feel safe enough to confide their concerns regarding relapse, thereby supporting mentors and partners to intervene and provide support. While many may have hidden such concerns from Probation or prison staff for fear of eliciting a risk averse and punitive response, the trust between IWW staff and 'whole families' enabled a joint effort to be taken towards both surveillance and support to facilitate positive change and continuing

engagement. As illustrated by the IWW Social Worker and corroborated by a family member in the quotes below:

“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 Family Integration Mentor [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.”

(Clancy and Maguire, 2017a:66)

“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.”

(Clancy and Maguire, 2017a: 69)

Qualitative data gathered during interviews with families support this and indicated family members wanted to work together with their mentors and the substance misuse mentor to ensure wraparound support was in place for the participant to prevent him, ‘slipping back to his old ways’ (IWW family member). The benefits of the multi-agency context within which IWW was delivered are further highlighted by the appointment of a drug counsellor and ex-user as a ‘through the gate’ substance misuse specialist in the latter half of the project, which represented a huge success as attested to during interviews with staff and participants alike. Participants’ comments indicated that the lived experience of this staff member gave him additional kudos as someone who had ‘walked their walk’ and could understand and empathise with their struggles. His ability to remain abstinent and lead a successful life as a qualified substance misuse counsellor and mentor also helped participants to see that it was possible to overcome addiction, replicating previous research highlighting the benefits of lived experience mentors in the Criminal Justice System (Cook et al., 2008; Devilly et al., 2005).

Furthermore, the prisoner participants frequently spoke in interviews about wanting to ‘prove’ to their families they could change and may be indicative of IWW’s success in boosting the social capital of participants, as improved family relationships represented their ‘hook for change’ (Giordano et al., 2002) strengthening their desire to want to be ‘fathers’ and ‘family men’. For many, this was the first

time they had really engaged with their families during the sentence, and this gave them a renewed sense of motivation and self-belief that they could change. This increased commitment to 'do the right thing' for their children and families may be indicative of the informal social control (Hirschi, 1969) exerted by IWW's success in strengthening familial bonds between prisoners and their families (see section 6.3.4 below for a more detailed discussion of this outcome).

6.3.3 Mentoring and criminogenic attitude change

Attitudinal/cognitive motivational change is an intermediate outcome measure which has been shown to be strongly linked to the risk of re-offending and addressing the cognitive motivational deficits of offenders has formed the basis of a number of evidence-based accredited programmes across prison and probation services in the UK and globally (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Change in participants' pro-criminal attitudes and levels of perceived life problems was used as an interim outcome measure in the absence of a full reconviction study across all three studies and was assessed using the CRIME PICS II tool (Frude et al., 1994). This instrument was selected because it has been found in previous studies to be related to reconviction (Raynor 1998) and has been widely used in evaluation and accreditation of criminogenic programmes delivered by HMPPS to assess programme efficacy.

A comparison of pre and post release scores for all FOR participants indicates that highly significant positive change in criminogenic attitudes and level of perceived life problems was achieved during the sentence and this was maintained after release. A comparison of CRIME PICS scores in the TSS study also indicate that positive attitudinal change occurred in participants across both schemes, although results only reached statistical significance in the Parc site. It may be that the greater change achieved by participants in the G4S scheme was at least partly attributable to the increased focus upon addressing cognitive and motivational skills by G4S mentors. Findings of previous research appear to support this as indicated by Lewis et al. (2003a, b; 2007) who found that mentees who had completed a cognitive motivational programme (also F.O.R) while in custody achieved significantly greater positive attitudinal change on the CRIME PICS measure than mentees who had not completed the programme. Further, mentees in Probation run schemes achieved greater change than those in voluntary sector led schemes. However, it is important to acknowledge that the TSS participant sample size was small and those who remained contactable after release may not have been representative of the whole TSS population.

Turning to the IWW study, results indicated that significant positive change occurred in participants' attitudes and perception of life problems between joining and the point of exiting six months post

release. While the most substantial change occurred during the sentence, results indicated that this change was maintained post release. The IWW study also benefitted from a matched comparison group for the prison phase of the intervention and results indicated that scores for these prisoners 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. However, it is important to note that IWW participants received a range of family focused interventions and support in addition to that of the Family Integration Mentor during the prison phase of the project and it is virtually impossible to disentangle the impact of the mentor from these other forms of support. However, by triangulating qualitative evidence gathered during interviews with prisoner participants, it is possible to gain an indication of how profoundly the relationship with, and support of the mentor had helped prisoners and their families.

Taken together, these results from the three studies do appear to offer some promise for the impact of mentoring support upon criminogenic attitudes and thinking skills, and findings of subsequent studies have further evidenced some impact of mentoring support upon the thinking and coping skills of mentees. Andreas, et al. (2010) for example measured general sense of perceived self-efficacy as an intermediate outcome and results indicated significant positive change between joining and 12 months, (see also Duncan and Balbar, 2008).

6.3.4 Mentoring, desistance, social capital and identity

Social capital represents the relationships, links and personal investment an individual has with his/her family/friends, the community and society in general. The importance of increasing social capital is central to the concept of desistance, (Maruna and Farrall, 2004) which asserts that as an individual builds pro social relationships such as those with his/her children for example, the more s/he takes on pro social roles such as that of a parent. As others (family, friends, and/or community) also begin to see the individual in this role, this identity is reflected back and s/he is able to move beyond the criminal label and settle into living a pro social life, free from crime.

Earlier studies have commented upon the relational benefits of mentoring as the relationship a mentee has with their mentor can for many, be the first opportunity they have had to build such pro social, supportive relationships (Brown and Ross, 2010; Tolland and Malloch, 2019). Qualitative data gathered from all three studies within this portfolio of research support these findings and emphasise how much mentees valued the emotional support they received through their mentoring relationships. In the FOR study for example, the most commonly cited reason for maintaining contact

with the mentor was 'having someone to talk to/general support'. Similarly, when TSS participants were interviewed post release and asked to describe what they had found especially valuable about their contact with the mentor, over a quarter reported that having someone 'straight' to chat to whenever they felt they needed support was most important, (the same number also cited help finding accommodation). These findings corroborate earlier research by Lewis et al. (2003a, b; 2007) who found that over half of mentees interviewed post release cited the emotional support, or 'someone to listen or talk to' as the most helpful aspect of the mentoring experience.

Desistance theorists discuss the impact of the mentoring relationship upon mentees' self-belief in engendering hope and optimism that they are able to make positive changes in their lives. This also came though clearly in interviews with IWW participants (see Appendix 3, Chapter Five, section 5.1). Theorists have conceptualised hope as motivating individuals to move towards their goals and helping them to cope in difficult times (LeBel et al., 2008; Snyder et al, 1991). Further, Maruna (2001) refers to the sense of being 'doomed to deviance' when people feel they have no choice about how their lives are going to turn out. In other words, Maruna's study highlights the importance of self-efficacy and agency, with the finding that those who believed that they were victims of circumstance were less likely to desist than those who believed they were in control of their own lives. Qualitative data collated across all three of the studies in this portfolio support this notion and indicate how the mentoring relationship nurtured this positive mind-set, engendering a sense of optimism mentees had for their future, coupled with the self-belief that they had the ability and support behind them to achieve their goals.

A substantial body of literature has also demonstrated the damaging effects of parental imprisonment upon family relationships and the likelihood of the family surviving the sentence as a unit (Apel et al., 2010; Arditti, Smock and Parkman, 2005; Condry and Scharff Smith, 2018; Hutton and Moran, 2019; Mills and Codd, 2007). For many imprisoned fathers, research also shows that the period of imprisonment can damage their ability to perform their role as fathers, effectively damaging their 'paternal identity' and eroding their stock of social capital (Chui, 2016; Dyer, 2005). Qualitative data collated during interviews with 158 imprisoned fathers during the IWW study²⁹ support these conclusions and the damaging effect of the sentence upon the father/child familial bonds, together with the negative impact upon children's well-being and behaviour was strongly emphasised during interviews. Many fathers described how they had stopped seeing their children as they did not want

²⁹ Interviewed sample comprised; 82 imprisoned fathers in the IWW intervention and 76 imprisoned fathers in the comparison group drawn from HMP Parc's mainstream prisoner population.

to expose them to the prison environment or for their children to see them as prisoners within that environment, thus supporting Dyer's (2005) theory that prison represents an 'interruption' to paternal identity resulting in stress, anxiety and a fracturing of the familial bonds.

However, evidence from the IWW study indicates that the 'Whole Family' approach taken by mentors to re-establish links between imprisoned men and their families, particularly during the sentence, helped to strengthen the relationships during this difficult time.³⁰ For many of the offenders, this represented a turning point in their motivation to change and take on the role of 'good dad' and 'family man' - this aspiration beginning to overshadow their previous identity as an offender/drug user. Further, post release interviews conducted with ex-prisoners up to six months after release indicate that these positive changes were frequently sustained after they had returned to the community.

Family members also spoke of how much the mentor had helped them to remain connected with their partners in prison and for many, the additional communication from the mentor (using tools such as the family diary for example) had helped them to see the work that the prisoner was doing to change. Several described how this had encouraged them to continue supporting their partners upon release, when previously they may have 'given up' on him and on the relationship. However, while these findings do offer encouraging support for the ability of mentors to forge supportive social connections thereby repairing familial bonds and increasing social capital in their mentees, it is difficult to say to what extent these outcomes can be attributed to the mentors or to the other interventions delivered as part of the IWW 'package'. It is likely that a combination of the Family Intervention Unit, the mentors and the multi-agency, 'Whole Family' support together culminated in the outcomes achieved. As noted by previous studies, mentoring is often most effective when delivered alongside other interventions (Jolliffe and Farrington, 2007; Lewis et al., 2003a, b).

6.3.5 *Mentoring and recidivism*

As discussed in Chapter One, the impact of mentoring upon recidivism among adult offenders, while promising, is not clear. Although a number of studies have found reductions in recidivism among mentees (see for example, Bauldry et al., 2009; Braga et al., 2009; Dubois et al., 2002; Jolliffe and

³⁰ See Appendix 3, publication: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M., (2021) 'He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man': The Impact of a Specialist 'Family Wing' on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers. *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 2021, Vol.60. (1) 101-121 for a full discussion of the impact of IWW support upon paternal identity.

Farrington, 2007), many mentoring services are voluntary (therefore more likely to be subject to selection bias) and are delivered alongside other services/interventions; moreover, most studies to date have been limited by small sample sizes and/or lack of robust comparison groups. While the use of intermediate outcomes can offer some indication of the impact of mentoring upon the likelihood of re-offending, only one of the studies within this portfolio benefits from a reconviction analysis³¹.

Reconviction data was obtained for the FOR Phase One participants and indicated that overall, FOR programme participants did not reoffend at a significantly lower rate than those in the comparison group³². However, participants who had post-release contact with mentors had significantly lower reconviction rates (relative to risk) than those who had no contact. As indicated by the Phase One finding (Lewis et al., 2003a, b) prisoners who took FOR were significantly more likely than others to maintain contact after release. It may be concluded therefore that while taking the FOR programme in and of itself did not produce lower reconviction rates, it was associated with increased continuity, which in turn was associated with lower reconviction rates. Furthermore, participants in the Probation-led schemes were reconvicted at a significantly lower rate than those in the voluntary run schemes.

Some important conclusions may be drawn from these findings; namely that post release mentoring support can contribute to successful resettlement outcomes in relation to reducing reconviction rates, particularly when accompanied by work to address cognitive motivational skills while inside prison by professionally trained staff. These findings are supported by the results of Maguire et al. (2010) who reported a statistically significant reduction in reconviction rates in TSS mentees compared with the comparison group and concluded that mentoring assisted in this respect by acting as a 'bridge' to other services.

While these results are certainly encouraging, it is re-emphasised that all results relating to FOR in the Phase One Pathfinders must be treated with caution. Not only is the FOR sample size small, but one-year predictions and comparisons between one-year reconviction rates are less reliable than those analysed over two years (Colledge et al., 1999).

³¹ Data for a full re-offending study in relation to the IWW project has been prepared by the candidate and submitted to the MOJ Data Lab for analysis. Results are delayed due to a backlog in processing requests for data arising during the Covid pandemic.

³² The reconviction analysis was completed by Dr. Jocelyn Kynch in 2005 and published together with the findings of the evaluation in 2006.

6.4 How can 'Whole Family' mentoring delivered within a multi-agency partnership context improve outcomes for prisoners' families and children?

As discussed in Chapter Two, the imprisonment of a family member can result in negative repercussions for the whole family. Children with a parent in prison are more likely than their peers to experience behavioural, psychological and educational problems, in addition to social isolation and bullying, often associated with the stigma of having a parent in prison (Boswell and Wedge, 2002; Murray, Farrington and Sekol, 2012; Murray and Farrington, 2005; Travis and Waul, 2003). The loss of income often causes additional stress for families and the extended separation from spouses/partners during the prison sentence often results in relationship/marital breakdown (Robertson, 2007; Sieneck et al., 2014).

In recognition of these issues, and the positive outcomes for both prisoner and family members which can be achieved through supporting family ties during the prison sentence (Farmer, 2017; May et al., 2008; Williams et al., 2012) an increasing number of prisons across the UK, Europe and globally are now beginning to offer more in the way of family friendly visits and family focused interventions. However, evidence for the impact of such initiatives is limited. As noted in Chapter Two, much of the evidence focuses upon the resettlement benefits to the prisoner alone and few studies have identified whether changes measured during the sentence are sustained post release. The third study within this portfolio, which outlined the impact of the Invisible Walls Wales (IWW) 'Whole Family' rehabilitative model, goes some way to contributing to these gaps by expanding the focus of the first two studies to explore the impact of 'Whole Family' mentoring delivered within a multi-agency context on the lives of prisoners' families and children.

6.4.1 Impact of IWW upon adult family members

The qualitative and quantitative data gathered in relation to family members indicate the highly positive impact the intervention had upon their family lives and personal relationships. A comparison of pre- and post-IWW scores on the Family Star tool for both prisoners and their partners/adult family member(s) indicates highly significant positive change in parenting skills and family functioning was achieved.

Qualitative interview data further corroborates these positive results, and many family members spoke of how much they valued the mentor's support particularly during the period of imprisonment

when they were struggling financially and felt lonely and isolated. One IWW family member commented for example that:

“[FIM] has been there for me at every step of the way. She has come to every Social Services meeting with me and supported me through it all. They became involved when I was seven months pregnant because of his past. I would have really struggled financially without IWW as they sorted all my bills out for me” (Clancy and Maguire 2017b:222).

While discussed earlier in sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, it is also worth reiterating here that the proportion of partners/carers in employment rose from 25% prior to the father’s imprisonment to 34% on exit from IWW, and the proportion known to be actively using drugs fell from 15% to 5%.

It is evident that the benefits of the ‘multi modal’ support offered by IWW facilitated a range of positive outcomes for family members. For example, in addition to the mentor support offered by the FIM, the Gwalia worker was able to offer support with education and training opportunities, in addition to financial advice and assistance. The Barnardo’s support worker delivered a parenting course in addition to some basic life skills training, even teaching some partners to tell the time and learn healthy cooking skills. The Barnardo’s Under 8’s worker offered play therapy sessions for younger children, while the YISP worker supported older children and teenagers. The G4S substance misuse worker began to deliver through the gate services to those in the community during the latter stages of the project, while the Local Authority Social Worker supported vulnerable families to address safeguarding concerns and assisted them with any care proceedings they were experiencing. These findings therefore emphasise the value added by delivering ‘Whole Family’ mentoring within a collaborative, multi-agency context.

6.4.2 Impact of IWW upon the children of prisoners

Evidence of the positive impact of the IWW intervention upon child participants was also obtained from changes in Goodman’s Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) scores. Highly statistically significant change ($p < 0.01$) was found in both parental and teacher SDQ scores, indicating improved wellbeing at home and in school. As with the other assessments implemented, it was not possible to follow up ‘drop outs’ and therefore children of those who chose to remain in contact with IWW until the end may represent a group that was ‘doing better’ than the children of those who disengaged. However, ‘drop-outs’ were relatively small in number, so this should not have affected the overall results significantly.

Further evidence of impact upon child participants was gleaned by examining change in children's status in relation to Social Services, with a marked decline in those registered 'at risk' and requiring agency support. There were also marked improvements in children's educational attainment, with 43% experiencing issues on joining compared with just 12% at the point of exit. Average school attendance rates also rose and peer relationships were reported to have improved substantially, with a decline in the number of children reporting they were; being bullied, socially isolated, had limited social networks and were engaging in inappropriate peer relationships.

Qualitative data gathered during interviews with teachers, family members/carers and during focus groups with some of the children themselves, also helps to add context to these figures and evidences how positively the IWW intervention was perceived by family member participants. Indeed, one teacher of a child participant commented that:

"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." (Clancy and Maguire, 2017a:107).

These findings echo those of Losel et al. (2012) who noted that family support for imprisoned fathers and their children contributed to improved outcomes for the whole family, including reduced problems in school, more pro social behaviour and a reduction in bullying (see also, Barnardo's, 2015; Gill and Deegan, 2013). The results of the IWW study go beyond these earlier studies by measuring a range of outcomes for families for up to six months after the release of the prisoner into the community and, in many cases into the family home.³³ Findings illustrate the positive social justice outcomes which can be achieved when multi-agency partnerships focus on the whole family as the beneficiary rather than upon the prisoner in isolation and also offer some indication that partnerships such as IWW may contribute to outcomes which can reduce the likelihood of intergenerational offending in the children of prisoners themselves.

One of the key benefits to child participants identified during the study, was the 'ripple effect' of the project upon the policies and practice of other agencies across South Wales and the impetus this raised in engaging and educating other agencies (such as schools, Social Services, Probation and housing) to support the children of prisoners. Of particular note, are the partnerships developed

³³ 38% of IWW prisoner participants returned to the family home on release (compared with 41% of prisoners who were living in the home prior to imprisonment).

between the IWW project staff and schools. This work led to the delivery of School Showcase events in the prison and the subsequent funding of the wider IWW Accord to provide support for all children (not just IWW participants) across South Wales with a parent in prison, (and who would otherwise fail to meet the threshold for support from Social Services). Consistent with previous research, increased multi-agency working can contribute to improved inter-agency communication and enhance understanding of partner agencies' roles and knowledge of available provision of support (Atkinson et al., 2002; Moran et al., 2006). This study therefore lends further support for the provision of multi-agency, 'Whole Family' support for prisoners, their families and children.

Chapter 7: Concluding comments

This portfolio of research has synthesised the findings of three empirical studies to achieve two overarching aims; the first is to explore the purpose, role and impact of 'through the gate' mentoring upon the resettlement and rehabilitation of ex-prisoners. Specific research questions addressed under this aim are: 1) What is the role and purpose of the mentoring relationship with prisoners? 2) How important is 'through the gate' continuity of contact in the resettlement of ex-prisoners? 3) What impact does the mentoring relationship have upon the desistance journey? The second aim is to seek evidence about the impact of 'Whole Family' mentoring delivered within a context of multi-agency support on improving the lives of ex-prisoners, their families and children. Together, these studies have extended our understanding of the potential value mentors can add, not only in improving the practical resettlement outcomes of ex-prisoners, but also in boosting their social and relational capital, in facilitating criminogenic attitude change, and in supporting their motivation to desist from crime. The most recent study further demonstrates the importance of 'whole family' mentoring to the aim of improving outcomes for all family members, including prisoners' children.

7.1 What is the role and purpose of the mentoring relationship?

All three of the studies found examples of mentors providing various mixes of cognitive, motivational, practical and emotional forms of support in their work with mentees. They also showed that mentors across all schemes facilitated access to community services for practical support, bolstered motivation to desist, and reinforced the cognitive behavioural and motivational treatment undertaken in custody once released. An important additional finding, consistent across the evaluations of both FOR and TSS, was that while all agencies paid attention to these three areas of support, increased emphasis was placed upon undertaking cognitive and/or motivational work by mentors working for statutory service providers, compared with more of a focus upon addressing practical problems by those in the Third Sector. Nonetheless, all three studies showed how it was the emotional support offered by the mentoring relationship which was most valued by the mentees themselves, thus highlighting the social and relational value of the services offered by mentors in supporting an individual on their path to desistance. Together, these three studies indicate that the key role played by mentors was that of acting as a 'trusted friend' and someone to whom the mentees could look up to, both as a source of emotional support and as a pro-social role-model who can offer guidance in times of need. Community caregivers' positive response to the 'Whole Family' approach undertaken by IWW mentors also emphasises how important this emotional and practical support was to families of prisoners, further

highlighting the current gap in service provision for vulnerable families. A key function of IWW mentors that was particularly welcomed by community caregivers was their role in advocating on behalf of the families and children during meetings with other services, particularly Social Services and the courts.

7.2 Mentoring as surveillance: Can a focus on risk and strengths be integrated?

Mentors across all three services were also able to use their relationship with the mentees to maintain a 'closer eye' on their activities following release. Mentors' relationship with the whole family resulted in a deeper insight into the 'goings on' in the lives of their mentees, enabling them to provide additional support and put safeguarding measures in place where required to achieve positive outcomes for families and particularly, the children. Indeed, this element of their role provides a useful example of how mentoring can provide a positive experience of 'needs-led' surveillance and support for offenders, rather than the largely deficit-focused, and risk-led mentoring with offenders described by some (Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014; Corcoran, 2011; 2019). This was evidenced as being of value as the 'Whole Family', multi-agency approach meant that families who may have previously been under the radar of services were able to benefit from support to address issues identified as representing elevated risk to the children and families of offenders and which may otherwise have remained unnoticed, such as domestic abuse, substance misuse, child protection and disengagement from school.

Furthermore, the high level of trust established with mentors encouraged families to engage with support for issues they may previously have hidden from services, while the multi-agency network of services surrounding families facilitated relationships with agencies traditionally viewed with mistrust such as Social Services and the Youth Offending Team. This is an important finding and one which evidences that a strengths-based, partnership approach to mentoring, which focuses upon supporting mentees to construct an alternative identity as a 'good dad and family man' as opposed to simply addressing criminogenic deficits to reduce re-offending, can be a powerful motivator and catalyst for change, and serves to forge positive relationships of voluntary engagement with statutory service providers.

These conclusions reinforce the point made by Hucklesby and Wincup (2014) that the Good Lives model could provide a useful conceptual framework for mentoring in the CJS, adopting a strengths-based approach to work with offenders to build a 'good life' (2014:388) - (see also, Wincup, 2019). Indeed, not only does the current study support this, but it also evidences how IWW takes it further,

moving beyond a narrow focus upon the offender to focus equally upon families and children, with the aims of improving the quality of family life and reducing the likelihood of intergenerational offending being given equal weight to that of reducing re-offending.

7.3 How important is ‘Through the gate’ continuity of contact in the resettlement of ex-prisoners?

All three studies also reinforce the importance of establishing relationships with mentees prior to release and continuing them ‘through the gate’ into the community. As evidenced by the FOR research, levels of voluntary post release contact were shown to be significantly higher in services where the mentor had worked with the mentee prior to release, indicating that mentors need to establish a relationship with prisoners while still in custody. These findings corroborate previous studies in this area (Lewis et al, 2003a, b; Maguire et al., 2010) and offer further insight into the benefit of continuity of contact as a mechanism for success. The reconviction study undertaken as part of the FOR Phase Two resettlement Pathfinders indicates for example, that while completion of the custodial FOR programme did not significantly reduce the risk of reconviction, mentees who remained in post release contact were reconvicted at a significantly lower rate than those who disengaged post release. Although there are weaknesses in the data, which means caution should be taken in interpreting these findings (see Appendix 1, Chapter 5) they have some important implications for policy and practice and suggest that work to address attitudes and thinking skills in custody may be insufficient to reduce the risk of reconviction unless accompanied by ‘through the gate’ support from a trusted source.

However, it is the extraordinarily high voluntary rates of contact achieved by IWW mentors with ex-prisoners and their families, both during and after the sentence (far exceeding that of other mentoring services evaluated), which represents a step-change in ways of delivering mentoring services. These results offer new insight into the potential value of a ‘Whole Family’ approach to mentoring in improving voluntary engagement and outcomes for offenders and their vulnerable families. As previous studies have shown, much of the merit of mentoring can arise from the mentors acting as a ‘bridge’ to increase offenders’ engagement with services (Baldry et al., 2009; Maguire et al., 2010; Schinkel et al., 2009) The approach taken by IWW in working with the whole family appears to markedly improve levels of voluntary post-release engagement with ex-prisoners and indeed the whole family, and suggests that where appropriate, mentoring services should consider all family members as clients rather than working with the prisoner in isolation.

7.4 What impact does the mentoring relationship have upon the desistance journey?

Mentees across all three schemes also demonstrated making progress on their 'desistance journey' with significant positive change in their housing and employment status following engagement with the mentoring schemes. A particularly interesting finding is that while mentees across all three schemes made positive shifts in the nature of their substance misuse, it was only IWW mentees who demonstrated substantial reductions in the frequency of use, with many reporting abstinence on completion compared with the harm reduction gains achieved by TSS and FOR mentees. One possible explanation for this may be linked with the involvement of the family in the offender's rehabilitation journey. The 'Whole Family' approach is likely to have resulted in an increase, both in social capital - resulting in the mentee having 'more to lose' should he relapse, and in the increased awareness and involvement of the family in supporting, 'surveilling' and reporting the ex-prisoner's 'slippage' to the mentor and/or substance misuse worker post release, representing a form of increased social control (Hirschi, 1969).

All three studies also evidenced positive change in the criminogenic attitudes of mentees. The finding that these attitudinal shifts only reached statistical significance when delivered by statutory service providers who demonstrated an increased focus upon addressing attitudes and thinking skills is an important one, indicating that there is a need for mentors to be trained in delivering cognitive and/or motivational work with offenders alongside offering practical and emotional support.

A key benefit of the mentoring relationship shown across all three of the studies was the increase in social capital reported by mentees. This was particularly true for the strengths-based 'Whole Family' approach offered by IWW, which helped to engender profound shifts in the paternal identity of many mentees, triggering a strong motivation to change and commitment to family life that was frequently sustained following the prisoner's release and over the longer-term as evidenced by the markedly higher levels of post release contact and positive resettlement outcomes achieved. These findings powerfully link desistance theory and a focus on identity to 'Whole Family' mentoring, highlighting how the relationships between mentors, families and the prisoner can create the perfect 'catalyst for change', allowing mentees to experience, perhaps for the first time, an alternative reality of a positive, pro-social family life. As emphasised in the qualitative data, mentees described how the 'Whole Family' approach had enabled them to fully appreciate the impact of their offending upon their children, while the relationship with the mentor and partners such as Barnardo's supported them to work through the guilt and remorse to make amends by giving them the opportunity to enact their role as a 'good dad'. As noted by Serin and Lloyd (2009):

“There appears to be hope for offenders who can vividly imagine themselves as ex-offenders. Identity can function as a bridge between cognitions and behavior; taking steps to make changes and following through with ample motivation requires one to both value the goal and imagine themselves as a person who can attain the goal” (2009:357).

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To echo the terms used by Burke (1991) and Dyer (2005), these findings evidence how the opportunity to enact the role of father with the support of the Family Integration Mentor, ‘verified’ prisoner participants’ paternal identity through ‘reflected appraisals’ from their close family and children. This subsequently helped the men to develop a new identity of being a good dad and role-model, triggering a powerful motivation to sustain this new ‘good life’ for the sake of their families and children.

7.5 What is the impact of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring delivered within a context of multi-agency support on the lives of ex-prisoners, their families and children?

There is a marked gap in the literature regarding the impact of family focused mentoring and family support more generally upon the families and children of prisoners. Much of the evidence focuses upon the resettlement benefits to the prisoner alone and few studies have examined whether changes measured during the sentence are sustained post release. The wider focus upon prisoners’ families and children in the IWW research addresses this gap, and by following families for 18 months, the study was able to evidence the impact of ‘whole family’ mentoring upon families and children both during the custodial sentence and for up to six months following the prisoner’s release into the community. The social justice outcomes achieved, particularly in terms of children’s social and emotional wellbeing, peer networks and school engagement and attainment indicate that this form of multi-agency, ‘Whole Family’ mentoring and support can engender significant, positive change in these children’s lives and may contribute to a reduction in intergenerational offending.

Finally, the ‘ripple effect’ of the project upon the policies and practice of other agencies across South Wales and the impetus this raised in engaging and educating other agencies (such as schools, Social Services, Probation and Housing) to support the children of prisoners is a key finding and one which has potential to trigger a cultural shift in how agencies view prisoners’ families and children, perhaps going some way to undoing the stigma and social exclusion many report feeling as a consequence of their loved one’s imprisonment. Importantly, a wider cultural shift in agency awareness, focus and support upon prisoners’ children would reap benefits not just for those in families involved with mentoring services, but would also serve to widen the focus to ‘shine a light’ upon all children with a parent in prison, improving outcomes and perhaps changing the life trajectory for the group many

have referred to as the ‘forgotten victims’ of imprisonment (Codd, 1998). Taken together these findings lend convincing support for the argument that more multi-agency, ‘Whole Family’ support should be provided for prisoners’ families and children (both aspects of this are essential – ‘whole family’ and multi-agency).

7.6 Future directions for research

When considering the implications of these findings it is important to acknowledge the limitation that only the first study in this portfolio (Clancy, Hudson et al., 2006) offers an indication of the impact of mentoring upon recidivism. A re-offending study is in progress for the IWW intervention and comparison groups, and their data is currently with the Ministry of Justice Data Lab for analysis. Unfortunately, delays in processing this data have arisen due to the Covid pandemic and the candidate is therefore unable to include this within the current portfolio. Once completed, this analysis will shed more light upon the effectiveness of the ‘Whole Family’ approach in reducing re-offending among prisoner mentees.

Future research would also benefit from constructing a comparison group of prisoners’ families and children to allow more definitive conclusions to be reached regarding the impact of ‘Whole Family’ mentoring upon families. A key aim of this approach is to reduce the risk of intergenerational offending and ideally a longitudinal study would be undertaken to follow both intervention and comparison groups over the longer term to identify whether the positive outcomes identified in the current study are sustained and the intergenerational cycle of offending is broken.

Further, as noted in Chapter Two, it is very difficult to isolate the impact of mentoring alone, as support is often delivered as a package alongside other services. It would therefore be beneficial to compare the impact of a ‘Whole Family’ mentoring approach delivered to prisoners who have not benefitted from residing on a Family Intervention Unit with those who have, to identify whether both services need to be delivered ‘multi-modally’ to reap the full benefits for all participants.

Finally, as highlighted earlier in section 6.1, the comparison of the three studies within this thesis has raised some important questions regarding the interplay of dynamics influencing the nature and focus of the work undertaken by mentors across the voluntary and statutory sectors. The finding that mentors working for statutory service providers placed a greater emphasis upon cognitive and motivational work, together with evidence that OASys assessments were scored differently by those working in the voluntary sector warrants further exploration in future research.

7.7 Summing up: key implications for knowledge, policy and practice

Taken together, the above findings have provided important new evidence regarding the effectiveness of mentoring, delivered within a multi-agency context, both in supporting ex-prisoners to progress on their desistance journey, and in improving the lives of their loved ones/significant others in the community. This research also sheds light upon the crucial ingredients necessary to create effective interventions involving mentoring, namely that, 1) it should be delivered ‘through the gate’, 2) it should incorporate cognitive and motivational support, 3) where possible and appropriate, it should take a ‘Whole Family’ strengths-based approach and be delivered to prisoners and their families/significant others as a holistic unit and 4) it should be delivered within a multi-agency framework in order to effectively meet the wide and varied needs of all mentees. In addition to their contribution to knowledge, these findings have implications of direct relevance to policy-makers and practitioners alike.

The successful outcomes achieved by the family mentors in IWW raises a bigger question regarding the applicability of this approach across all rehabilitative work with offenders. As it currently stands, children and families work is represented as one of seven key resettlement pathways for male prisoners in the UK, (first identified by the Home Office in their 2004 Reducing Re-Offending National Action Plan) but is often considered separately, or even overlooked in favour of a focus upon addressing mental and physical health, substance misuse, employability and/or homelessness. Indeed, the first NOMS Delivery plan for the 2004 Action Plan referred to these as ‘the four main pathways’, thus indicating that the Children and Families pathway was regarded as a lower priority. However, as evidenced by the study within this portfolio, the strengths-based ‘Whole Family’ approach not only improved outcomes for children and the wider family, but also acted as a ‘hook for change’ (Giordano, 2002) in prisoner mentees and crucially, contributed to the development and verification of a pro-social paternal identity – a key element in achieving long-term, secondary desistance from crime (Maruna and Farrall, 2004). The research discussed in this thesis has emphasised for the first time, the success of the ‘Whole Family’ approach in furthering the progress of male offenders on their desistance journey, in significantly improving outcomes for children and families, both during the sentence and following release and in creating positive change in the practice and culture of partner agencies in the community. These findings strongly support the argument that it should be considered as a core element of rehabilitative work, permeating all seven resettlement pathways; and further, that this is of importance to all offenders with families/significant others, both in prison and in the community. Indeed, as noted by Lord Farmer in his 2017 review of prisoners’

family relationships, which was substantially influenced by the IWW project, “good family relationships must be a golden thread running through the processes of all prisons” (2017:8).

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Appendix 1 Evaluation of the Focus On Resettlement (F.O.R) - A Change resettlement programme

**Clancy, A., Hudson, K., Maguire, M., Peake, R., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. and Kynch, J. (2006)
Getting out and staying out. Results of the Prisoner Resettlement Pathfinders. Bristol: Policy Press.**

Getting out and staying out

**Results of the prisoner
Resettlement Pathfinders**

Anna Clancy, Kirsty Hudson, Mike Maguire,
Richard Peake, Peter Raynor,
Maurice Vanstone and Jocelyn Kynch



Appendix 2 Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS)

Clancy, A., Lane, J. and Morgan, B. (2006) Moving Forward with Mentoring: An Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme in Wales. Welsh Assembly Government

MOVING FORWARD WITH MENTORING: AN EVALUATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SCHEME IN WALES

**Ms Anna Clancy, Ms Julie Lane & Dr. Beverley Morgan, Home Office (RDS),
National Assembly for Wales
Professor Mike Maguire, Cardiff University**

Appendix 3 Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales (IWW)

Publication 1: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2017a) Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales. University of South Wales.

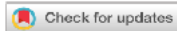


Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales

Anna Clancy
Mike Maguire
(University of South Wales)
December 2017



Publication 2: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2017b) 'Prisoners and their children: An innovative model of 'Whole Family' support'. European Journal of Probation 2017, Vol. 9(3) 210– 230.



Article

**Prisoners and their children:
An innovative model of 'whole
family' support**



Anna Clancy and Mike Maguire
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Abstract

The article reports key findings from an evaluation of 'Invisible Walls Wales' (IWW), a multi-agency 'through the gate' project in HMP Parc, South Wales, based on an innovative model of 'whole family' support for prisoners, their children and partners. It provides an overview of previous research on the impact of parental imprisonment on children and families, including financial hardship, emotional stress and risks of 'intergenerational offending'. It outlines the core elements of the IWW model and the substantial infrastructure of family support facilities in the prison on which it was built. It summarises outcomes of the project for fathers, partners and children, and gives examples of how IWW's 'whole family' approach is influencing policy and practice elsewhere. Reoffending rates are not yet available, but are anticipated to be low. However, the key strength of the project, it is argued, lies in its emphasis on the 'whole family' as the main beneficiary, rather than focusing narrowly on rehabilitation of the father.

Keywords

Intergenerational offending, parental imprisonment, prisoners' families, rehabilitation, resettlement, 'through the gate'

In this article, we report key findings from, and draw out some of the implications of, an independent evaluation of 'Invisible Walls Wales' (IWW), a multi-agency 'through the gate' project based on an innovative model of 'whole family' support for prisoners who are parents, their children and their partners (or others caring for their children). The project was developed by senior staff at HMP Parc, a large private prison for male offenders situated near Bridgend in South Wales,¹ where it ran between September 2012 and

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Publication 3: Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2021) 'He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man': The Impact of a Specialist 'Family Wing' on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers. Howard Journal of Criminal Justice 2021, Vol.60. (1) 101-121.

'He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man': The Impact of a Specialist 'Family Wing' on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers

ANNA CLANCY and MIKE MAGUIRE
Anna Clancy is Research Fellow and Mike Maguire is Professor of Criminology, University of South Wales

Abstract: The article examines the operation and impact of a specialist wing in a male prison, which aims to repair and enhance family relationships. It outlines the damaging effects of parental imprisonment on children and on paternal identity, and explores whether, and how, residence on the wing and prisoners' joint participation with children and families in extended visits and family-focused activities and interventions, mitigate such damage. The findings are overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating improvements in well-being among children and family members, enhanced family relationships, and a stronger sense of paternal identity among prisoners. It is argued that these activities set in motion processes akin to those postulated by Burke (1991) as necessary for maintenance and renewal of identity; namely, the 'verification' of 'identity standards' through 'reflective appraisal' by key referent groups (here, families and children). There is also evidence that positive changes in prisoners quite frequently persist after release.

Keywords: family wing; parental imprisonment; paternal identity; prisoners' families; prisons

The last two decades have seen the accumulation of a substantial international body of research demonstrating the damaging effects of parental imprisonment. These include the effects of separation on the incarcerated parent, the partner (or other family members) and the children as individuals, as well as the overall impact on family relationships, finances, and in some cases the survival of the family as a unit (for recent overviews, see Condry and Scharff Smith 2018; Hutton and Moran 2019). They also include an elevated risk that children of prisoners will themselves go on to become involved in crime – the so-called 'intergenerational transmission of offending' (Farrington, Coid and Murray 2009).

Appendix 4 Description of candidate's role in each study

Study 1 Evaluation of the Focus On Resettlement (F.O.R) - A Change resettlement programme

**Clancy, A., Hudson, K., Maguire, M., Peake, R., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. and Kynch, J. (2006)
Getting out and staying out. Results of the Prisoner Resettlement Pathfinders. Bristol: Policy Press.**

As the lead researcher on the project, the candidate was responsible for co-ordinating the fieldwork across the three sites and had responsibility for undertaking all research at the Parc prison site. The candidate's duties involved taking responsibility for the day-to-day management of the research and fieldwork. The candidate designed the research methodology, and the interview research tools (semi-structured interview schedules for use with strategic and operational staff and prisoner participants) and undertook data collation and qualitative and quantitative analyses of data from across the three sites. The candidate's role in the publications involved drafting of all interim and final research reports as first author. The candidate also co-authored the published book (a full copy of which is included within this portfolio, see Appendix 1) as lead author.

Dr Kirsty Hudson was responsible for all fieldwork and data collection at the Lewes prison site, while Dr Richard Peake undertook all fieldwork and data collation at the Hull prison site. Professors Peter Raynor and Maurice Vanstone undertook an analysis of programme treatment integrity by analysing video footage of programme tutors delivering the FOR modules. Dr Jocelyn Kynch completed the data cleaning and analysis for the one-year reconviction study, while Professor Mike Maguire retained responsibility for project oversight, editing and quality assurance of all interim and final reports to funders in addition to the published book.

Study 2 Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS)

Clancy, A., Lane, J. and Morgan, B. (2006) Moving Forward with Mentoring: An Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme in Wales. Welsh Assembly Government.

As a Senior Research Officer leading the Home Office's Regional Research team in Wales at the time, the candidate undertook an evaluation of the scheme to inform future pan-Wales funding of the initiative. As the lead researcher on the project, the candidate was responsible for designing the research methodology along with all research tools and co-ordinated and undertook the fieldwork across all sites, with assistance from two Research Officers, Julie Lane and Dr Beverley Morgan. She also collated and analysed the project data in addition to drafting the interim and final research reports to funders as first author, with assistance from Ms Lane and Dr Morgan. As Academic Advisor to the Regional Research Team, Professor Mike Maguire advised on the research methodology, together with editing and quality assurance of all interim and final reports

Study 3 Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales (IWW)

Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2017a) Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales. University of South Wales.

Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2017b) 'Prisoners and their children: An innovative model of 'Whole Family' support'. European Journal of Probation 2017, Vol. 9(3) 210– 230.

Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2021) 'He is a New Man, a Proper Family Man': The Impact of a Specialist 'Family Wing' on the Quality of Family Relationships and Paternal Identity among Imprisoned Fathers. Howard Journal of Criminal Justice 2021, Vol.60. (1) 101-121.

As the lead researcher on this project, the candidate was responsible for designing the methodology and research tools, undertaking all fieldwork with project staff (in prison and community), stakeholders, prisoners, adult community caregivers and children, analysing all data and drafting all interim and final reports to funders. During the life of the evaluation, the candidate was assisted in the fieldwork by Sam Hanks, who helped to undertake some of the interviews with prisoners and their family members. Marlies Postmus, Claudia van Leeuwen, Sofie Lorijn and Emmy Remijn from Hanze University in the Netherlands also provided much valued support with the comparison group interviews conducted in HMP Parc. Professor Mike Maguire retained responsibility for supervising and quality assuring all work and reports produced throughout the evaluation.

The candidate also co-authored as lead author, two journal articles with Professor Mike Maguire, both of which have been published in peer reviewed journals. The second article relating to the impact of the Family Intervention Unit upon paternal identity was also developed from an original idea of the candidate following analyses of the qualitative interview data with prisoners on the FIU and their counterparts residing in the main prison population.

In 2019, the candidate also cleaned and prepared the quantitative data for IWW intervention and comparison groups and submitted this to the Ministry of Justice Data Lab to undertake a re-offending study. However, the data is still being processed by the Ministry of Justice due to delays arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. It has therefore not been possible to include the reconviction results within this portfolio of research.