

Moving On: An Evaluation of the Jigsaw Visitors' Centre



Rachael Dixey
James Woodall

Centre for Health Promotion Research
Faculty of Health
Leeds Metropolitan University

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Executive summary

Background

The Jigsaw Visitors' Centre based at HMP Leeds is an innovative prison visitors' centre which aims, amongst other things, to improve family health and well-being for prisoners and their families. Where visitors' centres are attached to a prison, the process of visiting appears to be easier. Keeping families together produces a range of positive outcomes including improved mental health for the prisoner, improved resettlement and a reduced likelihood of re-offending.

Evaluation of the Centre

Jigsaw commissioned the Centre for Health Promotion Research at Leeds Metropolitan University to conduct an evaluation of its services, activities, partnership working and impact that Jigsaw had within the prison environment and local community. Evaluating community initiatives such as Jigsaw, require a number of activities in order to capture the diversity of perspectives that stakeholders and service users hold. Data for this evaluation was generated using a combination of methods with a range of groups, including prisoners' families, prisoners, prison staff, Jigsaw staff and key stakeholders with HM Prison Service.

Key Findings

A successful organisation

Jigsaw has reached a level of maturity as an organisation, with sound structures, policies and procedures and a clear vision. The staff are highly motivated, enthusiastic and are keen to take the organisation forward.

Providing a supportive environment

The findings show that Jigsaw provides a professional friendly service to prisoners' families and deals with concerns and apprehensions that families may face during the prisoner's sentence. The family support work currently being provided within the Centre was of an exceptional quality and visitors acknowledged the high-level of support they were receiving from committed Jigsaw staff.

Jigsaw's exemplar practice when faced with first time visitors is substantially ameliorating the stress and anxiety associating with prison visiting. This goes a long-way to keeping families together. There was also good evidence to suggest that

Jigsaw was working effectively and supporting families from different ethnic backgrounds.

Impact within HMP Leeds

Evidence suggests that Jigsaw supports the work of prison staff working in HMP Leeds. Jigsaw plays a crucial role in allowing visits to be a positive experience for the prisoner and the visitor. This has a 'knock-on' effect within the prison as prisoners return to the wing in a positive frame of mind. However, whilst many prison staff fully supported Jigsaw, there were some who questioned the Centre's role and purpose within the prison.

Jigsaw's work and its relevance to policy drivers

Reducing Re-offending – Jigsaw's unquestionable strength is its ability to facilitate the contact between families and offenders. Jigsaw ensures that prison visitors are treated decently and with respect and reduces the stressful circumstances which surrounds prison visitation. The importance of maintaining family links has been well established by other research and demonstrates the favourable impact on crucial issues such as resettlement and employment chances as well as providing a motive to cease re-offending.

Choosing Health – The health trainers working at Jigsaw highlighted the positive work they were conducting one-to-one with community members in West Leeds; a range of health related issues, i.e. weight loss, alcohol reduction, healthy eating, were being effectively addressed. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Christchurch Armley Youth Project, Jigsaw was also addressing health and social issues which were pertinent to young people.

Every Child Matters – Prisoners' families said that Jigsaw was a friendly place to bring their children and the majority were happy with the provision offered. Keeping children in contact with their fathers offers a number of positive benefits. However, prisoners' families and prisoners themselves commented that more should be provided within the visits hall to occupy children.

Jigsaw: a model of good practice

Jigsaw's work surpasses what is normally found in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, but also in other areas across the country. It is clear that Jigsaw plays a role in both the smooth running of the prison, keeping families together and consequently reducing the likelihood of prisoners re-offending. This link is crucially important for

the Yorkshire area, from where many offenders within HMP Leeds are drawn, but also for society as a whole as there are considerable savings to be made for the tax payer. It is strongly encouraged that Jigsaw's model of good practice should be shared both within and outside the region.

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Introduction and context

The importance of prison visits

The importance of prison visits is being increasingly well documented in the research literature and it is clear that they are the lynchpin of contact between prisoners and their families (Codd, 2008). The prison service itself recognises the importance of maintaining family ties (Light and Campbell, 2006), noted in the prison rules which state:

“Special attention shall be paid to the maintenance of such relationships between a prisoner and his family as are desirable in the best interests of both.” (Rule 4 of the Prison Rules, 1999)

The Home Office (2004), in their reducing re-offending national action plan, emphasised the important role that visitors' centres make in helping to maintain family ties and the influence that this may have on the rehabilitation process. Broadly speaking, maintaining contact between a prisoner and his family provides a range of benefits. Most significantly, research shows that family contact reduces the likelihood of prisoners re-offending. Ditchfield (1994), for example, demonstrates that prisoners without active family support are between two and six times more likely to re-offend within the first year of release than those with family support.

Home Office research also suggests that family contact is associated with successful resettlement. Their research found that family visits are an indicator for successful resettlement as 37% of prisoners who had at least one visit from a member of their family had either employment, training or education arranged on release from prison, compared with 16% of those not receiving visits (Niven and Stewart, 2005). Moreover, a prisoner's mental health is dependant on his contact with the outside world. The presence of visitors normalises the prison environment and acts as a reminder of the outside world and its associated responsibilities (Hairston, 1991; Mills, 2005). Therefore, regular visits improve the transition back into the community lowering levels of 'institutionalisation' as prisoners are not completely immersed in the prison sub-culture (Gordon, 1999; Codd, 2008). This arguably contributes towards effective prisoner resettlement on release.

Despite these positive benefits, caution should be exercised in that not all family contact has a positive influence for prisoners (Mills and Codd, 2008). Green (2004)

for instance suggests that in some cases “the family may be a bad influence”. In the case of young offenders, for example, it could be argued that in some instances family influences may reinforce criminal activity and behaviour as opposed to condemning it (Codd, 2007). Nevertheless, the case for maintaining family ties is strong and research evidence shows many positive consequences.

However, not all prisoners get their statutory entitlement of visits¹. In 2001, for example, approximately two-thirds of prisoners in local establishments and just under half of those in training prisons did not get their entitlement of visits (HMIP, 2001).

Prison visitors’ centres: national context

There are 139 prisons in England and Wales with 112 having visitors’ centres. Williams (2006) has estimated that in the UK there are one million relatives that are affected by imprisonment on an annual basis. To support these relatives, all newly constructed and contracted-out prisons must now have a visitors’ centre; however, as yet, the Home Office has placed no such obligation on its own establishments run by the prison service (Light and Campbell, 2006). Despite the significance of maintaining family ties during imprisonment, the facilities and provision available for prison visitors vary considerably across the prison estate. Visiting facilities across the country tend to be neither consistent or adequate (Browne, 2005); facilities for families, for example, can vary from a portacabin for visitors to wait in, to purpose built centres with support and information (Mills, 2005). Contributing to this problem is that there is no prison service standard in operation for the conditions and facilities for conducting visits (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002) and consequently, visitors’ centres vary in their structure, staffing and funding (Loucks, 2002).

Prison visitors’ centres: regional context

Within the Yorkshire and Humberside region a recent review of visitor centre services was conducted by Diane Curry (2008). The review involved selected site visits to five prisons as well as a questionnaire being sent to all prisons in the area. Furthermore, focus groups were conducted with families from HMYOI Wetherby.

¹ Sentenced prisoners are entitled to a visit on reception to prison and then a minimum of two visits every twenty eight days (depending on their status, i.e. enhanced, standard or basic). Remand prisoners may have up to four visits over a seven day period (dependant on their status).

Curry highlighted that the provision for prisoners' families within the region was



patchy and varied between prison establishments. In general, operational support officers were responsible for the running of visitors' centres, but no training in regard to prisoners' families was provided to these officers. There was a clear lack of relevant information available for prisoners' families and only a few visitors' centre staff were aware of the assisted prison visits scheme.

Across the region, refreshment services for prison visitors were insufficient, with stock often low and of an inadequate quality. Similarly, play activities for children were of a poor quality except in prisons such as HMP Hull and New Hall (Curry, 2008).

Although the recent review by Curry highlights that improvements need to be made across the region in terms of family visits facilities, there are some visitors' centres which were omitted from the review which seem to be providing high quality services to prisoners' families. One such centre is the Jigsaw Visitors' Centre based at HMP Leeds.

The Jigsaw Visitors' Centre

In 1999, when the New Opportunities Fund launched its Healthy Living Centres grant programme, Leeds took the opportunity to tackle disadvantage and to improve health across the city. Seven successful bids included one for the existing prison visitors' centre, to upgrade the buildings, reconnect to the local community, and to develop a programme of activities centred on the health of prisoners' families, prisoners and staff. The seven projects sit within the health and well-being strategy developed by the 'Health Partnership of Leeds Initiative', and all are positioned in the voluntary sector.

The 'Jigsaw Project' is the Healthy Living Centre project which is centred on the existing prison visitors' centre; the two entities are now conflated as the Jigsaw Visitors' Centre, but for brevity, Jigsaw, 'the Centre' or the Visitors' Centre will be used throughout the rest of this report. The Centre is located next to Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Leeds, an imposing Victorian category B local prison with approximately 1,200 inmates. In HMP Leeds' inspection in 2007, approximately 84% of its prisoners were white and almost half under the age of thirty; 26% of prisoners were serving sentences of two to four years (HMIP, 2007).

There are thirty visits sessions per week at HMP Leeds comprising of four sessions each day (seven days per week) in addition to two evening visits sessions². Each visits session can hold a maximum of twenty-seven prisoners and three adult visitors per prisoner³. In total, 94,439 visitors (this includes social and legal visits) entered HMP Leeds between February 2007 to January 2009.

Except for the two evening visits and the 8:30am visits during Monday to Friday, all social visitors arrive at Jigsaw to be registered and have the opportunity to relax and unwind before entering the main prison gate to visit their relative. Jigsaw is a separate building to HMP Leeds, however, the distance between the two is only a very short walk. Approximately thirty minutes before a visit session, visitors within Jigsaw are invited to walk over to the main prison gate where they are processed before being escorted to the visits hall.

As an organisation Jigsaw has a series of objectives. These are to:

- Improve family health and well-being
- Improve mental health and well-being
- Improve physical health and well-being
- Improve access to health information



² Jigsaw is open seven days a week but not for all visits sessions. For example, Jigsaw is not open for the two evening visits.

³ An adult visitor is classified as being over 10 years old. In addition, a maximum of three children (under 10 years old) can attend the visit.

- Provide a safe and friendly building with welcoming facilities
- Act as a bridge between the local community and the prison
- Build local capacity, develop partnerships and raise awareness of the issues surrounding prison life

Jigsaw has been previously evaluated. The evaluation suggested that there was strong evidence that the Centre improved the quality of visits for families, especially in the way the Centre helped children both prior to going into visits and also during visiting time through the facilitated play areas run by experienced and qualified staff. In addition, the Centre was addressing both health and re-offending agendas, thereby complementing the broader work being carried out within HMP Leeds (Woodall et al., 2006; 2009). In summary, Jigsaw was seen as an outstanding example of a visitors' centre.

Aims and objectives of the current evaluation

The Jigsaw Visitors' Centre commissioned the Centre for Health Promotion Research at Leeds Metropolitan University to conduct an extensive evaluation of its services, activities, partnership working and impact that the Centre had within the prison environment and local community. There were an extensive number of aims and specific objectives that the evaluation was asked to meet. These have been summarised below:

- To evaluate the impact that the Jigsaw Visitors Centre has had on the contribution to the public health, social service and reducing re-offending agendas through the activities, services and partnership work carried out for our stakeholders.
- To highlight areas of good practice and describe the lessons that have been learnt that could be shared with other visitors' centres both regionally and nationally.
- To provide an idea of cost savings that have occurred from running services, activities and courses, compared with the costs of re-offending
- To identify health outcomes.
- To evaluate the overall impact of the project on our stakeholders during the five years of existence.
- To investigate the impact Jigsaw has made within HMP Leeds.

- To evaluate the benefits of and differences between a voluntary sector organisation running the visitors' centre as opposed to the prison service.
- To evaluate the impact on mental health issues and emotional support for stakeholders.
- To comment on the capability of Jigsaw managing other visitors' centres in Yorkshire and Humberside.
- To make recommendations as to how the organisation could be further developed to become more sustainable.
- To consider how Jigsaw has evolved over the time since the last evaluation.

Methodology

A qualitative approach was favoured for this evaluation. Qualitative approaches are becoming increasingly used in evaluation research as they are particularly adept at examining the dynamics of how processes operate and how outcomes are achieved (Ritchie, 2003). The conduct of the evaluation was predominantly based on methods of data generation that were flexible and sensitive to the social context in which they were being produced (Mason, 2002).

It is generally agreed that when evaluating community initiatives, such as Jigsaw, a number of strands of activity are required to capture the context and diversity of perspectives that service users hold. Data for this evaluation was therefore generated using a combination of interviews, workshops, document analysis and focus groups with a range of user groups. A summary of these activities are described below and an overall outline of the evaluation has been presented in Table 1 (page 11).

Documentary evidence

Documentary data were obtained and analysed and used to supplement the other forms of data collection. Annual reports, project proposals, previous evaluation reports and promotional material including newsletters and newspaper articles were all provided by the Manager of Jigsaw.

Prisoners' families

Eliciting the views of prisoners' families in a qualitatively driven way was a key part of the evaluation. This allowed the vivid realities of prison visiting and the process of maintaining family ties to be illuminated using the voices of family members themselves. Arguably, this would have been difficult to do using quantitative methodologies (Codd, 2008). Short semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty prison visitors. To capture the views of a broad range of visitors, interviews were conducted both during weekday and weekend visits and during morning and afternoon visiting sessions. Broadly speaking, these participants were family members of the prisoners they were visiting and, for the rest of the report, will be referred to as 'prisoners' families' or simply 'visitors'.

Prisoners' families were invited to take part in a short interview as they arrived in the Centre to register their attendance prior to visiting. Advertising materials and information leaflets had been left in the Centre prior to the commencement of the interviews and, in most cases, prisoners' families had read this information on prior visits and were aware of the evaluation taking place.

Due to the nature of the environment, often prison visitors did not have the time or inclination to spend time being interviewed. Understandably their focus was principally on visiting the prisoners; consequently researchers were sensitive to these factors and an 'informal approach' to recruiting prisoners' families was adopted.

A fundamental concern of ours was ensuring that potential participants were able to give informed consent free from any pressure or perceived pressure. It was explained prior to interview that the researchers were independent of the prison and Jigsaw. The aims of the research were explained as were issues of confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the interview at any point. The interviews focussed broadly on:

- Their experience of using Jigsaw;
- Benefits of Jigsaw, both for them personally and their children (where appropriate);
- Their access to information and services;
- Views about what is working well/not well in the Centre;
- Their recommendations for the future.

Where permission was granted by participants the interviews were audio recorded.

Prisoners

Within the research and academic literature there is little consideration of prisoners' own views in regards to family ties and the visits process (Mills, 2005). This strand of the evaluation attempted to provide some insight into this under researched area, allowing prisoners to discuss the importance (or not) of family visiting and the maintenance of family ties.

Three focus groups with sixteen prisoners were conducted as well as an interview with one of the prisoners who worked at Jigsaw. It can be argued that focus groups are particularly appropriate for this evaluation and in this particular research setting. Spain (2005), for instance, has asserted that focus groups, in contrast to quantitative

approaches, offer increased credibility since the information acquired is not statistical but reported using the actual words and dialogue of the prisoners themselves. This is highly applicable, as involving prisoners as research participants in focus groups overcomes the poor literacy levels that are reported in this group. The general purpose of the focus groups were to explore the following:

- Prisoners' perspectives on visits and visiting time;
- Whether family relationships have been maintained during their time in prison and, if so, how this has been done;
- Prisoners' understanding of Jigsaw and the services it provides both for themselves and their families;
- Their views on resettlement and reintegration and the role that their family may play in this;
- Recommendations for Jigsaw or the visits process more generally.

Prison groups were selected by prison and Jigsaw staff to reflect the diversity of prisoners at HMP Leeds. Subsequently one group was comprised exclusively of vulnerable prisoners (n=5), a second focus group with black and minority ethnic prisoners (n=5) and a third group drawn from two residential wings in the prison (n=6). Although details concerning a prisoner's offence, their social background and their previous criminal activity were not routinely covered, many men provided reflections on their life, their pre-prison circumstances and their criminal activities.

Although the majority of prisoners received regular visits from their family and friends there were also a proportion of prisoners that participated who did not. Furthermore, the diverse nature of the sample allowed discussions to be held with remand and sentenced prisoners, therefore providing alternative perspectives of visiting⁴. Prisoners were encouraged within the focus group to share opinions and discuss individual experiences in relation to visits and maintaining family connections. Several prisoners had served previous custodial sentences and were therefore able to compare and contrast similarities and differences between HMP Leeds and other prison establishments both within the region and across the country.

Two researchers were present to guide each focus group discussion which lasted approximately one-hour. A member of prison staff was also present during these groups but mostly situated away from the discussion to allow prisoners to share their

⁴ Remand prisoners are entitled to a greater number of visits than sentenced prisoners.

views openly and honestly. All focus group discussions were recorded after permission was granted to use the equipment by the prison management.

Prison staff

For most prisoners' families and visitors, prison staff are regarded as the public face of the prison service (Codd, 2008). Prison staffs' views on the visits process and on their understanding and experiences of Jigsaw were uncovered using three focus groups with fourteen prison staff.

Prison staff were selected by Jigsaw and prison managers after the evaluation team had outlined that a diverse group of prison staff (in terms of age, experience, rank, job role) participating in the focus groups would be beneficial in obtaining a wide range of perspectives. A diverse set of staff members (with job remits including: security, visits, offender management and resettlement, gate responsibility and work on residential wings) voluntarily participated in three focus group sessions each lasting approximately one hour. These sessions were audio recorded after permission was obtained from all participants. Two researchers guided the discussion.

Community groups

The opportunity was taken to interview a number of individuals from the surrounding local area that used the Centre. These individuals were members of local community groups that regularly used the facilities at Jigsaw. A sample of individuals from the 'Wortley Walking Group' and the 'Christchurch Armley Youth Project' were therefore selected to discuss their views on the Centre.

Jigsaw Centre staff

An interactive workshop was carried out with operational staff from the Jigsaw Visitors Centre (n=5). Due to staff working rotas, not all members of the Jigsaw team were present. This basis for this exercise was to explore the ways of working within the Centre and to discuss organisational changes and developments that had taken place since the previous evaluation. Specific community health service providers (health trainers) working within the Centre were also interviewed individually and on a separate occasion (n=2). The workshop was conducted by two researchers and all discussions were audio recorded after receiving permission from all participants.

Jigsaw management committee

A focus group with the majority of the Jigsaw Centre's management committee (n=5) was carried out to discuss strategic and financial developments that had taken place at the Centre since the previous evaluation. The future direction of the Centre was also discussed. The focus group was conducted by two researchers and all discussions were audio recorded after receiving permission from all participants.

Other key stakeholders

The views of key partners associated with the Centre and other stakeholders were also sought using in-depth interviewing. Those individuals that participated have been listed below:

- The prison service area manager of Yorkshire and Humberside.
- The governing governor of HMP Leeds.
- A previous service provider at Jigsaw.
- An ex-prisoner of HMP Leeds who worked at Jigsaw.

Table 1. **An overview of data collection activities**

Group	Data collection activity
All	Gathering documentary data including annual reports, project bids and promotional material.
Prisoners' families	Thirty semi-structured interviews with prisoners' families.
Prisoners	Three focus groups with sixteen prisoners.
Prison staff	Three focus groups with fourteen members of prison staff.
Local community groups	Interviews with a sample of members from the 'Wortley Walking Group' and the 'Christchurch Armley Youth Project'
Jigsaw staff	An interactive workshop with five operational staff from the Jigsaw Visitors Centre. Interviews with both of the health trainers working in the Centre.
Jigsaw management committee	A focus group with the Centre's management committee.
Others	Interviews were conducted with various other key stakeholders including: the prison service area manager of the Yorkshire and Humberside region, the governing governor of HMP Leeds, an ex-service provider of Jigsaw and an ex-prisoner of HMP Leeds who worked at Jigsaw.

Data analysis

All focus group and interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and the data was coded and themes identified. Initially this level of analysis was carried out separately by the two authors. The individually identified themes were then discussed between the authors and any discrepancies were considered and resolved. Themes were then organised into larger categories based on the evaluation's primary objectives.

A summary of the changing organisational landscape

Since the previous evaluation (published in March 2006) there have been a number of organisational changes that have occurred within Jigsaw. These changes will be broadly reported here using data derived from document analysis, the workshop conducted with Jigsaw staff and the focus group with the management committee of the Centre.

Personnel

Over the past number of years there has been a significant change in the personnel profile at Jigsaw. Key staff members have left Jigsaw which has affected the shape and capacities of the organisation. This is highlighted diagrammatically in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1. **Personnel profile of the Jigsaw team (2005)**

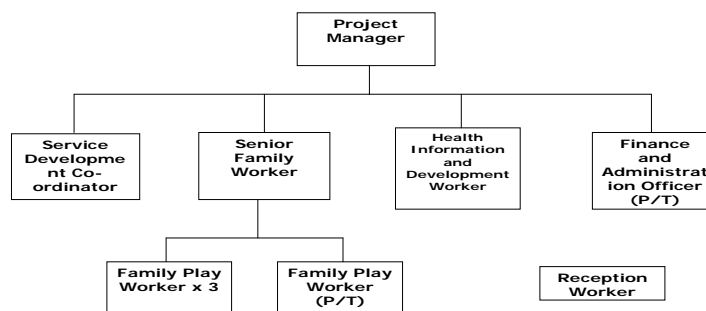
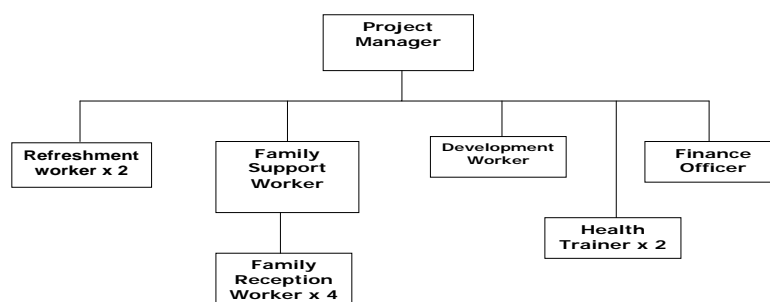


Figure 2. **Personnel profile of the Jigsaw team (2009)**



In contrasting the two personnel profiles it is evident that Jigsaw no longer employs family play workers; however, in the current organisation two health trainers are part of the Jigsaw team. Of particular note, there has been a new manager at Jigsaw. The new manager (who was already working within the Centre prior to the appointment) has been a popular appointment since coming into post in 2008 and has strong relationships both with operational staff members, the management committee and prison staff and managers inside HMP Leeds. Operational staff suggested that the new manager has also gone some way to improve the staff dynamic, eradicating the 'upstairs/downstairs' tension between family support staff and finance/management staff creating an even more harmonious unit at the Centre:

"I didn't go down stairs at all, but since the new manager has taken over I have tried to become a little bit more involved down stairs, just so that I integrated into the team... because I was very isolated upstairs"

In 2006, in collaboration between Jigsaw and HMP Leeds, a serving prisoner and a Samaritan trained listener in the prison were permitted to work within the Centre with prisoners' families. In addition, female prisoners from HMP Askham Grange have been working in the Centre allowing those prisoners opportunities to share their knowledge of the criminal justice system and aid their own reintegration back into society.

Focus of work

Mainly due to funding implications, the focus of work carried out at Jigsaw has changed. The concept of Jigsaw being a resource for the four 'communities' (i.e. prisoners' families, prisoners, prison staff and the local community) as discussed in the previous evaluation has altered somewhat and tends to now focus predominantly on support and services for prisoners' families. This has inevitably created a far more focussed and streamlined service. Targeted work centring on prison staff, for example, has been less of a concern and, again, this was driven by funding streams:

"We don't really do that much for the prison staff, because when the money came to an end we focused on the prisoners and the prisoners' families."

Furthermore, the counselling and citizens' advice services are now no longer a part of Jigsaw's work.

Family centred visits, where extended time is permitted for the prisoner to spend with his children and partner, have grown significantly since the previous evaluation. Family centred visits are now a core part of Jigsaw's work throughout each year

allowing opportunities for prisoners to firmly re-establish their role as a parent especially during culturally significant times of the year (Christmas, Eid). Furthermore, family visits are becoming increasingly more elaborate and sophisticated. The recent 'cook and eat' visit, for example, allowed the prisoner and his child to make a healthy meal together enabling the prisoner and child to spend an extended period of time together and, in the process, develop health skills and knowledge during the process of the visit. This particular visit also allowed time for the family to eat together as a family unit. Similar visits have been conducted with a focus on physical activity.

Moving towards self-sustainability?

A number of developments have allowed Jigsaw to begin to become less reliant on funding from outside agencies. Sporadic, often short-term funding from external agencies can lead to services being unsustainable and frequently means that a high proportion of staff time is spent on writing and searching for appropriate funding bids. An overview of Jigsaw's funding streams since 2003 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. **Jigsaw's funding streams (2003-present day)**

Period of funding	Source
Annual funding	HMP Leeds
2003-2008	New Opportunities Fund (NOF)
2003-2008	Leeds PCT
2004-2006 and 2006-2008	Tudor Trust
2004-2006	Lankelly Foundation
2004-2007	Community Fund
2005-2006	Action for Prisoners Families
2007-2010	Henry Smith Foundation

In April 2007 Jigsaw established a tea bar facility within the visits room during social visits. Prior to the establishment of the tea bar visitors were reliant on using vending machines in the visits room to purchase refreshments. These machines held a series of drawbacks (i.e. often out of order, low stock levels, no change given etc.) and frequently caused frustration for visitors. The tea bar, run by members of the Jigsaw team, is now in use during all domestic visits. This innovation provides a higher level of service to the visitor, providing better quality refreshments at an affordable cost. This facility generates substantial and regular income for Jigsaw and plans are also in place to extend the tea bar provision for legal as well as domestic visits. Most importantly this facility allows a constant income stream which can be re-invested into the Centre.

There have also been developments and early proposals which may see the Jigsaw Visitors' Centre managing other visitors' centres in the Yorkshire and Humberside region. This would allow Jigsaw to become self-sustainable through charging other prisons for staff time and management consultancy. This opportunity would allow Jigsaw to expand, share good practice and allow staff to progress and develop. This was summarised by the Centre's manager:

“There is a chance for us to grow as an organisation and staff to grow and hopefully to be moved on. Before it was really hard to get a promotion...there was nowhere to grow really or go to; but now staff have seen that there are other centres and that there is potential to be taking on more responsibility in other centres or working more hours here or getting more of a bigger role. I think that's why people have been getting more excited, in regards to that because they can see they can actually stay here with the organisation and they can grow as well individually.”

Other notable changes

Jigsaw is now available to visitors seven days a week⁵. This means that Jigsaw staff members book in the majority of families visiting prisoners at HMP Leeds. This is a significant improvement to the service offered by Jigsaw and allows those families that only visit on a weekend the opportunity to be supported and assisted by experienced staff.



Since 2006 Jigsaw launched its own dedicated website which provides information to service users about Jigsaw and its related services. This makes Jigsaw available to a far wider audience and allows information to be made more accessible. In addition, Jigsaw has published regular

newsletters which were widely distributed. These highlighted the recent work of the

⁵ Jigsaw is open seven days a week but not for all visits sessions. For example, Jigsaw is not open for the two evening visits.

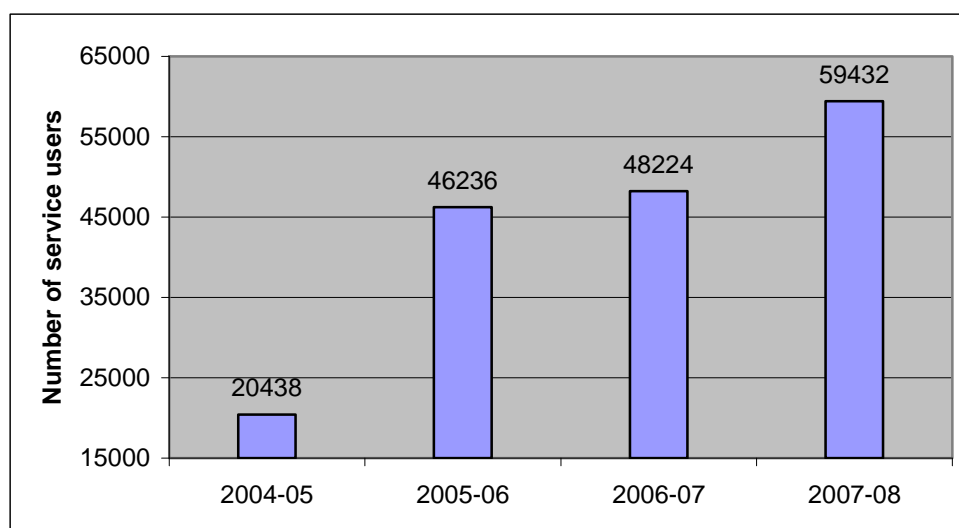
Centre and forthcoming events that were taking place. Jigsaw is now moving towards distributing e-newsletters via their web site.

Jigsaw service user profile 2004-2008

All data taken from Jigsaw's annual monitoring reports (2005; 2006; 2007; 2008)

The extent and number of people that use the facilities and services available at the Jigsaw Visitors' Centre should not be understated. The total number of people accessing Jigsaw and its related services between 2004 and 2008 was 174,330 and each year the numbers of visitors coming into the Centre has grown. Figure 3 demonstrates this growth⁶.

Figure 3. **Number of service users accessing Jigsaw between 2004 and 2008**



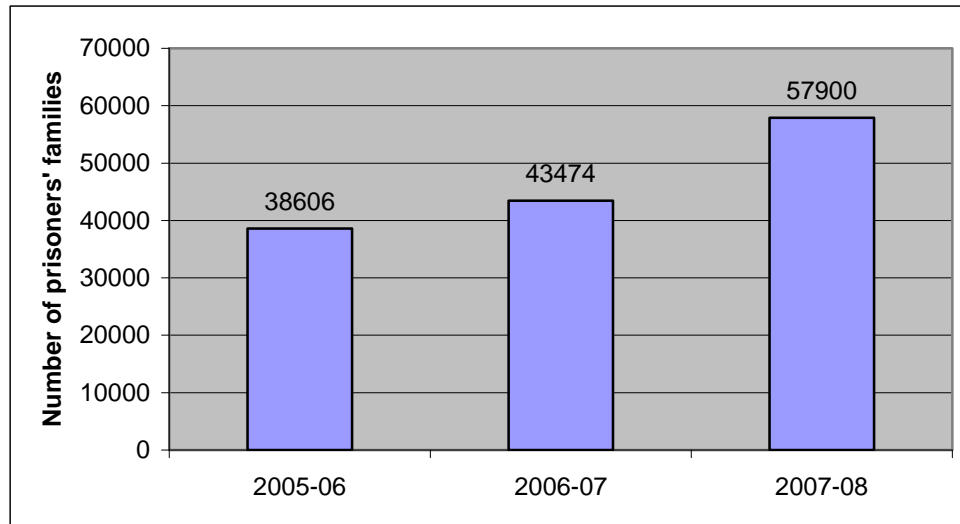
Substantial increases have been seen particularly in the number of prisoners' families using Jigsaw. In 2005-06, for example, 38,606 people using the Centre were classified as a member of a prisoner's family; whereas in 2007-08, this increased to 57,900 (see Figure 4). The number of first time visitors has remained relatively static, although since Jigsaw started opening on a weekend a rise in numbers has been seen. Currently, based on figures from 2008 and 2009, there are between 250 and 300 first time visitors entering Jigsaw each month.

Of the total number of users between 2004 and 2008 the proportion being classified as prisoners' families has grown year on year. For example, during 2004-05, 78.5%

⁶ Jigsaw is unable to specify how many of these are new and how many are repeat users. Also, during 2004-05, Jigsaw was not open for a full 12 months; this accounts for the lower figures during this period.

of people using Jigsaw were prisoners' families, however, in 2007-08 this proportion increased to over 97%.

Figure 4. **Numbers of prisoners' families accessing Jigsaw**



What these figures may imply is that as Jigsaw has evolved over the past number of years their client base has changed and has become more centred on prisoners' families and less on the other stakeholder groups (see Figures 5 and 6). The number of prisoners accessing Jigsaw services, for instance, has declined almost year on year.

Figure 5. **Service user breakdown by percentage 2004-05**

(Where PF represents prisoners' families, P represents prisoners, Pr St represents prison staff and Comm represent the local community)

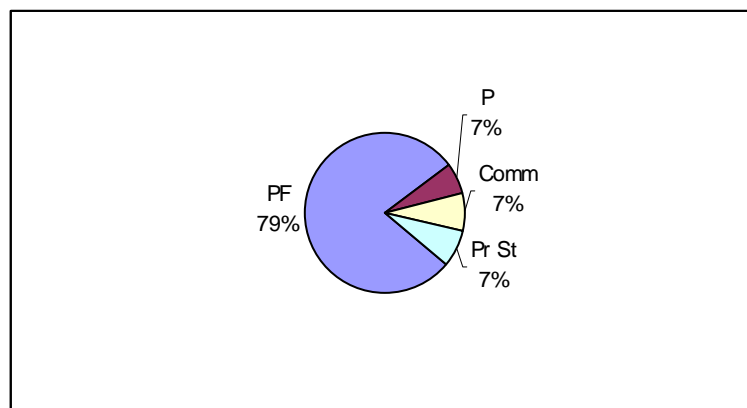
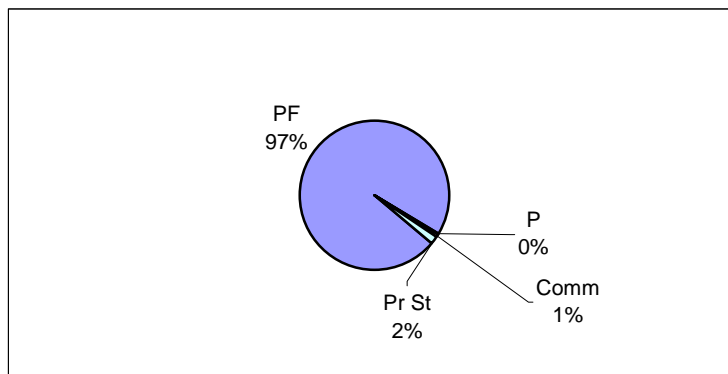


Figure 6. **Service user breakdown by percentage 2007-08**

(Where PF represents prisoners' families, P represents prisoners, Pr St represents prison staff and Comm represent the local community)



A contributory factor which may have substantially affected the increased number of prisoners' families is the move in 2007 to open Jigsaw on a weekend. Arguably, this may have created an environment where visiting becomes more conducive for families and provides the opportunity for children to visit who would otherwise miss out due to schooling. It is expected that this figure will continue to grow as the Centre is now open seven days a week. Furthermore, the funding streams available to Jigsaw have shaped who their services have been targeted towards and funding limitations can be attributed to the fewer numbers of prison staff and prisoners using Jigsaw services.

The number of children aged between 0-15 years has fluctuated between 2004 and 2008. During the period between 2005-2006, for example, 13,908 children accessed the Visitors' Centre with a similar figure also recorded in 2006-2007 (12,894 children). Within this period Jigsaw provided supervised play development opportunities to occupy children who were visiting within HMP Leeds, thus allowing adults to have better quality visits. However, it may be assumed that since funding for the play areas in HMP Leeds ceased in 2007, a substantial number of children have stopped visiting. This is clearly indicated in the 2007-2008 monitoring data, where 7,954 children aged between 0-15 years accessed Jigsaw.

Summary points

- 174,330 people have used Jigsaw and its services between 2004 and 2008.

- Substantial growth has been seen in the number of prisoners' families using Jigsaw. However, fewer prisoners and prison staff are using Jigsaw and its related services; this has been mainly due to funding limitations.
- The number of children aged between 0-15 years using Jigsaw has varied between 2004 and 2008. The changes to the supervised play area within the visits hall may account for this fluctuation.

The experiences of prisoners' families

The emotional, physical and economic realities of prison visiting

Visiting HMP Leeds could be a traumatic and upsetting experience. On an emotional level, the process of seeing a son, father, husband, partner or friend within an unfamiliar and daunting environment caused anxiety, stress and worry for many visitors. Families visiting for the first time were particularly uneasy and apprehensive, many described feelings of uncertainty, insecurity and generally not knowing what to expect from the experience.

The imprisonment of a family member often evoked strong and powerful feelings especially for those visitors who had no previous contact with the criminal justice system. During the research, several visitors entered Jigsaw often feeling angry or resenting the system for taking away their relative. One father was particularly emotional with regards to his son in prison:

“The thing is, I think it’s not human having them locked up for twenty-three hours a day, they don’t even do that to animals...if you get a dog, it’s a guard dog, that guard dog gets let out. These people are locked up all the time, and for what an hour a day, this is absolutely stupid it’s going back to the prehistoric times, having people get locked up like this, it’s rubbish...the law stinks!”

Prison visiting could be an extremely painful event. Many visitors (mainly female) described how they had been upset at the thought of a visit, frequently crying days prior to and after contact with their close relative. One mother discussed the contrast between her husband’s and her own coping response:

“He balls and shouts and I just go home quietly and have a good cry, it is very stressful.”

From a practical and logistical viewpoint, prison visiting was a time consuming event which could be repeated on numerous occasions during each month depending on the prisoner’s status (i.e. a remand or sentenced prisoner or an enhanced or basic prisoner). Several families consumed large portions of their day due to the time it took them to travel to the prison. This was often due to insufficient public transport links from their home to HMP Leeds; this could be particularly demanding and stressful if young children were being brought to see their father. Furthermore, a

number of older and disabled visitors found the process of visiting physically tiring and therefore had to limit the contact they had with their family member:

“We have only been able to come once a week because, it is, and I mean I am disabled as well, so I have got to come when I can, the first visit I couldn’t which greatly upset me, but my husband came, and then after that I joined him as and when I could.”

Although most families were aware of the assisted prison visits scheme to aid the financial costs of visiting, a few visitors were ineligible for the scheme. In general, prisoners’ families found the costs associated with travelling to visit expensive. In most cases this outlay of cost would have to be paid upfront and then claimed back at a later date if eligible to do so under the assisted prison visits scheme.

First impressions

During the period of this evaluation several families were interviewed that had never been in contact with a prison before. Most families were surprised when they first entered Jigsaw commenting

positively on the atmosphere and vibrancy of the Centre. In all cases, the welcome they received from staff at the reception was warm, pleasant and professional instilling families with confidence in the visiting processes they were to face:

“We didn’t expect anything like this, we had the impression that it would be like something off the TV.”



“I hadn’t got a clue what to expect, never experienced this kind of thing before, never hope I do it again, but it’s nice I don’t feel under any pressure.”

“The staff are always very friendly, they have always got a smile for you when you walk in”

Several families reported that Jigsaw staff had made a special effort to go through the visits process and what to expect when entering the prison. Families viewed this as a particular area of good practice and all of those who had received this individual

attention were highly appreciative of the one-to-one time and support staff had given them.

Family support

Jigsaw staff were consistently praised for the support and assistance they provided to family members and other visitors. The family support work which reduced the stress of visiting a relative in prison was recognised and highly appreciated by all of the interviewed visitors. Broadly speaking, Jigsaw staff were credited for their empathy, professionalism, communication skills and their ability to reduce the stressful and emotional nature of prison visiting. It was not uncommon for visitors to suggest that without Jigsaw they would not have been able to cope:

“Without it [Jigsaw] I don’t think I would have been able to have coped.”

It was suggested that Jigsaw staff made the visiting process considerably easier, often taking the time to explain things, listen to family’s concerns or simply be on hand to answer questions or enquiries. This frequently meant that families were more likely to continue visiting their relative whilst he was imprisoned. One visitor who arrived to visit her son described how traumatised she was prior to visiting but how this had been reduced after talking to Jigsaw staff:

“When I came in here I was in tears and totally out of orbit and the ladies over there sat us down and told us to go over last to make it easier for us. They were absolutely brilliant, they made it a lot easier.”

The benefit of Jigsaw staff being available by telephone was also appreciated by those who lived outside of the area as this reduced feelings of loneliness or isolation. Several family visitors felt disadvantaged living a distance away from the Visitors’ Centre and therefore unable to call in if a problem had occurred. Nevertheless, a number of visitors had built a strong rapport with staff and felt comfortable talking through any issues that they had over the telephone:

“When I get on the phone and cry they are there and they don’t mind talking to me.”

Those families who predominantly visited their family member during the weekend had been pleased that the Jigsaw Centre had moved to opening seven days a week. These families often chose to visit on a weekend as work commitments frequently inhibited the possibility to travel to the prison on a weekday. Since Jigsaw had started to open seven days a week (since December 2008) their visits experience

had become increasingly more relaxed and comfortable through the provision of refreshments and the family support they received from staff:

“I mean we used to come on a Sunday, it weren’t open on Sundays, but since it has opened on Sundays it’s a lot better than having to stand up at the top there. You can come down here and relax.”



Some of those visiting the prison were accompanied by other family members (such as a young woman visiting a partner, who had been driven there by her father), so the Centre also provided a place to wait for those not going inside the prison.

Keeping families together

There was evidence provided by prisoners’ families that as a result of the services and support provided to them by Jigsaw it was encouraging the continuation of visiting and therefore the maintenance of family ties. Several commented that without Jigsaw they would not have visited as frequently and may not have visited at

all. Parents appreciated the child-friendly environment within Jigsaw and the play facilities and toys that were available for their children. A number of parents suggested that allowing the children to play prior to visits relaxed them and therefore this encouraged to continue bringing them to the prison:



“It’s a nice environment here rather than sending him straight over there it’s a bit daunting for a six-year old...he plays with those thingies on the table.”



However, several families were disappointed that play facilities were no longer provided in the visits hall for younger children. This could make the visit increasingly difficult as children had to sit quietly throughout the visit. Some of the mothers suggested that they often found themselves being more concerned about keeping their children quiet and relaxed than actually engaging in the visit with their partner.

Family visiting days were also discussed by prisoners’ families as being crucial to giving children time with their father inside the prison and at the same time allowing the prisoner to re-establish his parental role. The nature of family visiting days allowed more time for the parent (prisoner) and child to be together and in some instances (e.g. the cook and eat session) allowed children to learn new skills. One visitor paid particular tribute to a recent family day where her child was able to spend time with his father whilst she indulged in a well-being session at the Jigsaw Centre:

“I came to the family open day and that was really, really good...the children get to go off and cook with their dad...it was good for my little boy because he was able to spend four hours with him, but getting him away was hard work. He [the prisoner] felt a lot better through it and so did I, so that was a good thing to do.”

Access to information

Most visitors preferred information provided verbally from Jigsaw staff as this was the most clear and helpful and tailored to their own requirements. However, access to a range of written information was readily available within Jigsaw and many families commented how useful the leaflets, posters and booklets had been to them:

“I’ve got plenty of information from here like travelling, help with travelling, knowing what I can send in.”

Visitors were generally impressed with the scope of the information available and the specificity of some of this information in regards to the policies and procedures at HMP Leeds as opposed to more generic materials some had received in other visitors' centres. However, those families residing outside of Leeds suggested that other leaflets and posters advertising health and social services information (e.g. home start information, drug services etc.) were generally specific to the West Yorkshire region and therefore not applicable to those living in other areas of the country.



Families commented on how the Jigsaw Centre fostered a sense of community between visitors. Families would regularly see one another prior to visits, this became a way to make new friends and also listen to people that shared similar problems and were experiencing the same life changes:

“It’s somewhere to come, where you see that other people are in the same position as you...you don’t feel as alone as you would say just going straight to the prison without dropping in here.”

“When you are feeling a bit shit and you see someone that you know, then it’s easier.”

Often families themselves provided informal information to each other with the knowledge and experience of visiting in addition to their knowledge of the criminal justice system being shared with others.

Some visitors found that accessing information by telephone or over the internet problematic; telephone lines could be engaged and some commented that Jigsaw’s website could be more user-friendly and should be continually kept up to date with the correct information. One visitor suggested that she had found contradictory information on the website which caused some anxiety. On interpreting the quote, it seems that the visitor may have confused Jigsaw’s website with other information found elsewhere on the internet. However, this was rectified after speaking to a member of Jigsaw staff at the Centre:

“The only problem I had was that I initially had a lot of questions that needed answering and I couldn’t get through on the phone and the website had very

conflicting information it would say one thing on one part and another thing on a different part. When we came last week everyone was really helpful and they answered lots of questions for me, but for anyone else in my situation it is very difficult to get the correct information. Even for example postal orders, on one part of the site it says that they are payable to the governor and on another part it says payable to HM Prison Services. I was really worried and I didn't think I could send it in because if I got it wrong he wouldn't get it, but all my questions were answered when I actually came in here."

Prisoners' families also suggested that whilst access to information with regards to the visits process was outstanding, the provision of information related to resettlement and the process of release was less comprehensive. In some instances, prisoners' families suggested feeling apprehensive and unprepared for their relative's release:

"We don't know quite what's going to happen when he comes home, and that's our worry more than anything, we don't know what help is available"

Acting as a bridge between the family and the prisoner

Families suggested that they found communicating with the prison gate extremely difficult. However, Jigsaw acted as a liaison point for families if important information was needed to be passed to their relative inside. Jigsaw staff played a 'troubleshooting' role, by for example, asking a prison officer to call down to the Centre if a family member was there who had received a letter which they did not understand.

Families especially appreciated the opportunity to communicate with their relative either via Jigsaw staff or through volunteers within Jigsaw who were prisoners themselves. An ex-prisoner volunteer that worked in Jigsaw for a number of years discussed how the process worked:

"When I came out of the prison to Jigsaw I could pass on messages from families to prisoners or vice-versa and I got into a rapport with the families...I make sure that someone got a message or if a prisoner had ran out of telephone credit I could let the family know." "

Many regarded this 'go-between' service as one of the major strengths of Jigsaw; not only did families mention that this form of communication reduced anxiety for them but they also commented that speaking to Jigsaw staff and prison volunteers allowed

them to understand more about the processes and procedures inside the prison. Families suggested that having prisoners working in the Centre was useful so that questions about prison life could be answered. Often, this process was useful for dispelling any myths about life inside prison and eradicating some of the ‘fear of the unknown.’

Families contrasting Jigsaw to other prison visitors’ centres

Several families had experienced other prison visitors’ centres both within the local geographical area and in other regions across the country. The majority of these families were unequivocal in their perspective that Jigsaw was providing excellent facilities and a high-level of family support services which were not found in other visitors’ centres:

“This is better than all the other centres...they [other visitors’ centres] weren’t as friendly, weren’t as clean, the staff weren’t as nice.”

Generally, other visitors’ centres were regarded as functioning simply as waiting areas. Information was far more readily available for families at Jigsaw with the general atmosphere and comfort being praised:

“It’s a lot better than [name of prison in the North West], that’s just plastic chairs and it’s cold with no information for families...it’s like a bus station compared to Jigsaw.”

Nevertheless, some families believed that the facilities for children in the visits room at HMP Leeds were poor and a few visitors suggested that provision for children was better catered for in other prisons in the Yorkshire region:

“Inside [name of other prison in Yorkshire] there is a big hall and in the middle there’s a play area that has games in and it’s got staff...I mean there is nothing here [HMP Leeds] for the children.”

Of some concern were those families who had no previous contact with the criminal justice system prior to their experiences of Jigsaw and HMP Leeds but who expected the same level of family centred services to be replicated in other prisons if or when their relative was relocated. As they had no reference to other visitors’ centres they believed that other centres across the UK would be similar in terms of size, staffing and availability of services.

Summary points

- Visiting HMP Leeds could be a traumatic and upsetting experience.
- Prison visiting was not only time consuming for families but often expensive.
- Jigsaw staff were credited for their empathy, professionalism, communication skills and their ability to reduce the stressful and emotional nature of prison visiting. It was not uncommon for visitors to suggest that without Jigsaw they would not have been able to cope.
- Due to the high level of support provided by Jigsaw, families were more likely to continue visiting their relative at HMP Leeds.
- Those who predominantly visited their family member during the weekend had been pleased that the Jigsaw Centre had moved to opening seven days a week.
- Visitors were generally disappointed that the play facilities inside the visits hall had been removed.
- Those who had experienced an extended family visit suggested how important this had been both for their relative in prison and for their children.
- Visitors were impressed with the scope of information provided in the Centre; however, some had found the information on Jigsaw's website confusing or contradictory.
- The provision of information related to resettlement and the process of release was less comprehensive.
- Families suggested that having prisoners working in the Centre was useful so that their questions about prison life could be answered.
- In comparison to other visitors' centres, Jigsaw was seen as providing an exceptional service.

Prisoners' viewpoint

Opportunity was taken to explore the views and perceptions of prisoners within HMP Leeds. A wide range of prisoners with varying backgrounds and offence types were involved in group discussions.

The importance of visits

Visits were generally seen by prisoners as important events which went some way to counter-balance the negative effects of imprisonment. For most men, visits were essentially the highlight of prison life:

"I look forward to visits as there are not many highlights in jail."

"It gives you something to look forward to when you know that your family is coming to see you."

Contact with family and friends were therefore commonly viewed as the focal point of a prisoner's routine. Visits provided an important opportunity to remain in contact with the outside world or, as one prisoner suggested, "a chance to keep check of reality". This contact was suggested to be beneficial especially when attempting to reintegrate back into society after release:

"When your family comes then you stay in touch with that outside life. You know that there is something out there, but if you are not in touch with your family when you come out you are going to be lost."

Some prisoners suggested that visits, in some way, contributed to temporarily re-establishing their role as a son or husband. Of particular note, were those fathers that had experienced an extended family visit; they suggested that this allowed some dedicated time to be spent with their children, allowing them to momentarily restore their role as a parental figure. Prisoners from Asian backgrounds suggested how their families were especially close-knit and therefore visits were important in keeping the family together enabling the reinstatement of the family unit during visits.

The importance of visits was clearly emphasised by the majority of the prisoners. However, those prisoners that had been on remand and had been entitled to receive regular visits from their family, did find the transition to being a sentenced prisoner

difficult to adjust to. As a convicted prisoner they received considerably fewer visits and this, at first, could be difficult to manage.

Acknowledging the difficulties of maintaining family ties

Broadly speaking, prisoners acknowledged the strain placed on their families in order to visit them within prison. These men understood the difficulties their family faced in maintaining family ties. Prisoners suggested that there were a series of barriers which inhibited visits, these have been discussed below.

Cost

Although visits were of central importance to the prisoners, several recognised the financial and logistical implications for their families. Petrol costs, train and bus fares were often expenses that family members would incur in order to maintain family ties. Often this outlay was very costly especially if family members were reliant on the use of public transport. Several prisoners were aware of the assisted prison visits scheme which enabled their family to receive help with travelling expenses; however, some families were ineligible for the scheme and others simply found the process of claiming back money onerous and time consuming.

Time

Many of the prisoners' families resided outside of the Leeds area (e.g. Manchester, Bury, Rochdale, Scarborough, Cheshire) and therefore spent a great deal of time visiting their relative. Many prisoners suggested that their families would travel across the region in order to maintain family contact. In some cases, a disproportionate amount of time would be spent travelling to the visit than the actual visit itself. One prisoner, for example, commented:

“They spend more time travelling than they do seeing me. It’s one and a half hours to get here and then anything from an hour to forty minutes for the visit.”

The frequency of visits varied; several men received three visits from their family on a weekly basis, whereas others had less frequent contact. Often the prisoner's status, i.e. as a remand/sentenced prisoner or enhanced/basic prisoner, determined the regularity of visits; on other occasions, it was the family's geographical or financial circumstances:

“I’m only getting one to two visits a month because one is the distance and the other is the cost. They would love to come five times a month but they just can’t afford to.”

Facilities within the visits hall

Often difficulties in maintaining family ties were not financial or logistical, rather the facilities within the visits room made it less conducive to discussing family issues and preserving family bonds. Prisoners suggested that the physical environment of the visits hall was too focussed on maintaining security rather than on comfort and some level of intimacy. Prisoners often felt that the restrictive rules within the visits hall and the design of the chairs and tables made them feel as though they were on a closed rather than an open visit⁷. One prisoner commented:

“Softer chairs, a little round table, instead of a high table, kick board and a chair where you can’t move...It’s like you are sectioned off away from your family isn’t it, even though you are not on closed visits it feels like you are.”

Many prisoners also commented that the lack of child-friendly facilities, particularly a staffed play area, frequently meant that their children quickly became bored and disgruntled during visiting time. Two prisoners, in separate focus groups, noted:

“The one thing that’s always being brought up about the visits is there is nothing for the kids really, you know. Kids get bored quite easily, you know they’ll sit on your lap for about fifteen or twenty minutes but then they want to run around and do things, and there’s nothing.”

“There’s nothing for them to do really, you know yourself kids can get quite distracted and bored easily, there’s no toys there really apart from colouring in.”

A number of fathers felt that expecting their younger children to sit still and quietly in a visits hall for an hour was unrealistic:

“I’ve got a two year old son, he’s nearly three, you can’t expect him to sit down throughout the whole visit and then when you put him down there’s an officer coming over saying ‘can you keep your child under control otherwise I’m going to terminate your visit.’”

⁷ Closed visits are where the prisoner and visitor are separated by a glass partition and cannot make physical contact. Prisoners and their visitors may be placed on a closed visit if there is reasonable suspicion that drugs or other items may be being passed during open visits.

Several believed that part of the issue was that the atmosphere and set-up of the visits experience was unnatural for children:

“Kids want to run around. It’s not normal for them to sit like that for an hour.”

Prisoners recognised how important visits were for the other men inside the visits hall. Consequently, some prisoners persuaded their children to behave appropriately by offering sweets and chocolate for good behaviour (usually purchased at the tea bar in the visits hall). On some occasions, if their children were severely misbehaving, prisoners found themselves having to warn their children if they were being noisy or disruptive, so as not to distract other people from their visit. Often these fathers resented having to do this, as they wanted the contact with their children to be enjoyable:

“You don’t want to be telling your kids off if you’re only seeing them once a week. You don’t want to be shouting, you want to be as nice as you can so that you can enjoy your visit.”

Many believed that having a designated play area within the visits area would resolve these problems and would allow some dedicated time to be spent discussing financial and domestic issues with their partner or wife whilst their children were having fun. However, some prisoners raised concerns in regards to the location of the play area; several believed that locating this in close proximity to the area where sex offenders were receiving their visits was not appropriate.

Whilst prisoners commented favourably on the quality of the refreshments offered within the visits hall, a number were also frustrated at the time their visitors spent queuing for these. Despite prisoners often preferring their visitors to sit down and talk, many visitors wanted to buy the prisoner a drink or something to eat. Frequently, prisoners suggested that their visitors could be waiting for fifteen minutes before being served at the tea bar, this obviously detracted from the overall time spent discussing and talking to one another. Prisoners recommended that the tea bar should be open to visitors before the prisoners arrived thereby allowing time to be spent queuing whilst not interfering with the actual time spent together as a family unit.

Prisoner movement to the visits hall

A majority of prisoners discussed how they often received shorter visits due to organisational difficulties in moving prisoners from their wing to the visits hall. Several men were irritated and frustrated by procedures which limited their contact time with their family. On numerous occasions prisoners claimed that they received

less than the one-hour permitted visit time and, in some instances, prisoners only received around forty-minutes. These men were particularly annoyed at the inflexibility of visiting time, where if there had been a delay in moving prisoners to the visits hall this time would not be added to the end of the visit. In a minority of occasions prisoners levelled the delays at prison staff who they believed “could not be bothered” to collect them on time from the wing.

In contrast, however, a number of men in one focus group suggested that the process of wing staff collecting prisoners (as opposed to the previous set-up where a designated visits team were in operation) and taking them to the visits hall had been a positive introduction to the visits process. They had not experienced delays to the start of their visit and commented on the positive rapport between them and the wing officers that escorted them.

Choosing not to stay in touch

Several prisoners preferred not to receive any visits. Although these men acknowledged the value of family contact, many found the process of being separated from their family after the visit too difficult. These men preferred to serve their time in prison with only limited family interaction, choosing instead to use the telephone or letter writing as a means to communicate. Some prisoners consciously decided to focus their attention away from the outside world whilst in prison, suggesting that this made their time easier to manage. A few men even saw visits and family contact as a reminder of the world outside which they were missing. These prisoners therefore favoured an approach to prison life which did not involve extensive family contact. Several participants appreciated the reasons why some chose not to maintain family contact through visits. Some prisoners suggested that the first visit they received from their families in prison was the most difficult. One prisoner suggested how emotional the experience was not only for himself, but for his family as well. Prisoners suggested that support mechanisms in place after the first visit for the prisoner and his family would be beneficial.

Furthermore, it was fairly common for prisoners not to allow their children to visit them in prison. This had often been a conscious decision made between the prisoner and his partner in order to protect the feelings and welfare of the child:

“I have got a four year old son, but I don’t want him coming into the prison to see me. That’s my choice. He thinks I am away working”

Many men felt uncomfortable at the prospect of their children seeing them in a daunting and unfamiliar environment and some suggested that seeing their child for only a brief period of time could be psychologically damaging. Two prisoners suggested:

"I don't like visits. It's a bit hard and I don't like my son coming up...now and again I may ask for a visit but it's too much shit in my head when he has to go like...it makes my jail a bit easier."

"Getting him taken away from me, being sat on the other side of the table from him, only having an hour with him, it would kill me, it really would kill me"

Where children did visit their father inside prison, often they were not old enough to be aware of the circumstances and rarely told the exact reason why they could not see their father more regularly. Many prisoners told their children that the prison was their place of work. One remand prisoner yet to be trialled commented:

"My child is six he always asks me when I'm coming home and you know I can't tell him when I'm coming home. I just say look I'm at work here. "

The significance of a 'good' prison visit

Prisoners greatly anticipated visiting time and frequently placed a great deal of importance on the occasion. In some cases, a prison visit acted to temporarily elevate a prisoner's well-being and acted as a buffer against the sometimes stressful and oppressive prison environment. One prisoner commented that after a visit:

"You feel refreshed and it just lifts your mood up...just the contact, a cuddle and a kiss and whatever."

Visits which allowed the prisoner and his family maximum time together, i.e. an hour, and those family interactions where the conversation was relaxed and stress-free were generally perceived as being the key ingredients of a 'good' prison visit. The implications of these positive visits were profound and prisoners suggested that they favourably impacted on their future interactions on the wings with other prisoners and staff:

"If you do have a good visit, even if it's an hour, say you see your kids or your family and you do have a good time your day will go a lot quicker, even the next day because you might still have them same good thoughts in your head."

However, prisoners suggested that less positive visits would increase stress levels and could spill-over into interactions on the wings. In these cases, the prisoner

would often have to resolve issues with family members over the telephone which could be expensive and cause additional frustrations if the line was engaged. One prisoner reflected on how a bad visit had severely affected him:

“I had a bad visit once and I took an overdose...I spent five-weeks in intensive care because of it.”

When prisoners' families did not attend a scheduled visit, this was referred to by the prisoners as “ghosting” and this could be difficult for prisoners to cope with:

“It’s not a nice place to be stewing, because your first thought is what’s gone wrong? Then after you stress yourself.”

Prisoners often found “ghosting” a particularly difficult aspect of the visits process and, when this occurs, the prisoner should be taken out of the visits hall and escorted back to his wing. The implications for the prisoners' mental health were discussed and many felt that support strategies should be put in place to reduce the affects of this. One recommendation was that prison staff should try to contact the visitor to discover the reasons why they did not attend so that the prisoner was reassured that an accident or serious problem had not occurred.

Appreciating the work of Jigsaw for their families

Several of the prisoners had been told, through their visitors, about the work of Jigsaw in answering visitors' queries and providing a relaxing atmosphere prior to visiting. Many prisoners appreciated the work that Jigsaw did in working with their families and explaining the processes of the prison. A couple of prisoners themselves had first-hand experienced of Jigsaw having been a visitor to the prison before committing their offence; they too found the service helpful:

“I’ve been there myself. It’s like a friendly atmosphere you don’t feel intimidated.”

Prisoners from Asian backgrounds were particularly complimentary of the work of Jigsaw. They claimed that their parents had been extremely apprehensive at the prospect of visiting a prison; however, the staff at Jigsaw had answered their queries and dealt with their concerns:

“Our families aren’t as westernised if you like and jail is a really big thing. They feel intimidated and nervous and when they do come they wouldn’t know who to ask, but at the Visitors’ Centre they’re really helpful.”

However, prisoners often suggested that the positive atmosphere and support that Jigsaw provided to their families was potentially being undone by the processes

within the prison itself. Searches and other security measures after leaving Jigsaw conducted by uniformed staff within the prison could be intimidating and upsetting for the prisoners' families. Several prisoners suggested that the improvements to the visits process should therefore focus on visitors entering the prison as, in their opinion, the work being done by Jigsaw was of a high standard:

“As far as I’m concerned the Jigsaw part of it is cushty, but as soon as they come into the jail, that’s when the stress hits them and then that makes your visit not very good and that.”

Keeping families together and the impact on reducing re-offending?

Generally, prisoners held mixed views in regards to the impact their families would play in reducing the likelihood of them returning to prison in the future. Some prisoners suggested that prisoners' personal attitudes and thinking would be the overriding factor in the probability of re-offending. Some suggested that they had a supportive family infrastructure when they were released from previous sentences; however, this had not stopped them from committing further crimes:

“I’ve always had someone to come out to but I’ve been back in jail, it’s just a habit I have.”

Despite this, several men suggested that families played a central role in the successful resettlement of offenders released from prison. Successful reintegration was reported to be especially likely if family ties had been strong prior to the prisoner's sentence and the bonds had been maintained throughout the sentence by regular visits.

One of the major ways that prisoners suggested that their family would assist them once released was in finding suitable accommodation and employment. Several prisoners commented that their family and friends would be highly influential in finding them appropriate employment once discharged from prison. Many suggested that it was this all-round package of resettlement factors (i.e. housing, employment, family ties) that would enable prisoners to stop re-offending.

Summary points

- Visits were of central importance to the majority of prisoners that participated in the group discussions.

- Family visits were particularly important for maintaining family ties and enabled the fathers that were in prison to keep in touch with their children.
- The transition from being a remand to a sentence prisoner impacted on the number of entitled social visits. This could be particularly difficult to adjust to.
- Prisoners acknowledged the financial and emotional strain as well as the amount of time taken by their families to travel to the prison in order to visit them.
- A number of facilities within the visits hall acted as potential barriers in maintaining the family unit. The lack of child-friendly resources was one issue that was frequently mentioned.
- It was recognised that several prisoners within HMP Leeds chose not to stay in touch with their family. This often made their time spent in the prison easier to manage.
- The first prison visit can often be the most difficult to cope with for both the prisoner and his family. Suitable support mechanisms in place after the first visit for the prisoner and his family was recommended by several prisoners.
- The significance of a 'good visit' had direct consequences on the prisoners' mood and attitude. Visits often acted to lift self-esteem, whereas a bad visits experience could increase anxiety and stress levels.
- Prisoners had no issues concerning Jigsaw. Many participants recognised the valuable function the Centre played in making their families feel comfortable with the visits process.
- There were mixed views in relation to family contact and reducing re-offending. Most prisoners suggested that a combination of employment, accommodation and positive family links were crucial to successful resettlement.

The perspectives of prison staff

This section outlines the views and perspectives of a range of prison staff working in HMP Leeds. The focus groups covered a wide range of issues which have been categorised into pertinent themes. Where appropriate, these have been illustrated with direct quotes from the participants.

Recognising the work of Jigsaw

Most prison staff involved in the evaluation were fully aware of Jigsaw and the work it did for prisoners' families and the prison itself. The staff were divided into two camps though, on their appreciation of the work carried out. Broadly, there were those who were fully behind the Centre's aims and understood the value it added to the prison. Others seemed not only less sure of what the Centre actually did, but also saw it duplicating or 'interfering' with the work of the prison.

Those who were positive included several staff members who had worked in other prisons prior to working at HMP Leeds and understood how fortunate the prison was in having such a high quality resource:

"I came here [to HMP Leeds] from [name of prison in the North West] they had a little portacabin where you put your name down and then you were into the gate. There was nothing for families...it was just one person with a phone and a list"

Several prison staff were aware of the family focussed interventions that were conducted with visitors. They were particularly aware of the support work Jigsaw did for those visiting for the first time, their information provision and resources and the overall emphasis the Centre has on children and young people. One member of staff, in addition to the family-focussed work, also commented on the internet and computing facilities available at the

Centre:

"The service here that the staff offer the visitors, assisted visits, help on the computer, the internet, they can come and sit in here and have guidance if they have got



problems with the visits, the Centre itself is very, very good.”

In one focus group, however, some staff questioned the need to provide a wide range of facilities for prisoners' families. Several saw Jigsaw as simply a place for families to wait prior to going into the prison and struggled to see the Centre's role beyond this. The internet provision, for example, was one resource which was questioned:

“Internet access? Why do they need internet access when they're visiting a member of their family...it just seems money wasted.”

The majority of prison staff acknowledged the function Jigsaw had for the image of HMP Leeds. Staff were well aware of some of the negative media representations of the prison and most staff believed that Jigsaw provided a positive image of HMP Leeds. It was suggested that the Centre engages with members of the general community providing a positive perception of work being done with prisoners and their families.

A number of staff members, however, were unaware that the Jigsaw Centre was a facility that could also be open to them as members of prison staff. Some staff had only used Jigsaw during training courses and others had only been in occasionally to access the internet. One member of staff was unaware of this facility:

“That's a new one on me. I didn't even know you could come in and use the internet here.”

Several staff suggested that they would often use alternative facilities, such as the officer's mess, rather than using Jigsaw. Some prison staff did not feel comfortable sharing a facility with prisoners' families and therefore tended to avoid it:

“We [prison staff] are perceived as the enemies in a lot of visitors' eyes”

Assisting staffs' work within the prison: “the knock-on effect?”

The importance prisoners attach to family contact and visits was mentioned by those prison staff working directly with offenders. Most staff recognised the central role visits played in the prisoner's routine. Staff claimed that if prisoners were able to enjoy the interaction with their children and their family then they frequently became easier to manage when they returned to back to their wing as they were less anxious or stressed:

“If the lads in there are getting better quality visits with their family more often and for longer then they are going to be more settled because they discuss their problems and they can play with their children.”

Staff suggested that the “knock-on effect” of positive interactions with family was clear and certainly had an impact on the general atmosphere of the wings:

“If they have a terrible visit we [prison staff] suffer...they come straight back to us and say ‘this happened or this happened now sort it’.”

Gate staff also recognised the implications of Jigsaw. Jigsaw processed all domestic visitors and was therefore able to deal with any problems or queries at the Centre prior to the families arriving at the prison gate.

Some staff members that worked on visits, however, felt that Jigsaw could cause some problems. There was a reported clash between Jigsaw’s values and prison staffs’ concerns for maintaining security and control. In some staffs’ opinion Jigsaw had been afforded too much control and power over the visits process:

“Jigsaw do play a role, but from a staffs’ point of view they have too much power and they have been allowed to take too much responsibility.”

It was suggested that Jigsaw should simply remain as an information provision service or a place for families to socialise rather than expanding into other areas of the prison. One of the issues concerned Jigsaw providing information to prisoners’ families before they arrived at the gate. One member of staff suggested:

“The visitors will be told one thing when they go to the Visitors’ Centre but when they arrive at the prison there’s a disruption because they have to be told the truth.”

Communication links and relationships between Jigsaw and prison staff

Prison staff, particularly those working in the gate and those with security responsibilities, felt that the communication between the prison and Jigsaw was excellent. This open-line of communication meant that Jigsaw staff could raise any issues to security staff and vice-versa. Most prison staff from the gate and security seemingly had a great deal of trust in the Jigsaw team. Several noted how Jigsaw staff members had the right balance in their approach to both treating people with decency and courtesy and remembering that within a prison environment security and control is a principal consideration. However, a minority of staff had no trust in Jigsaw staff and questioned their position within the prison. Some staff were concerned that Jigsaw had grown out of all proportion from its original conception.

Concerns in relation to Jigsaw's need to have access to prisoner information through the LIDS system was raised and some staff questioned the need for Jigsaw to have access to prisoners' details when their concern should be with prisoners' families. In addition, some wing staff queried Jigsaw staffs' need to have access to prison keys and authority to walk around the prison. One member of the wing staff commented:

"You actually see them walking around the prison visiting prisoners...why are they on the wings? Surely that side of prison life has nothing to do with them people. It's a visitors' centre not prisoners' centre."

Those staff working in offender management dealing with resettlement issues, such as housing and employment, had limited contact with Jigsaw. Their work was considered as being intense one-to-one work with the offender and in only rare circumstances would families be involved in the prisoners' resettlement issues. The probation service or chaplaincy service was seen by these staff members as being responsible for family issues in relation to resettlement.

Improving the family atmosphere inside the visits hall

Several staff suggested that transferring the atmosphere and vibrancy of Jigsaw into the visits hall itself would be positive and productive to support the family unit.

Although staff acknowledged funding restraints, many felt that the conditions within the visits hall were unsatisfactory. Some of the physical conditions were especially noted; the lack of a crèche for children and the seating arrangements for prisoners and their families during the visit were mentioned.

Some prison staff also noted that the lack of staff continuity in the visits hall was not of benefit. Recommendations were put forward to return to having a dedicated staff group that worked in the visits hall. These teams would have favourable interpersonal skills and able to communicate with prisoners, prisoners' families and children. Whilst security would always maintain a paramount standing in the visits hall, this could be done in a less severe or intrusive way:

"Dedicated visits groups. It works because they spend all their time on visits and they get to know the prisoners and they have that rapport."

The advantages of voluntary sector provision

Prison staff themselves suggested that Jigsaw staff were able to be more creative and adventurous to their approach to working with prisoners and their families. In the case of a visitors' centre, many believed that professionalism derived from those working in the voluntary sector was the key to delivering a high quality service. The enthusiasm that Jigsaw provides to their work, for instance, would be difficult to replicate even by those prison staff with an interest in the area. The governing governor noted:

“It has the culture, the ability...to engage and push back boundaries; it does things that I have certainly not come across in twenty five years of working in prisons.”

Prison staff also suggested that some prisoners' families can respond negatively to uniformed members of staff. One participant described the 'stigma' attached to being a prison officer. Staff felt that prisoners' families can often view prison staff in a negative light and therefore staff from outside the service are often more effective in delivering a service for prisoners' families.

Summary points

- Most staff recognised the support that Jigsaw provided for prisoners' families.
- Several prison staff suggested that Jigsaw's resources for visitors were outstanding and that providing a diverse range of facilities was a 'good thing'. However, other staff questioned the need to spend large sums of money on such facilities when essentially Jigsaw was a short-term waiting area.
- No staff member disputed that Jigsaw did not have a role in the visits process. However, staff views varied in regards to the input that Jigsaw should have within the prison. Some suggested that Jigsaw should simply be a place to provide basic level information to prisoners' families, whilst other staff fully advocated Jigsaw's innovative work both in and outside of the prison.
- The idea that prison staff could use the facilities within Jigsaw was largely dismissed. Many staff felt uncomfortable in sharing a facility alongside prisoners' families. Most preferred to use alternative facilities such as the officer's mess.

- The 'knock-on' effect of a good visit for prisoners was discussed. Many wing staff claimed that positive interaction between the prisoner and his family had an impact on the general atmosphere of the wings.
- A minority of wing and visits staff claimed that Jigsaw had a negative effect on the prison and caused some problems for gate staff by providing inaccurate information to visitors. However, this was not supported by those members of gate staff that participated in the focus groups.
- Communication links and understanding between Jigsaw and prison staff within HMP Leeds was mixed. Gate and security staff praised Jigsaw and their approach to dealing with visitors. Several staff, however, suggested that Jigsaw had expanded too quickly and wielded too much power and control over the visits process. Resettlement staff had limited contact with Jigsaw.
- Some prison staff questioned the physical environment within the visits hall. Several advocated the re-introduction of crèche facilities.
- Most staff also claimed that a dedicated visits team was more effective than the current staff profiling situation.
- Visitors' centres run and managed by the voluntary sector, rather than the prison service, was fully supported by prison staff.

Engaging with the local community

Jigsaw has continued its close association with local community groups in the West Leeds area. Of particular note, is the Centre's strong relationship with the 'Wortley Walking Group' and the 'Christchurch Armley Youth Project'. Opportunity was taken to uncover these community users' perspectives of Jigsaw and the services which it provides.

Local community groups

Overall, the community users were impressed by what Jigsaw had to offer. This is particularly striking as both community groups have very different member profiles in terms of age and needs. Within the walking group the community users appreciated the café facilities provided by friendly staff and the refreshments which were provided at a reasonable cost. One walker commented:

"Coffee and toast is at a very good price with excellent service."



Some of the walking group suggested that the Centre fostered a sense of community as many of the people using Jigsaw (visitors, prison staff etc.) were from the Leeds area. Several also claimed that Jigsaw broke down any associated stigmas that were attached to a prison with Jigsaw acting as an important bridge between the local area and the prison. The majority of walkers praised the atmosphere and spirit of the Centre although a few participants suggested that more could be done to improve the garden and borders area outside of Jigsaw.

Those young people that were part of the 'Christchurch Armley Youth Project' reiterated much of what the walking group had said. The young people were keen for the youth project to continue using Jigsaw as a community resource as, in their opinion, Jigsaw was one of the better venues in the area for hosting a youth project. Access to the internet and comfortable sofas and seating, for example, were clear benefits which the young people enjoyed although many were disappointed that Jigsaw's sensory 'chill-out room' was no longer available. It was clear that the young people had no concerns with the Centre being located to a prison. In fact, many of

the young people, as a result of using the facility, suggested that they had thought more about the impact that prison had on families and the community.

During the period of the evaluation some innovative work was being carried out with some of the female members of the youth project. A programme, addressing key social issues affecting young people, such as sexual health and relationship concerns, was taking place at Jigsaw each week. One component of the programme asked the young people, over the course of a weekend, to care for a computerised baby which simulated the normal behaviour of a small infant. This allowed the young people to experience first-hand some of the demands of infant care. The young people noted how after a weekend with the baby they appreciated the responsibilities involved with parenthood and they commented that they experience would make them think more carefully about future relationships.

Health trainers

Since April 2008, the introduction of health trainers within Jigsaw has been an initiative which has enabled the health and well-being of the local community in addition to prison visitors to be addressed more effectively. Two health trainers are currently based at Jigsaw offering support and motivation for those individuals who want to make health related behaviour changes. One of the health trainers described their role:

“We help people make behavioural changes such as weight loss, stop smoking, cut down on drinking, improve fitness, help those that are socially isolated those kinds of things.”

Despite being based at Jigsaw, the health trainers' client base is predominantly individuals referred from the local community rather than prisoners' families or other visitors that use the Centre. Referrals from prisoners' families were often low as visitors did not have the inclination either before or after visits to spend a prolonged period of time with a health trainer. Perhaps as expected, prisoners' families were principally concerned with preparing themselves physically and mentally prior to visiting their partner, husband or son and, as a consequence, accessing a health trainer was not generally regarded as a priority. Similarly, after a visit, families would often want to travel back home rather than wait to spend time talking to a health trainer.

However, positive behaviour changes had been initiated with a number of clients from the local West Leeds community and it was clear that a diverse range of health

related issues, i.e. weight loss, alcohol reduction, healthy eating, were being effectively addressed. It was, however, recognised that being based at Jigsaw was often unfavourable to developing and increasing a client base. Often, the physical location of Jigsaw acted as a barrier for many clients based in the community. It was suggested that the stigma attached to using a facility designated for prisoners' families sometimes meant that clients were hesitant to access the health trainers. This problem was often resolved by conducting client consultations in another venue within the West Leeds area.

Both health trainers acknowledged the sensitivities and subtleties required in order to advertise and market their work within the Centre and in the local community in order to obtain client referrals. Currently, there was some reliance on prisoners' families



being motivated to self-refer after reading advertising literature or viewing the prominent advertising display in the waiting area. In other instances, the reception workers at Jigsaw acted to highlight the health trainer service to visitors as they arrived at the Centre. Where visitors had been directed to a health trainer or had self-referred, the frequency of client contact would usually be sporadic and largely dependant on the number of times they visited the prison to see their partner or son. Many visitors were drawn from outside of the local area and therefore special visits to see the health trainers were not

financially or practically feasible. Both health trainers found this frustrating as it prevented sustained relationships from being built; however, because of the nature of these particular clients this was an issue that had to be accepted. Nevertheless, despite these barriers positive success stories were discussed including a number of clients that had successfully altered their health related behaviours.

Summary points

- Jigsaw has continued its close association with the local community. The 'Wortley Walking Group' and the 'Christchurch Armley Youth Project' are two community groups that regularly use the Centre.

- In general, the community users were happy with the facilities and services provided at Jigsaw. The young people enjoyed the vibrancy of the Centre and preferred the facility to other community resources within West Leeds. The walking group enjoyed the quality and cost of the refreshments and commented on the warm welcome and good service they received.
- The young people, however, were disappointed that Jigsaw's sensory 'chill-out room' was no longer accessible.
- Positive work with the young people was being carried out during the sessions hosted at Jigsaw. Issues concerning relationships and drugs were being discussed with the group by the youth workers.
- The health trainers have been a recent addition to the Jigsaw team. The health trainers assist clients in making health related behaviour change.
- The health trainers' client base is principally individuals from the local area. Prisoners' families were less likely to use the service.
- Being based at Jigsaw was sometimes unfavourable to developing and increasing a client base. Often, the physical location of Jigsaw acted as a barrier for many clients based in the community.
- Nevertheless, a number of successful client case studies were discussed where individuals had been supported to make behavioural changes.

The importance of voluntary sector service provision

There is growing recognition of the value of the third sector in offender management and in working within the prison service (Hucklesby and Worrall, 2007). In general, information and support provision for prisoners' families is provided by voluntary sector organisations that specialise in this area of work, e.g. Action for Prisoners' Families (APF), Partners of Prisoners and Family Support Groups (POPS). However, a high number of prison visitors' centres are run by the prison service (Loucks, 2002). Within this evaluation opportunity was taken to uncover what (if any) added value was provided by Jigsaw (as a predominantly voluntary sector funded organisation) as opposed to a visitors' centre being run by the prison service. A series of themes emerged from key stakeholder interviews.

Quality of service

The independence of Jigsaw and its management through the voluntary sector were seen to be advantageous. There was recognition from senior prison staff and governors within HMP Leeds that the quality of service that Jigsaw provides would be extremely difficult to replicate if it was to be managed by the prison service. The current level of provision would be difficult to sustain and as a consequence only a simple facility could be provided. The governor of HMP Leeds commented:

"We might be able to provide a basic service but it would be no more than a 'here's a place where you can use a toilet and here's a vending machine for a cup of tea.' We wouldn't be able to provide what they provide... we certainly wouldn't be able to provide some of the other interactions, the promotions work and the working with the offenders' families that they do"

Having staff that were separate from the prison service was felt to provide more independence, compassion and empathy for prisoners' families. Prison staff noted how the prison uniform itself acted as an immediate barrier to establishing meaningful relationships and rapport with prisoners' families and therefore would be counterproductive in a visitors' centre environment.

Committed staff

The way the Jigsaw staff work as an effective team seems to be a key determinant in the success of the Centre. Jigsaw staff are dedicated and committed to the work which they do with prisoners' families and highly experienced in working in this particular area. It was generally agreed by several of the major stakeholders that

prison staff would not have the detailed level of knowledge, training or experience to deal with the emotional and practical needs of prisoners' families.

Financial considerations

Funding from the voluntary sector, to some extent, allows money to be spent on a greater range of services within Jigsaw. Arguably, a greater proportion of funding from the prison service would restrict Jigsaw in their ability to provide innovative and creative services for families. A visitors' centre run through public funds would therefore struggle to provide the range and scope of services and activities that are currently provided.

Bridging the traditional and modern prison cultures

Jigsaw, as an organisation predominantly funded from the voluntary sector, holds a different set of values and different ways of working in comparison to the prison service. The main function of the prison service is to maintain security and officers have to be trained to run a tightly disciplined organisation. Jigsaw, as common in the voluntary sector, can run a less hierarchical structure and develop a facilitative, non-judgemental culture. Jigsaw constantly keeps prisoners' families on the agenda within HMP Leeds through 'gentle' forms of lobbying to key figures in the prison. However, there was clearly some tension between those prison officers who felt that the Centre was 'too soft' on prisoners' families and that the Centre intruded too much into the needs of the prison. For example, the provision of drinks (a service run by the Centre) within the visiting hall was perceived by staff as creating an increased security risk. Another officer however, argued that with the right amount of resources:

"You can maintain security in any kind of environment....with the right kind of resources the right kind of training and the right kind of people, we haven't got it right at Leeds...."

This officer felt that "if you talk to them (prisoners) and treat them well", then it was possible to maintain good discipline and security. The counsellor also felt that she had helped to bridge the cultures:

"...the service was always very well used (by prison staff) so that bridging did go on. An officer worked with me and you would hear an awful lot of prejudice, hate and a sort of backlash against the prisoners...I'd start working it through and you'd see their attitudes towards the prisoners would

change...as they started to work through within themselves, they could actually start relating differently to the men.”

The counsellor also pointed to the tremendous pressure facing officers, who were the:

“subject of so much aggression because obviously the prisoners were taking out all their issues, such massive issues about authority, and they’d take them out on the chap in uniform, so they were having to withstand a huge amount of pressure so they would be almost rigid like in this is the way it’s done...”

This ‘depersonalising’ and resorting to holding the client group at arm’s length is not uncommon in professions where those client groups can be challenging or abusive. However, the ‘us and them’ culture can get in the way of more productive ways of working and can lead to stereotyping. Certainly many visitors thought that prison officers “tarred them with the same brush” as prisoners or as those prisoners’ families who did try to smuggle contraband into the prison. Several spoke of feeling that they were being ‘treated like criminals’.

The competing pressures facing prison staff were noticeable to the evaluation team, with staff seeming to feel threatened by changes to the way the visits were staffed (from a dedicated visits team to wing staff accompanying prisoners to the hall), and by what they saw as incursions from the Jigsaw team into their domain within the prison. Some for example, could not see why families had to “book in twice”, i.e. at the Centre and then inside the prison. It was clear that in terms of modernising the prison culture, there was some resistance, and that prison officers were at different stages along the transition curve.

Centre staff were aware that they were not always popular with the prison staff:

“I mean my name is often mud over the road because I will ring governors or I’ll ring if I believe they have been mistreated, I will ring and say give me a logical reason why they (the family member) can’t go in.”

Centre staff rationalised this by saying that ‘there were a few bad fish in the sea’ or that some officers ‘get a bit of a buzz’ by throwing their weight around. They were also aware of the different pressures facing prison staff and of the different kind of experience they could offer to prisoners’ families.

Discussion of findings

Supportive environment

This evaluation has demonstrated that Jigsaw provides a professional, yet friendly service to prisoners' families and deals with concerns and apprehensions that families may face during prison visitation. Like the previous inspection report of HMP Leeds published in 2005 (HMIP, 2005), Jigsaw was once again seen by the inspectorate in 2007 as an area of good practice within the prison in terms of offering support for prisoners' families (HMIP, 2007). There was strong evidence that the family support work currently being provided within the Centre was of an exceptional quality and visitors unanimously acknowledged the high-level of support they were receiving from committed Jigsaw staff. Although family support interventions were successfully noted in the previous evaluation, since Jigsaw has streamlined its service to focus more on prisoners' families this has created an even higher level of service, as staff are dedicated in full to this area of work.

Jigsaw creates an atmosphere where the process of visiting is made considerably easier which often meant that families were more likely to continue seeing their relative whilst they were imprisoned. Their exemplar practice when faced with first time visitors is substantially ameliorating the stress and anxiety which is symptomatic of visiting a close relative in prison for the first time. This goes a long-way to keeping families together, a determinant which is associated with reducing prisoners' chances of re-offending, and is an indicator that Jigsaw is contributing to national and regional policy drivers in this area (see section on Jigsaw's work and its relevance to policy drivers).

There was also evidence to suggest that Jigsaw was working effectively and supporting families from different ethnic backgrounds. While not all information within Jigsaw was translated into different languages (a point also noted by HMIP), prisoners from Asian backgrounds did comment that Jigsaw had reduced the anxieties associated with visiting a prison for the first time for their families. It is important that this good practice continues as, despite prisoners in HMP Leeds being predominantly white British, there are also a growing number of prisoners from non-British origins (HMIP, 2007).

This evaluation would also support the comments made in the most recent inspection report (HMIP, 2007) which noted that Jigsaw provides excellent facilities for visitors including a café service which provides a wide-range of refreshments and snacks, internet access, toys and games for children as well as lockers, toilets and baby changing facilities.

Impact within HMP Leeds

Evidence suggests that Jigsaw contributes to supporting the work of prison staff working in HMP Leeds. Several members of staff (especially those predominantly working in residential areas) discussed the tangible difference prison visits can make to prisoners. This was reiterated by prisoners themselves who suggested that visits from their family were central to their time within the institution. Prisoners also suggested that visits had a direct impact on their mood, attitude and behaviour on the wings.

Jigsaw plays a crucial role in allowing visits to be a positive experience for the prisoner and the visitor. Jigsaw ensures that prisoners' families are provided with space to ask questions or simply relax with some refreshments prior to entering the visits hall. Whilst Jigsaw cannot control whether the conversation between the prisoner and the visitor is going to be constructive and uplifting, the atmosphere provided to the visitor prior to entering the prison can only be positive for ensuring the visits experience is a generally considered a positive one. The knock-on effect is that prisoners return to their wing in a positive frame of mind. This potentially leads to a reduction in confrontation between prisoners and prison staff and may go some way to making the prison easier to manage (Light, 1993). The prison service area manager of the Yorkshire and Humberside region was one interviewee who was keen to make clear the contribution Jigsaw made for the prison:

“They probably don’t realise this, but having visitors that feel they are being treated fairly, having their needs met, when you get the families in the visits hall it makes the process easier to manage and makes the prisoner have a better visits experience which in turn then goes back [onto the wings] and makes the prison easier to run... So they [Jigsaw] don’t probably appreciate their contribution to the smooth running of [HMP] Leeds...because they [Jigsaw] absolutely play their part.”

As noted in the previous evaluation, it is apparent from speaking to prison managers that Jigsaw also contributes to reducing the workload of prison staff. The Centre

deals with visitors' enquiries and questions before they arrive at the prison gate. This often means that visitors are less likely to drain the time of visits and gate staff who are then able to concentrate on other aspects of their work.

There were some tensions, however, between several members of prison staff and Jigsaw. Whilst many staff (predominantly those working in the gate and security) fully supported Jigsaw, there were some individuals who were questioning the Centre's role and purpose within the prison. In general, staff saw Jigsaw having some function in the visits process, but several believed that this should be limited to providing basic information and acting as a setting for families to relax prior to visiting. Several prison staff claimed that Jigsaw had been afforded too much power and control over the visits process and had access to information (such as the LIDS database) which was superfluous to their needs.

Jigsaw's work and its relevance to policy drivers

Jigsaw's work contributes to a range of policy areas. Of significant note, is the impact Jigsaw's work has on the reducing re-offending agenda, public health agenda and social services agenda. These will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Reducing re-offending agenda

Within regional and national re-offending action plans (Home Office, 2004; NOMS, 2006) the importance of the children and families pathway is highlighted as a key determinant in reducing re-offending rates. Many interviewees recognised the pivotal role Jigsaw played in keeping families together and thus reducing re-offending:

"[Jigsaw's] wider contribution to NOMS, reducing crime and public protection. I know that the work they do is linked to that." (Area Manager)

The following section will continue suggest the contribution that Jigsaw has made to reducing re-offending strategy documents.

Jigsaw's unquestionable strength is its ability to facilitate the contact between the family and the offender. Jigsaw ensures that prison visitors are treated decently and with respect and reduces the stressful circumstances which surrounds prison visitation. The importance of maintaining these links has been well established in the literature and research demonstrates that this can impact favourably on crucial

issues such as resettlement and employment chances as well as providing a motive to cease re-offending (Holt and Miller, 1972; Ditchfield, 1994; Niven and Stewart, 2005).

In the regional re-offending action plan, future priorities are highlighted to move forward the children and families agenda in order to reduce re-offending (NOMS, 2006, p.37). These priorities are:

- 1) To include families at all stages of the criminal justice process.
- 2) To reduce the negative impact of the criminal justice process upon the family to the minimum level.
- 3) To provide offenders with opportunities to develop skills which support them in maintaining positive relationships with their children and families.
- 4) To bring about a shift in culture within criminal justice providers which recognises the importance of working with the families of offenders.

This evaluation would suggest that Jigsaw is already contributing to several of the priorities set out in the action plan. Certainly Jigsaw's work in providing information and family support to visitors, particularly their exemplar practice when dealing with first time visitors, is substantially reducing the negative impact of the criminal justice process upon the family (point 2). The vast majority of visitors were immensely satisfied with the welcoming and friendly greeting they received by the professional and skilled reception workers. Similarly, the information that families received from Jigsaw staff resolved all queries, reservations and doubts that they may have had in regards to visiting for the first time. This had such a positive experience on families that some suggested that they would not know how to cope without the staff at Jigsaw.

However, whilst the one-to-one support either over the telephone or in person was highly praised, some visitors had been confused by conflicting messages they had received on Jigsaw's website. Care should be taken to ensure that the information on the site is kept up to date and is relevant. Furthermore, reports by prisoners' families that uniformed officers within the visits hall could be hostile are still evident. These seem to be a rare occurrences, but this issue was also highlighted in the previous evaluation (Woodall et al., 2006). While the positive work of Jigsaw offers a series of benefits, this is often being overshadowed once visitors step inside the prison gates. As is the case in other prisons, visitors can be treated as a nuisance, a disruption to the routine and perceived as a security threat (Broadhead, 2002). Codd

(2008, p.60), for instance, notes that prison staff “can make families feel at home, or, in contrast, profoundly unwelcome.”

In terms of providing offenders with opportunities to develop skills which support them in maintaining positive relationships with their children and families (point 3), Jigsaw have been highly influential in delivering an increasing number of extended family visits. These extended visits are now considered part of the Centre’s core work and undoubtedly these contribute to prisoners re-establishing their familial role. This is of great importance to prisoners’ own well-being, as it has been reported elsewhere that prisoners worry about not seeing their family and relationships breaking down (Lester et al., 2003). It has also been suggested that prisoners who are able to talk with their children adjust better to imprisonment (Carlson and Cervera, 191). In addition, these extended visits have frequently been conducted with an underlying theme which has attempted to provide additional skills or has enabled the prisoner to develop his competencies as a father. The extended family visit which also incorporated a ‘cook and eat’ session is a good example of how the extended visit also acts to develop parenting skills and health awareness.

In considering how to include families at all stages of the criminal justice process (point 1), it may be important to consider how Jigsaw could contribute in the future to the resettlement process of prisoners. This is arguably an area where Jigsaw could provide additional expertise. During the evaluation of Jigsaw, prisoners’ families commented positively on the access to information with regards to the visits process; nevertheless, the provision of information related to resettlement and the process of release was seen as being less comprehensive. Some families even suggested feeling apprehensive and unprepared for their relative’s release. Resettlement teams within the prison are already considering prisoners’ accommodation and employment needs for when they are released into the community. In some cases, it may be suitable for prisoners’ families to be involved in these resettlement decisions as ultimately this will impact on their lives as well as the prisoners. This work could be facilitated and co-ordinated in a negotiated partnership between Jigsaw and those primarily working in resettlement within HMP Leeds.

It is fair to suggest that prisoners’ families have traditionally been excluded from sentence planning and resettlement (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Murray, 2003 cited in Mills, 2005); however, their input may be vital in facilitating successful integration. What remains crucially important, however, is that if this is to be implemented

properly that it is taken on a case by case basis and treated with some caution (Codd, 2007). Prisoners families are not a “homogenous group” (McEvoy et al., 1999) and it is essential to consider what kind of support families may be able to offer to assist in resettlement, and indeed, whether or not this is feasible at all (Mills, 2005).

Finally, Jigsaw does provide a cultural contrast to the prison service and continues to raise the profile of children and families within HMP Leeds (point 4). Their innovative way of working has been recognised by senior prison officials as well as their high-level of commitment to prisoners’ families. As stated within the regional re-offending action plan (NOMS, 2006, p.42) Jigsaw recognises that the “family of offenders are an integral element of the aim to reduce re-offending”. Jigsaw ensures that this line of thought is ever present within the work conducted in HMP Leeds.

Choosing Health

The recruitment of health trainers into the core work of Jigsaw has provided a firm focus on health and reducing health inequalities. Previous evaluation of the health trainer scheme in Bradford has demonstrated that it has the potential to enable people to make positive changes to their health and assist them in moving along the cycle of behaviour change (South et al., 2006). The health trainers working at Jigsaw highlighted the positive work they had been conducting on a one-to-one level with community members within the West Leeds area. Health issues, such as diet, alcohol intake and smoking, are particular areas which the health trainers have addressed with clients, providing a “friendly, approachable, understanding and supportive” service (Department of Health, 2004, p.103). However, the uptake of prisoners’ families working with the health trainers was low. Prisoners’ families were less likely to engage in this service as they were more likely to be focussing on visiting their relative. Further consideration will need to be given if prisoners’ families are to be encouraged to participate in the scheme.

Within Choosing Health (Department of Health, 2004), an approach to promoting mental health is outlined. One important constituent of this approach is strengthening individuals by “increasing emotional resilience through acting to promote self-esteem” (p.131). Support services and information offered by Jigsaw (both formally and informally) went some way to support prisoners’ families. The stresses associated with prison visiting have been consistently recognised both within this evaluation and elsewhere. However, Jigsaw acted as a buffer to these

stresses and supported visitors both mentally and emotionally with coming to terms with their relative's imprisonment.

In collaboration with the Christchurch Armley Youth Project, Jigsaw was also addressing health and social issues which were pertinent to young people. Programmes delivered in Jigsaw by the Christchurch Armley youth workers were addressing key issues affecting young people, such as sexual health and relationship concerns. The 'baby reality' work conducted with a group of young females was one specific area related to reducing teenage pregnancy. Sexually active young people aged less than 16 years are at particular risk of pregnancy and contracting sexually transmitted infections (Department of Health, 2004) and the Government's teenage pregnancy strategy aims to provide young people with the knowledge and skills to develop safe and responsible relationships. Jigsaw's partnership with the youth project was contributing to this strategy.

Every Child Matters

The statistics mentioned in *Every Child Matters* (Department for Education and Skills, 2003) suggest that children with a parent in prison suffer a range of disadvantages. Whilst it was the intention of this evaluation to uncover and illuminate the issues concerning prisoners' children and their perspective on Jigsaw, this often proved too difficult as parents were often reticent in allowing their children to speak to a relative unknown. Nevertheless, reflections from prisoners themselves and the mothers of the children proved useful in understanding the children's perspective.

Denise Johnston (1995) has outlined the benefits of children and parents remaining in contact despite imprisonment. However, before summarising these issues it is important for Jigsaw to continue to consider that the imprisonment of a father can be beneficial for some children. Of course, much of this depends on the family situation preceding the custodial sentence (Codd, 2008). Despite this caution, the positive benefits of prison visits for children include:

- Positive adjustment – empirical studies show that the well-being of children who visit their father in prison is often higher than those children who do not visit.
- Improvements in child behaviour.

- A greater understanding – visiting allows children to comprehend the context of their father's imprisonment. Children who do not visit can have unrealistic ideas and fantasies about prison.

Every Child Matters notes that:

“Research with children has shown that they usually want to maintain links with their imprisoned parents, but they lack help and encounter many obstacles, especially in visiting prisons.” (Department for Education and Skills, 2003, p.43)

Prisoners' families suggested that Jigsaw was a friendly environment for them to bring their children and the majority were happy with the provision offered within the Centre. Almost unanimously, however, prisoners' families and prisoners themselves commented that more should be provided within the visits hall to occupy children. The previous situation where the children of prisoners were supervised by professionally trained play workers was praised. However, since the play work ceased, prisoners' families felt that a key service had been lost which was detrimental to the overall visits experience. McEvoy et al. (1999) suggest that children can be restless, troublesome and bored during visits. Our findings would endorse this, as many prisoners and prisoners' families reported that their children could find visiting tedious and unexciting after the initial contact with their father was over. Indeed, Eurochips (2006) notes the importance of crèche and play facilities during visits as this prevents children becoming bored and provides the adults with a space to discuss important domestic issues instead of sticking to 'safe topics' which may be the case if prisoners' children are present. Prisoners who were interviewed during this evaluation resented having to control their children during visits, especially as contact between parent and child was limited. Often prisoners were keen to make the experience as positive as possible for their children.

However, the issue of supplying play facilities for children whilst in the visits hall is not a simple matter. First, consideration needs to be taken to ascertain what type of facility will be provided; for example, toddlers have different activity needs to primary school aged children. Second, there may also be financial implications if playworkers are employed and there are no children in attendance during a visits session. All these issues need to be well thought-out before a play facility is provided by Jigsaw.

Jigsaw: an evolving organisation

Research on how organisations evolve suggest that they go through a series of stages. Boydell and Leary (1996) and Morris (1997) suggest that stages can be summarised into three phases:

1. Implementing, doing things well
2. Improving, doing things better
3. Integrating, doing better things.

Other writers suggest slightly different phases, such as 1. The primal phase: the pioneer organisation, 2. The rational phase: the differentiated organisation, 3. The developmental phase: the integrated organisation, and 4. The metaphysical phase. Boydell and Leary (1996) suggest that organisations travel through these stages, with 'crises' in between.

These stages relate well to the evolution of Jigsaw. It did start as a pioneer organisation, characterised by being driven by the energy of an individual or small group (Malka Denton and Susie Gridley provided inspired leadership in the earlier days of Jigsaw). This small scale means personal relationships can develop between all parties, systems and procedures can be kept to a minimum and there is a relatively flat management structure.

As an organisation grows, these informal ways of working based on individual energy need to be replaced with more consolidated structures and activities. This relates to the 'improving' stage above and also the 'rational phase'. Specialists are required to handle particular functions and the organisation grows by adding various workers with distinct roles. Pedlar et al. (1991) suggest that in some cases, the more 'amateurish' approaches of the pioneer organisation, where workers are inspired and enthused by the leader, are replaced by more bureaucratic and formal structure, but one which is necessary to bring 'order out of chaos'. We are not suggesting here that Jigsaw has ever been in chaos (!) but it is clear that the organisation necessarily went through a more bureaucratic stage, where procedures were developed, and the organisation was put on to a solid footing. As the current manager generously said recently, the previous manager did things which he himself was not inclined towards, such as making sure policies and procedures were firmly in place. It appears that the right manager (Rita Hindley) was in place for this phase, as she used her experience of the voluntary sector to place Jigsaw on a sound footing in terms of funding,

reputation and structure. The current manager has said that the organisation would not be where it is today without her management skills. According to the literature, this phase generates its own problems, with internal tensions and a lack of identification with the whole organisation (there was a mention of an 'upstairs/downstairs' mentality from Jigsaw workers harking back to that phase, which has now disappeared). This phase, where Jigsaw was 'improving and doing things better', was when we first evaluated the project three years ago.

A positive way forward from this phase or 'crisis' is for the organisation to 'shake itself up', and/or for staff to move on. The organisation, if it successfully negotiates this stage, can then move into a phase of being 'integrated'. It can meet the needs of a wide group of stakeholders, becomes more focused on its central mission, and is more integrated in that everyone subscribes to the vision of the organisation. There are good internal methods of communication and a sense of working together towards shared goals. The organisation is conscious of quality management and also begins to be seen as a model of excellence. Jigsaw has recently won awards and is also seen as a model which other visitors' centres could follow. This stage of 'integrating, doing better things' can be seen by the sharper focus on particular activities (such as family centred visits), the reduction of specialised workers and the greater integration of the Centre into prison life. The current manager, Lee Stephenson, is clearly right for this stage, well respected by prison staff and held in high regard by the team, an approachable manager who has 'worked his way up' from the shop floor, as it were.

The fourth stage mentioned above in the theory, is when emphasis on excellence and winning can mean that the organisation loses sight of its central purpose: the original idea of the organisation becomes distorted or goes 'over the top'. New ideas are required to keep the organisation growing but these can sometimes be the 'wrong' kind of ideas and can mean that the organisation spirals off into a direction that may not be the right one. This stage implies a greater role for management board or other governance structure, which needs to ensure that the organisation stays true to its purpose, or does embark on new ventures but also manages to stay integrated. The opportunity for Jigsaw to run other Centres or to act in a consultancy capacity, could be an example of where the organisation needs to take stock, and ensure that its own mission remains sustainable. This metaphysical stage seems to be one to enter with caution!

A key challenge facing Jigsaw is how it manages the relationship between itself and the prison. There is a clear difference in the mindsets of prison staff, which it would be easy to categorise as a more traditional mindset, where offenders are there to be restricted and security concerns are uppermost, a somewhat inward looking mentality, and secondly a more progressive mindset where rehabilitation is seen as an ideal, a more outward looking mentality, a recognition of the need to modernise and a willingness to engage with outside agencies. Examples of these two mindsets were evident through interviews with prison staff. Jigsaw has to negotiate these differing mindsets, one of which is clearly more hostile to the idea of the Centre. These competing ideologies present very different perceptions of the role and purpose of a visitors' centre, which can be confusing for outsiders, such as evaluators, as clearly the work of Jigsaw is seen very much through the 'lens' of these different mindsets, and is therefore seen as either very positive or as somewhat negative.

A further challenge is whether the Centre should restore some of the specialised functions (such as children's workers, legal advice workers etc.) which have been stripped out as part of the move from the stages above (the 'rational' to 'integrated' stages). It may be possible for the organisation to move forward by thinking about staff development activities, and for some staff to train in some more specialised functions (such as to undergo CAB training).

Does Jigsaw offer value for money?

Within the scope of this evaluation it was not possible to provide a detailed cost benefit analysis for the delivery of services provided within the Jigsaw. However, some comment can be made based on the financial data provided in the Centre's annual monitoring reports (Jigsaw Visitors' Centre, 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008). Based on calculations made by Brookes (2005), using data from the Social Exclusion Unit (2002), the average sentenced re-offender costs the taxpayer £111,300 through criminal justice costs. Even if only one prisoner desists from crime as a result of strong family ties which have been facilitated by Jigsaw then this would be an excellent financial investment.

Jigsaw: a model of good practice

The high-quality service and expertise provided for prisoners' families by Jigsaw is unique and currently not the norm across the prison service. Across the region and in England and Wales generally, the quality and provision of visitors' centres remains patchy (Curry, 2008; HMIP, 2009). Based on this evaluation and on reading evaluations of other prison visitors' centres it is clear that Jigsaw is one of the country's pioneers in providing high-quality services for prisoners' families. Indeed within Yorkshire and Humberside, Jigsaw was seen as one of the best centres in the region by strategic figures in the prison service.

The previous evaluation described Jigsaw as a learning organisation; characteristics of learning organisations are that they are:

- Adaptive to their external environment
- Continually enhance their capability to change/adapt
- Develop collective as well as individual learning
- Use the results of learning to achieve better results

This can be contrasted with the 'dynamic conservatism' of many organisations, which are inherently conservative and resistant to modify, especially in the face of the increased pace of change. Theorists concerned with good practice in organisational management and change suggest that those organisations which perform well are those which 'tune into the environment', challenge prevailing organisational wisdom, communicate a compelling aspiration, build coalitions, transfer ownership to a working team, learn to persevere, reward staff, are willing to take risks and are receptive to new ideas (Kotter, 1996; Worren et al., 1999). Jigsaw exemplifies these traits; as a small organisation, it can adapt and respond quickly to demands or changes.

As an example, Jigsaw has recently gained National Open College Network (NOCN) Centre Recognition. This entitles Jigsaw to access the NOCN National Qualification Framework (NQF) and Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF). This enables Jigsaw to access units and qualifications in the learning sector areas. Centre recognition also means that Jigsaw has met the NOCN quality Standards as an effective provider. Jigsaw is now in a position to deliver accredited training courses for prisoners and partners together, a unique concept within the prison service. A

three day relationship course has already been developed and a second course is around alcohol is also being constructed.

Finally, Jigsaw recently gained a quality assurance standard with an international organisation called ISO 9001 which measures the level of service that Jigsaw offers to its clients/service users. Jigsaw will be assessed on an annual basis to ensure that their quality standards are maintained.

The capability of Jigsaw managing other visitors' centres in the region

Based on findings from both this and the previous evaluation conducted in 2006, it is abundantly clear that Jigsaw has a tremendous level of expertise and experience in dealing with prisoners' families and establishing a successful prison visitors' centre. Whilst the findings suggest that there remain opportunities for Jigsaw to develop within HMP Leeds, their model of good practice should be shared. Critically, and as was mentioned by senior figures within HMP Leeds, in managing other prison visitors' centres Jigsaw must be mindful not to diminish the quality of service currently being provided to visitors of HMP Leeds. Often prisoners' families were frustrated at the varying levels of visitor centre provision across the region and would prefer a more consistent level of service. Jigsaw could arguably provide their expertise in providing good practice guidelines for other prison visitors' centres both within and outside of the region.

Conclusions and issues for consideration

Jigsaw's work with prisoners' families surpasses what is normally found in the Yorkshire and Humberside region (Curry, 2008), but also in other areas across the country (Hartworth and Hartworth, 2005). Based on the evidence collected as part of this evaluation and on reflecting on the wider prisoners' families literature, it is clear that Jigsaw plays a role in both the smooth running of the prison, keeping families together and consequently reducing the likelihood of prisoners re-offending. This link is crucially important for the Yorkshire area, where many offenders within HMP Leeds are drawn from, but also society as a whole as there are considerable savings to be made for the tax payer. Future research should investigate this link more fully by tracking prisoners' contact with their family (quantity and quality of contact) during prison and how this impacts on them as they reintegrate back into society.

Jigsaw also contributes towards a number of other policy areas. The introduction of health trainers provides a definite public health focus to Jigsaw's remit. Whilst referrals from prisoners' families have been slow, those clients from the community that have used the service have seen positive behavioural changes.

Despite these positive findings a number of issues for consideration have arisen. These considerations have been divided into those for immediate and future consideration.

Issues for immediate consideration

- The information that Jigsaw provides on its website should be constantly updated and relevant.
- The extended family visits produce a series of benefits and these should continue to be a prominent feature of the work delivered by Jigsaw.
- Play facilities within the visits hall would improve the overall visits experience for children and visitors in general.
- The first prison visit can often be the most difficult to cope with for both the prisoner and his family. Suitable support mechanisms in place after the first visit for the prisoner and his family should be offered.
- Jigsaw's role within the prison and the visits process should be made clear to prison staff to limit confusion and tensions.

- If Jigsaw's vision is to be a resource for prison staff as well as prisoners' families then more marketing needs to be done to highlight the relevant services on offer.
- Information for families should be made available in languages other than English where possible.
- Jigsaw should continue to develop and expand their tea and refreshment facility within the visits hall. This income generation is significant for the sustainability and long-term future of the Centre. However, the type of refreshment on sale should be carefully considered as prison staff working in visits suggested that some items could be purchased which could be used to threaten security and increase opportunities for passing drugs.
- The building should continue to be used as a community resource, particularly during evenings when there are fewer social visits. Jigsaw's relationship with the 'Wortley Walking Group' and the 'Christchurch Armley Youth Project' is very successful and these users derive a great deal of benefits for using the Centre. Wider marketing of the facility should be encouraged, as this may generate additional income for Jigsaw.

Issues for future consideration

- Jigsaw may consider longer term follow up and evaluation of families and prisoners that have used their services. This could provide stronger evidence of the Centre's success and may attract further or sustained funding. The use of specific case studies could also be considered.
- The evaluation team would support Jigsaw's plans to manage other visitors' centres across the region. However, care must be taken not to compromise the high-quality work being conducted at HMP Leeds.
- Research suggests that families are important in prisoner resettlement. Jigsaw may consider strengthening links with the resettlement team within HMP Leeds.
- In many cases, the vibrancy and positive atmosphere within Jigsaw is lost when visitors enter the prison visits hall. Prison staff within visits must maintain their remit for control and security; however, the way this is implemented should be 'prisoner family' and children friendly. The 'string of pearls' training session, delivered by PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust), which teaches professionals about the needs of prisoners' families should be part of prison staffs' training.

- Opportunities should continue to be made available to facilitate positive interactions between prison staff and prisoners' families, breaking down the 'them and us' attitudes.
- To improve referral rates, Jigsaw should re-consider how to attract prisoners' families to the health trainer service.
- Jigsaw may consider re-opening the 'chill-out' room.
- The garden and borders area outside of the Centre could be developed to provide a more welcoming physical appearance to Jigsaw.

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