

Thanks to all our partners for their contributions to both the newsletter and the CFO3 project as a whole – only together can we succeed. Thanks.



Thanks to everyone who contributed with their stories and experiences of CFO3 so far – please keep us informed of any good news stories and updates from your area.

Keep up the great work -
Look beyond the Label

Next issue

Look out for new stories coming soon!

Achieve North West Connect

7th Floor, Walker House
Exchange Flags, Liverpool, L2 3YL

Telephone:
0151 600 7764

Email:
help@achievenwconnect.org.uk

Website:
careerconnect.org.uk/achieve

Twitter:
@Achieve_NW

This Programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund

Editorial Contacts:



Chris Bennett
Managing director
chris.bennett@achievenwconnect.org.uk.cjism.net



Dave Christian
Business Director
dave.christian@achievenwconnect.org.uk.cjism.net

ANWC

CFO3



Look beyond the Label

CFO3 IS PART-FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

ISSUE 4

AUTUMN 2017 EDITION



Inside this Issue

ANWC - Leading the search for opportunities and jobs for the hardest to help.

P2 / CUMBRIA'S HIDDEN SUCCESSES

Did you know that the world's oldest manufacturing machinery still in use is to be found in Kendal?

P4 / A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A POPS CF03 RELATIONSHIP LINK WORKER

Diane Feeney tells us how she helps to reconnect offenders with their families.

P7 / GOOD NEWS FROM OUR MERSEYSIDE PRISON TEAM

Sharon Parkinson-Burgan, Case Manager, shares her insights from HMP Liverpool

P10 / FAMILY DAY JUNE 2017

Michelle Fewery, Lancashire Case Manager, was pleased to have 8 Achieve participants attend the Family Day arranged at HMP Wymott

SOLUTIONS AND CREATIVITY AT HMP STYAL

The arts and crafts workshop that is creating opportunities

Full stories on page 4 and 11

Welcome

Thank you to all who have provided such positive feedback from our previous editions. We hope you will find this edition just as informative. Achieve Northwest Connect remains the top performing provider of CFO3 in the country so the good news continues.

We are especially proud of our performance in obtaining employment for our beneficiaries. Our work with sub-contractors and individual companies is helping create opportunities for people who often believe their criminal records will be a significant barrier to the labour market. So far we are beyond our contracted schedule for finding jobs to such an extent, that in Cumbria we are a year ahead of our targets. We do not rest on our success however, and continue to seek new opportunities as they arise. We have featured Cumbria in this edition as we are making significant inroads to finding work opportunities for participants. We hope that in our next edition we will be announcing the start of a new recycling service through one of our partners that will produce even more jobs. More of that in the next edition.

Our teams of case managers and subcontractors operate in all the counties of the North West and each is making their own contribution to securing jobs, training, specialist support, qualifications, motivation and inspiration to achieve. We are only able to provide a sample of what we do in this newsletter but this gives a flavour of the range and substance behind the headlines of obtaining jobs.

We have again featured a selection of articles on activity provided across the region including our work both in prisons and the community. We have contributions from case managers and our subcontractors. Thanks to everyone who has contributed and please keep articles coming in for future editions.

If there is anything contained in this edition that is of interest to you and you would like to hear more about it please feel free to e-mail us and we will get back to you. If you would like to comment or offer views on the newsletter or specific content then we would welcome hearing from you.

Chris Bennett and Dave Christian

Continuing creativity

Achieve North West Connect has been running a bespoke creative arts group at HMP Styal. You can read the full article on **page 11**.

Case Study

Hindley Prison

L. Gillan, Salford Foundation, More Developed Region

Salford Foundation is playing a key role in the CFO3 project as a sub-contractor of Achieve Northwest Connect. Salford Foundation are currently working in seven prisons across Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Lancashire, namely HMP Manchester, HMP Styal, HMP Risley, HMP Hindley, HMP Kirkham, HMP Wymott and HMP Garth. Below is a case study from a member of their team.

Initial meeting with the client

When I first met the client, he had difficulty formulating coherent sentences and jumped from talking about one situation to another without any rational links. He was, at that stage, on relatively high doses of methadone. This caused him to feel extremely depressed and, at times, very anxious and fearful of his ability to move forward in his life.

After a few conversations, we talked about losing his mother and how this caused him to feel alone. He touched upon his previous relationship, mentioning his two children, and how he felt that he had let his family down – further increasing his anxiety and depression.

Background

Over the course of our sessions, we discussed many things, how his first memory was that of his grandfather's death, his father being in and out of prison for drug related crimes, and his mother's alcoholism.

We talked in detail about her volatile and abusive behaviour when intoxicated, which made him feel worthless and frightened. This caused a knock-on effect with his father, who often resorted to physical violence to 'toughen up' my client. His father would often leave home, leaving him to be the 'man of the house' from the age of ten – a responsibility that terrified him.

Over time my client was arrested on numerous occasions for various crimes. He told me that he noticed that whenever he was arrested, his father would come back – creating the idea that he would get to see his father if he continued to get arrested. Experimenting with solvent abuse from a young age, my client explained that he was introduced to other classified drugs – leading to his incarceration by the age of 16.

We often discussed his parents' death, his subsequent suicide attempts, and his increase in drug abuse. Upon his realisation of his need for help, he began working with mental health teams to bring his life back on track.



Progress

As expected, his state of mind was not great when he first started the sessions. They were long and understandably tiring, but he engaged well – telling me that he looked forward to the next session.

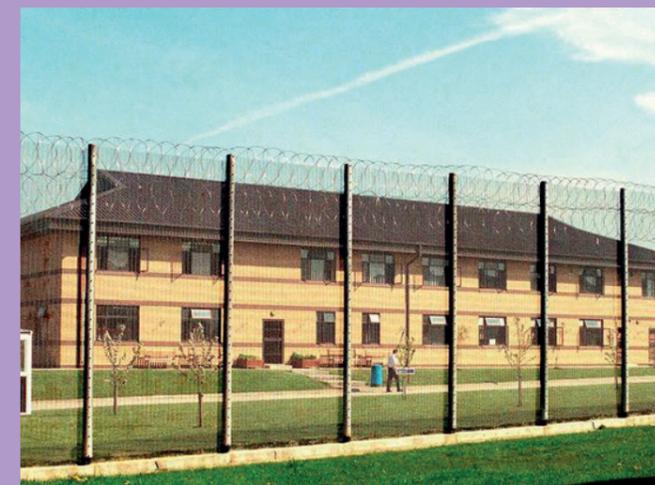
Each session was aimed to help him to explore different areas of his past that may have caused his addictions, drawing on his inner resources and strengths to improve his well-being. He began to recognise how his strengths could be used to change his patterns of behaviour, and his focus began to move towards using methods of channelling his inner resources.

Result to date

As a result of our sessions, my client has begun to reduce his methadone intake to single figures and has followed a planned methadone reduction with his drugs worker. Understanding the struggle that many take on this path, he has now been assigned fellow offenders to help mentor on his wing.

He has been signed off by the mental health team and has been given category D status, meaning that he will be moving to a category D prison shortly. While he has been tempted to take drugs by other inmates on many occasions, he tells me that he has resisted doing so.

He has developed strategies to deal with possible future challenges, and is articulate and communicates clearly. He said he knew there would be challenges, but felt equipped to deal with them - showing strong emotion when he told me that he was looking forward to a changed life.





Cumbria's hidden successes



Did you know that the world's oldest manufacturing machinery still in use is to be found in Kendal? Snuff makers, Samuel Gawith and Company, were the revolutionary buyers of this machinery made in 1750. The machinery was bought second-hand in Glasgow in 1792 by local resident, Thomas Harrison, and shipped to South Lakeland on packhorses. It has endured at least three moves that required dismantling but nevertheless, the wheels are still turning down at Brown House in Kendal. They truly don't make 'em like they used to. Cumbria is one of the most sparsely populated counties in England, its famous Lake District beauty spots, including Windermere, Conistone and Ullswater, attract millions of tourists every year. For many, the county's stand-out industry is its tourism. But Cumbria's workforce is more diversified; working in wholesale, retail and distribution, manufacturing and tourism.

Cumbria has two heavyweight names in manufacturing; Sellafield, synonymous with the nuclear industry, while further down the coast at Barrow, is the historic naval shipbuilders VSEL - although it now goes by the name BAE Systems Submarine Solutions.

CUMBRIA GOOD NEWS STORY

We recently worked with a male participant who had been referred to us by NPS. He had, in his own words, no hope of getting anywhere and felt like he was at a dead end. Interested by his story, it wasn't long before the GBH Foundation was involved. This really ignited his passion, telling us that he had always wanted to plan for his own business.

We started to put together a business plan, arranging some business advice via our in-house mentoring service. Conscious of his previous situation, it was very difficult for him to find an insurance company who would take him on. We were able to refer him to UNLOCK for his insurance and also helped him to obtain equipment that he desperately needed through our DAF procedure. He tells us that Achieve has had a considerable input in helping him get his business off the ground, but most importantly helped him with confidence issues with our hands-on support.

Gabriele Wackwitz-Marshall
Cumbria Case Manager

Case Study 1 – Case Manager Mark O’Doherty

Cumbria is well positioned to take advantage of opportunities presented by changing energy needs. Its ability to supply more energy will be critical to the local economy and the wider economic health of the North and the UK as a whole. Whilst an established home to extensive nuclear capability, there are other growth opportunities too, for example in renewable power from off-shore wind and tidal schemes, together with other forms of renewable energy generation. With these capabilities, the energy sector in Cumbria can be an integral part of the national industrial strategy and plays a crucial role in the success of the Northern Powerhouse.

Achieve North West Connect has a team of three Case Managers working across probation centres in Cumbria – Workington, Carlisle, Barrow and Kendal. They deliver supported outcomes to assist offenders on their journey towards employment which is a key factor to reducing re-offending. With the support of Offender Managers who manage their risk, they work closely with participants to identify their individual work goals and aspirations on a ‘case load’ model. The advantage of this approach is to build rapport and confidence to address individual barriers to enable the participants to become ‘job ready’ over a sustainable amount of time.

Notably, the case managers have placed 14 participants into employment between January – July 2017!

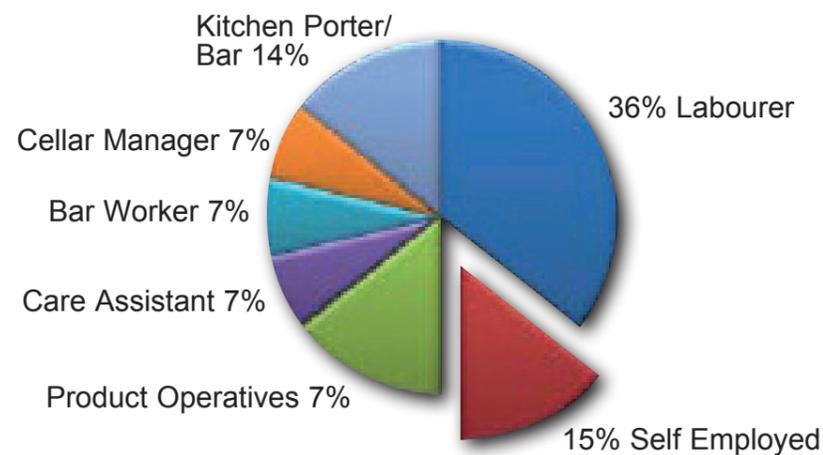
David was living in Approved Premises in Carlisle when I first met him prior to him leaving there and moving to West Cumbria in March 17 and him enrolling onto the CFO3 Achieve programme.

We met on a regular basis as his end goal was to work as an engineer. He received support from his Offender Manager and was attending a series of mandatory workshops due to his offence. Despite this, he embraced the learning he was receiving and was determined not to re-offend, to find work and lead a more stable life. When he was at the supportive measure stage on his participant journey, we felt that he would benefit greatly from some mentoring, we made a referral to CROPT and they started to work with him. David really enjoyed the additional support from Nathan Thompson of CROPT and his motivation for change grew. He felt more empowered disclosing his convictions and dealing with stress management. We started working on job search techniques and his Offender Manager and PPU agreed he could have supervised access to the

internet to help him with research for jobs and training. We did a series of job search sessions and found that many of the engineering sectors required a Safety Passport certificate, CFO3

Achieve applied for funding for David to attend a Safety Passport course and the nearest to Carlisle was located in Huddersfield, so we looked at funding a travel-lodge overnight stay and travel. David attended the course, passed his training and started applying for vacancies with my assistance. We found an engineering vacancy via a reputable engineering agency, David sent over his CV (which we completed) and was asked to interview. He was successful and started working for an engineering company in Carlisle.

Employment Outcomes in Cumbria January – July 2017



Continuing creativity

Since October 2016, Achieve North West Connect has been running a bespoke creative arts group at HMP Styal. This particular area of the Achieve North West project pays attention to the needs of several ‘sub groups’; offenders with mental health needs, offenders with significant alcohol or drug misuse, and vulnerable women.

This project gives a group of female offenders at HMP Styal the opportunity, through a range of art sessions, to explore their issues and build their confidence, self-esteem, and motivation to move forward. The sessions are delivered on a weekly basis, and work alongside HMP Styal’s ethos of ‘Decency being our Styal’.

During the past six weeks, women attending the sub group have been designing and making a patch work cushion cover. During the programme, the women are given a brief to create a personalised patchwork cushion cover in a style of their choice. The style of the cushion cover is to represent a time, a person, or a special moment in their

life that they held dear, reminding them of a positive time in their life. The women are also faced the challenge of creating their cushion covers using recycled fabrics donated to the CFO3 project.

Many of the women who complete the project found the process both a creative and emotional outlet. One woman said, “I find the session really relaxing, they give

me time to calm down and realise that I am capable completing creative items. The session really helps me manage my mental health in a positive way”. Another woman who has taken part in the project explained “I’m really happy with my cushion. I didn’t think that I’d be able to concentrate long enough to finish it. I had lots of support and learned new skills, such as chain stitch and how to make a 3D feature on a cushion.”



Here at Croft in Cumbria

Nathan Thompson, Project Manager, Cumbria

At ‘CROPT,’ we’re dedicated to providing ex-offenders across the Cumbria and Lancashire community with a professional team of mentors that focus on reducing the risk of offending.



In addition to the mentoring project we run in partnership with Achieve North West Connect, we have a variety of projects supporting those who have previously offended or those who are at risk of offending. While our allotment project allows those with convictions to learn new skills in horticulture, we also run Circles of Support and Accountability in Cumbria and Lancashire. This helps us to work with sex-offenders to reduce the risk of them re-offending and assisting them to reintegrate into their communities.

Alongside our outreach projects, we also raise awareness of autism in the

criminal justice system with our ‘Triple A’ project. This project aims to support autistic individuals who have previously been convicted or at risk of being convicted.

When an individual is referred to Achieve North West Connect in Cumbria, they aren’t just given the opportunity to receive E.T.E support from a Case Manager; they are also given the opportunity to receive additional mentor support from CROPT. This service is bespoke and is tailored to their needs.

After completing an action plan created by our mentors in an initial meeting, a participant will then start working on a one-to-one basis with one of our mentors. For some individuals, having someone to talk to and receiving emotional support has been enough; whereas others have

needed more practical assistance. This has included; help when applying for jobs, help with understanding how and when to disclose their unspent convictions to a potential employer, and accompanying individuals to appointments.

Since December 2015, we have worked with more than 100 service users across Cumbria. The support and progress have been different for each, accommodating to various needs, personalities, and circumstances. We’re very proud to say that we’ve made a positive impact on many people’s lives, increasing their confidence, and building their self-esteem.

If you’d like any more information regarding our mentoring program, please contact our Project Manager, Nathan Thompson, on nathan.thompson@cropt.org.uk or 07584858694.

Family Day, June 2017

Michelle Fewery, Case Manager, Lancashire

Michelle was pleased to have 8 Achieve participants attend the Family Day arranged at HMP Wymott for all of the Prison Wing and Student Council representatives in the prison. The role of the representatives is to deal with all the basic wing queries and guide and support individuals to the right point of contact. They also represent and present the views of other prisoners to the management team. It was lovely to attend the day and see how these participants interacted and spent quality time with relatives.

Below is a write up from one of our CF03 participants who attended the family day:

“On Wednesday 28th June 2017, HMP Wymott held a special family day visit. I was one of those lucky enough to spend the day with my wife.

“This visit is different in that the visit started at 10am and finished at 3pm. Throughout this time, we were allowed to sit next to our visitors, walk around the visit hall, speak to others and make as many brews as we liked! The kitchen put on a selection of tasty food and there was plenty to go around, twice over! Later in the afternoon, there was a quiz with a prize for the winners – let’s just say that we didn’t win!

“One of the most pleasing aspects of the visit that all of us noted was the attitude and behavior of the staff. The officers were great – they were professional, courteous, friendly and approachable. They all seemed to genuinely want us to have a great day. Over the course of the day, we had other members of staff pop in and have a chat with us. Each member spent time with us and were also respectful of us wanting to have private time. I recently signed up with Achieve and it was really nice to see Michelle come in and have a friendly chat with us. My wife was reassured and happy to see that there are people who work in prisons who do want the best for us. It was nice for her to be able to put a face to the people who I have mentioned to her previously.

“Being incarcerated in prison puts a huge amount of strain on any relationship. My wife has been my rock throughout my 3 years in prison but it certainly hasn’t been easy. Days like these are vital in helping me maintain those close ties, and will help me when I am released. I can appreciate that they are hard to organise but Sharon should be congratulated on organising such a fantastic day. I would like to thank her and all the staff who took part, in making that day the best day I have ever had in my whole time in prison (and I mean that with no hint of exaggeration!).”



Achieve Case Manager Helen Wood and Tomorrow’s Women Wirral

Helen Wood, Achieve Case Manager, Merseyside

Tomorrow’s Women Wirral (TWW) is a charity based in central Birkenhead, Wirral. The centre works to the principles within The Corston Report (2007) and has a women-only environment. All women aged 18+ are welcome to attend the centre, where a holistic person-centred approach is adopted to support women overcoming barriers and improve their lives.

Achieve Case Manager, Helen Wood, has been attending TWW for many years. She works with CFO3 participants referred by Merseyside CRC, NPS and TWW staff, as well as through-the-gate cases. A range of partner agencies also attends the centre to provide support to women with issues including domestic violence, mental health, substance misuse, finance, accommodation, education/training and employment. Helen

works with participants to identify their needs and to agree on a plan of action. She delivers the GOALS course, which is a beneficial two-day motivational programme, covering areas such as confidence building, self-esteem, taking responsibility, stepping out of your comfort zone and setting goals to improve your life. After completing the course women have more confidence and motivation to engage, so referrals to partner agencies can then be made by Helen to ensure women receive the support they need to move forward. Support and encouragement are continuously provided by Helen. She accompanies women who experience anxiety to JobCentrePlus appointments, college and job interviews. She has also worked alongside women to complete courses and gain work experience.



Angela Murphy, Chief Executive Officer, TWW :

“When Helen arrives at TWW, you know it! She brightens everyone’s day.

Helen has such a lovely, encouraging and motivational aura that surrounds her – making our women feel extremely comfortable. She is warm, caring and supportive, and is clearly stimulated by women who want to make positive lifestyle changes. Helen goes above and beyond to support others to achieve the best they can be.”

A remarkable journey

Tim Moore, More Developed Region

On Tuesday 20th June 2017, we had our annual Career Connect conference at St. Helen’s Rugby League Club. Alongside some fantastic guest speakers, we had a special guest appearance from Britain’s greatest ever female gymnast, Beth Tweddle.

Beth spoke about her determination to succeed and how her strong personal motivation has helped her, despite injury setbacks and issues with self-confidence.



she’s achieving in the sports industry, and what we do at Achieve. Her company helps young people to widen their horizons, just like we do with offenders. We discussed how important it was to utilise goal setting and measurements, but

Speaking to an already captivated audience, Beth gave us a very interesting presentation and video about her gymnastics career. While we already knew that she was an Olympic medal winner, we also learned that she was three times world gymnastics champion, six times European champion and seven times British national champion. Along with these achievements, she also won TV’s ‘Dancing on Ice’ in 2013 – amazing!

Fascinated by her story, I stayed behind at lunchtime to get a more in-depth interview for the newsletter.

Beth told me that she’s now a director of a company called Total Gymnastics, a company that promotes gymnastics as a sport and offers opportunities for children to take up gymnastics in schools, leisure centres and clubs around the UK.

From what she was saying, there are lots of common areas between what

were in complete agreement about the need for a sturdy support network.

Overall, Beth’s presentation was fantastic. It gave great insights into how determination can help to overcome any obstacle, something that I feel would be amazing for our clients to hear in the near future.

Solutions and creativity at HMP Styal

Kate Dugdale, CFO Engagement Manager, More Developed Region

On May 2nd, I visited HMP Styal to get a better understanding of CFO provision for females and hard-to-help sub groups.

When I arrived, I was invited to observe the sub-group session, which had 8 participants. The group was busy creating personalised patchwork cushions but were quickly keen to find out more about who I was and why I was there, and importantly, asking if I could sew! I was more than happy to get involved and put my creativity to the test – it was great to interact with the participants and discuss their design ideas.

The group were chatting amongst themselves, discussing their plans for the day ahead and their specific jobs. The atmosphere seemed to be positive with a strong sense of communication and team work.

Most women required help and support when designing their cushion and regularly asked the Achieve Case Manager for assistance, the Case Manager (CM) proved extremely supportive of the women and encouraged the women to make their own decisions and have confidence in their abilities. I was extremely impressed with the CM, she possessed a great deal of patience with the women and challenged any negative behaviours appropriately. The sense of trust and respect between participant and CM was evident.

I asked one of the women whether she would be happy to talk to me about her experience of the CFO project outside of the

group environment. The woman was 3 months into her sentence at this point and had another 18months left to serve. I asked the participant about her experiences of prison so far and she explained it was daunting in the first few weeks but once she had familiarised herself with the environment and was allocated a job role within the prison, the situation improved. The job role the participant was allocated was a 'wing orderly', which involved escorting other female offenders to scheduled appointments around the prison. During the discussion, the participant explained this is a respected job role in the prison and required a sense of trust. I could sense an element of pride as the participant explained the job role.

The participant went on to describe how she attends the arts and crafts workshop once a week and finds it extremely useful as it acts as a distraction from her everyday problems. The participant explained she currently suffers from severe mental health issues and regularly self-harms to release her frustrations and anxieties. When asking whether she receives any support for her mental health, the participant explained the mental health team in prison are extremely busy and securing an appointment is challenging. When asking whether Achieve NWC could help with the mental health appointment, the participant explained this is something she would prefer to do herself, and ask for help in the near future.

Following the workshop, I spoke to the Case Manager to discuss her experience of the CFO programme. Nicola has worked on the CFO programme for 12 months and is based part-time in HMP Styal and



Pure Poetry

Dear All

I just wanted to share with you a couple of the delightful poems created by offenders being supported by Sally Bristow via the CF03 contract. They have recently taken part in POPS ran Poetry workshops in HMP Risley.

The freedom to express feelings in a supportive environment is critical. Sally's work is typical of POPS culture of trust and non-judgement. Below are poems from two participants who decided to write of their experiences with POPS. It is important in the building of fractured relationships that men feel they can communicate feelings and thoughts effectively and without aggression to their loved ones.

So, I've started this course and it's with pops
it's not the kind where you pass or flop
you talk about relations with your kids
and how to develop them more

Some people are outgoing; they got a lot to say
some people hold back there simply not sure
you see everybody's different; their lives are all unique

the aim is to guide people to a break in the dark clouds
where life doesn't seem so bleak
you don't always have to talk nobody forces you into the
limelight
if you only sit and listen, just try and take it in and you'll be
alright
you never know, somebody's story might resemble yours
whoever you are

just never give up hope and be strong, you will be surprised
how many people have the same scars
this is just a little letter to say come on join up, join in
peace of mind is waiting for you
ready to begin?

Best wishes

Pretending Only Prevents Solutions

Have you lost contact with family?
Drifted apart over a while.
Do you want to reach out to them?
Do it all with a smile.

POPS can help you
And it might be fun.
To reconnect with family
Whether it be mum, dad, daughter or son.

They can help set up family days
And support through difficult times.
This is true and helpful information
Also, it's a bonus that it rhymes.

The ladies that work for POPS
They have your best interest at heart.
Helping families reconnect for over a decade
And they have been successful from the start.

So, if your missing your family
And have any worries, doubts or fear
Contact us, and we will support you
Because POPS are always here.

Lancashire

Hi Zubeir,

Just want to offer my thanks for your assistance in supporting my client around disclosure to potential employers etc.

This was so useful and helpful and he has now successfully obtained employment at Clitheroe Lite Engineering.

Your professionalism and approach considering the nature of his offence was highly welcomed.

Many thanks

Thank you for your support.



A Day In The Life Of A POPS' CF03 Relationship Link Worker (RLW)

As the POPS' CF03 Relationship Link Worker (RLW) my aim is to help reconnect offenders with their families and strengthen family bonds. It can take time for families to rebuild trust and construct family foundations and I am there to listen, support and engage.

Daily routine

My day begins by calling into the POPS' Visitor Centre to 'touch base' with the Visitor Centre Manager before heading over to the prison. My office door at Wymott opens out onto the prison library and during this time I may get a knock on my door from one of my clients wishing to obtain additional support. Prisoners often face relationship issues and the anticipation of the effect this may have on their pending release and resettlement can be a source of great anxiety. Alternatively, the offender may be moving to a new area and need support in making new friendships that are appropriate, meaningful and sustainable.

I head out on the wings each day to carry out new assessments based on referrals from the Achieve Case Managers, deliver interventions and to relay outcomes from telephone calls and emails. We deliver a person-centred

service based on the needs of the client identified via the assessment process. Multi agency working is pivotal to our success and so I keep the Achieve Case Managers updated on our work as well as connecting with probation, offender supervisors, families, social workers and support housing case workers as required.

Family connections

Another part of my job role is to identify clients for Family Days and promote Family Forums. It is now widely recognised that if an offender has the support of their family throughout their custodial sentence this can help to reduce reoffending. Our aim is to encourage families and their children to visit, to build relationships and to enable them to have their say in the issues that affect them. We have created a welcoming and creative environment in visits. In the play area at Wymott Visitor Centre we have created a 'Magical Reading Corner' and a 'Wishing Tree' for children so they can express their feelings, and at Garth Visitor Centre I have been promoting the theme of equality utilising the adventures of 'Elmer the Elephant' through the play area.

Leading up to release, transitions can be an anxious time for the offender, situations are often magnified or clients may start catastrophizing their situations. I draw upon my counselling skills as a 'listening ear' and promote frameworks for positive thinking, introduce mindfulness strategies and breathing techniques into their daily routines. We also deliver Hidden Sentence workshops for offenders highlighting the impact of their sentence on their family members - more to follow on this in another issue!

Post release we support clients through their transitional period acting as a 'safety net'. Often a prisoner's family can be supportive all the way through their sentence but withdraw their support as anxieties about the prisoner's release surface. Often family members simply need to express their feelings concerning the custody period or the future that lies ahead. We support the offender through this difficult time and in some instances contribute to contact being re-established.

Post-release positivity

Clients can feel lost on return to own the family home where children have grown up and there have been many other changes in their family's finances, relationships and technology. We provide support around relationship building and encourage and support family days out in order to help forge new positive and memorable experiences, particularly for children. Our aim is to help guide couples through the 'maze' of living together again and hurdles they may come across. Expectations may be unrealistic and it can take time to adjust but we provide tools to encourage good communication between partners. I find my role as a RLW extremely rewarding, there is always a different story to be heard, a problem to be unfolded and a new challenge to be overcome. The reward for me is observing the milestones achieved and hearing the positive outcomes post-release.



part-time in HMP Risley. When I asked her about the role, the CM explained how she enjoys witnessing the participants' journey and the distances they have travelled. She praised Achieve NWC and explained how, in the establishments she is based, ANWC have a strong presence and are integrated well with Offender management (OM) teams. It is not uncommon for her to visit the OM office and discuss participants with the Offender Manger, or populate NOMIS with information to contribute to the Offender Manager's understanding of Achieve's involvement.

Getting to know the role

The Case Manager discussed how her role is to support the participants and provide a handholding approach for them to access other services within the establishment. We discussed the sub-group that had taken place earlier that morning and she explained all participants are extremely hard to help and do not interact with any other service within the prison as they find it hard to engage. Nicola explained the prison is impressed with the work Achieve are delivering and approached Achieve to work with the safer custody group within Styal - this group is extremely vulnerable as they all suffer from mental health problems and severe self-harm.

Nicola explained she works closely with POPs, (family specialist) mental health and substance misuse teams within HMP Styal to provide the necessary help for participants on her caseload and feels the teams are well aligned and have a strong relationship. Achieve are also on the post induction board as well as the release board to keep up-to-date and offer information regarding individual participants on their caseloads.

My afternoon was spent shadowing another case manager who had arranged one-to-one appointments with participants.

The first appointment was scheduled with a participant who required support with completing a legal document regarding debts she had incurred with legal aid. The participant was extremely anxious and didn't fully understand why she had received the letter - she was concerned about the substantial amount she was expected to pay (in excess of £30,000). The CM explained to the participant that since

their last meeting, he had spoken to the solicitor within the establishment to seek advice and they agreed a plan of action which involved completing forms which the participant was uncomfortable with. The CM was very supportive and had additional guidance notes to help.

Sense of calm

Throughout the session, I was in awe of the CM's ability to calm the participant and ease her anxiety and, his ability to act on her behalf as quickly as possible to resolve the situation. The participant completed the form with the CM's help and guidance and a wave of relief spread across her face. She thanked the CM profusely and explained she remains slightly anxious about other debts she has incurred whilst in custody and how this may affect her family. The CM asked about this in more detail, and suggested further solutions to tackle potential problems.

The CM met with another participant who worked as a peer mentor for ANWC - the participant's role within the establishment was to act on ANWC's behalf, during the day and out of working hours. The participant explained she is well known in the prison by other offenders and is regularly approached by females in the prison who ask questions about ANWC. Another aspect of the role is to deliver appointment slips to the participants and encourage them to attend their appointments on time and continue to engage. The CM noted the peer mentor has recently been involved with the IOM unit to develop a complaints book for offenders to use and this has subsequently reduced prison complaints by 30%.

Becoming a peer mentor

To become a peer mentor, participants are interviewed by Achieve and if successful, complete a peer mentor course in the educational building. Following the course, the peer mentors will lead a 'positive you' programme to participants to encourage offenders to move away from their offending behaviours and focus on the positive aspects of their life. The peer mentor explained she thoroughly enjoys her role and has really built her confidence and self-esteem within the prison and it is a great way to meet new people and use her knowledge of Achieve to help others in the prison.



A remarkable journey

Jason Roberts, Case Manager, More Developed Region

A 17-year old male was referred to Jason Roberts, Achieve Case Manager, through North Manchester's Youth Justice service. The 17-year old was subject to a Referral Order for Actual Bodily Harm and here, Jason tells us about his journey with him.

Case 'D' was referred to me and following assessment, was deemed to require ongoing support and guidance in multiple core areas of his life. He found it difficult, generally, to follow the initial assessment so I had to adapt my delivery to make sure he understood what I was asking, and the reasons behind it. D provided closed responses and was very distant. Through discussions with his Youth Justice Officer, I knew this was due to him having engaged with other supporting services previously without any success. In his words, 'they're not around for long anyway so what's the point'.

Very shortly after signing D, up his whole family were urgently moved from their home following violent incidents against the younger children, and D being threatened by a group with weapons. The family were placed in emergency supported accommodation on the other side of Manchester, meanwhile, I continued to go and see D. It was clear that D was not in a good place and was worried about losing the family home permanently, as well as the family's general welfare. The family, who are under observation from Child Protection and Social Work teams, are all under a lot of pressure.

A fresh approach

It was agreed with D's Youth Justice Officer that he was not able to focus on education, training or employment, and as such, I wanted to take a completely different approach at such a stressful time. With D's health and mental wellbeing in mind, we worked together around focusing on positive activities. D told me that he used to love BMX riding and had attended the National Cycling Centre at Manchester's Velodrome before his bike was stolen a couple of years ago. Following many discussions with the NCC, they agreed to not only support D by waiving their session fees, but their Community Activities Co-ordinator also donated her son's old

BMX. D has attended twice so far with my support and the change in him is quite impressive. He has opened up and is smiling – something I haven't seen him do since working with him.

Recent feedback from the family social worker, to Project Manager, Priscilla Roberts, states:

"I have never heard him speak in such a positive way about anyone or a worker before. He informs me he loves working with you and you are 'mint'. He said you do everything you say you will and he enjoys your sessions. D had nothing but praise for you, which he reported a few times during my visit.

"You have a lot to live up to now as it has taken me a long time to have such detailed conversations with him. He presents a lot better since working with you and as you know, if you can engage a teenager, you can do anything!"

"Thank you very much and keep up the good work!"



Progress

Jason reports, 'D continues to engage brilliantly and I am very proud of how he has remained resilient at such a tough time. We have contacted a local bicycle repair shop who have agreed to provide D with hands on voluntary experience doing something that he obviously enjoys so much. He knows it can't all be fun and bikes though, and is preparing himself to complete ongoing 1-2-1 focused work to improve his education and employability when the time comes. D wants to undertake an apprenticeship and I am fully confident in his abilities to do so with the correct support and guidance'

Good news story from our Merseyside Prison team

Prison Radio

The custody team at HMP Liverpool have recently taken part in an inter-agency marketing programme with the Radio station at their prison. Through this programme, we were able to explain and discuss the work carried out by Achieve North West Connect and the CFO3 support we offer.

We were interviewed by prisoners who are training in broadcasting and working towards the qualification. This was a great opportunity to help all prisoners understand the social inclusion and ETE support on offer to them.

Prisoner turnover is rapid at HMP Liverpool, so the programme is continuously broadcast over one of the radio stations, so everyone can learn about the support on offer and have a chance to access it by self-referral. We also highlighted that the CFO support is on offer all over the country, but may be delivered by different providers. This meant that we could advise them on who this would be in specific areas if they were interested.

The marketing opportunity proved very successful for the custody team as the number of self-referrals increases month on month.

Partnership Working - Key Worker Role at HMP Liverpool

A fantastic new Change programme has started introducing a key worker role within the prison. This means that a prison officer is assigned up to eight prisoners to work with on their rehabilitation goals with them. These have been rolled out onto two of the eight wings so far.

The custody team from Achieve North West Connect has seen an opportunity for partnership working with these keyworkers and has discussed with the governor how we could work directly with the keyworkers to support the prison change programme as various themes the prison have fit into the CFO3 support.

Keyworkers could refer direct to ANWC, and we could support them by planning work that is in line with both organisational roles. This has proved very successful

with ANWC keeping KW up to date with work carried out with participants. Word is getting around to the keyworkers and referrals are coming through regularly.

Another Successful Training Programme at HMP Liverpool

As one of our biggest attractions for self-referrals, the custody team has been very successful in running vocational training courses at the prison. After discussions with managers in the Reducing Re-offending department at the prison, it was understood that there is a need for more opportunities like this on the VP wing.

The custody team work with many of these participants, especially since our joint work with the Keyworkers, and we have recently run a successful Level 1 H&S course with 10 participants starting and completing with passes. All participants engaged and contributed really well and there was lots of support for each other during the course.

Sarah Shillcock, Sefton CVS, Merseyside Offender Mentoring Project

Much appreciated work in Merseyside



Prisoner A was referred to me by his Achieve Case Manager as he needed support while in custody. He was suffering from mood swings, low confidence, and mental health issues – which was further affected by his family being unable to visit due to distance.

During our conversations, Prisoner A had disclosed to me that he was being racially bullied in the workplace. Explaining that it had been going on for a few months. The overall experience

had left Prisoner A dreading work, ultimately increasing his already shy-high anxiety levels.

Understanding the sensitivity of the situation, I was able to inform the manager of Prisoner A's workplace about what was happening. After a short conversation with myself and one of our Achieve case workers, Prisoner A was moved to a more suitable work environment.

Understandably, Prisoner A was thrilled with this result and thanked us for our help on his case.

A few weeks later, Prisoner A was transferred to a location closer to his family – meaning that they were able to meet a lot more often. While Prisoner A could not thank us enough for our help on his case, it was our pleasure to be able to help him.

