We want to empower communities, victims and witnesses, users of the justice system and associated services, citizens more widely and third sector providers of services to help us shape services at national and more local levels.

"Improving policies and securing better public services through effective partnerships",
Consultation paper 33/07, December 2007
Third Sector Strategy - 2.2 Ministry of Justice ambition

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1. Executive summary and list of recommendations

The idea for the West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project emerged from a thriving multi-faith prison chaplaincy. Some members of the original steering group are current WYCCP trustees. The trustees are to be congratulated on the amount of work they put into creating WYCCP.

By the time WYCCP was established the prison chaplaincy team was much smaller. The energy of the dream of a smooth bridge between the work of the prison chaplaincy inside the prison and continuation of its work on the outside was seriously weakened.

The time taken from the appointment of the Project Director to seeing the first service users was an amazing feat. The official launch in March 2007 and the first of a series of partnership meetings in September 2007 were well attended by representatives of organisations involved in resettlement of offenders. Attendance is a good indicator of the regard in which WYCCP is held and an endorsement of the success of the networking undertaken by the staff, board members and, in particular, the Director. WYCCP is still a 'young' project.

A major question we have addressed through this evaluation is the importance of a resettlement service aligning itself to the faith community sector. Different opinions exist as to the importance of 'faith' as an aspect of WYCCP. Having access to faith communities is acknowledged by most people as a strength.

WYCCP is only meeting some of its objectives:

- the quality of support and advice provided is good
- statistical data is incomplete as to numbers of service users
- there appears to be a well established network
- volunteer recruitment is low

Whilst we have been told there have been strategies for partnership working with the prison and probation services, we would like to have seen strategies for connecting to faith communities and active recruitment of volunteers.

We heard differing opinions as to the importance of the aim to prevent re-offending. For some, improving the quality of life of service users is a means to preventing re-offending and thereby building safer communities – and thus meeting WYCCP's aims. To others, quality of life is an end it itself. Improving the quality of life is a laudable aim but it is not enough if it does not lead to the objectives WYCCP has set for itself.

Service users come into contact with WYCCP through a range of channels. Everybody we interviewed considered a 'whole person approach' to WYCCP's

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work to be at the project's heart. The approach is appreciated by service users as something better than they experience from other agencies. WYCCP is based in office premises 2.5 miles from the prison. The premises are pleasant but clearly not appropriate for service users to drop in. Much work is being done to find alternative premises.

Most people inside the project felt WYCCP is not working with enough clients. It is true that WYCCP's client group is very challenging. They tend to be repeat offenders, serving relatively short sentences and leading fairly chaotic lives. There is a view that staff could be more persistent in maintaining contact with service users.

The statistics that exist, though incomplete, open the possibility that the project may be having some impact on national proven reoffending rates. Without more regular monitoring of reconviction rates, no definite statement by the project will be possible. It is much too early in the life of the project to assess impact on community integration. There are no statistics to help us determine how many service users have or have not been reconvicted.

The available statistical information falls short of providing evidence of the impact of the project. The introduction of a new data collection method at the beginning of 2008 should help. Swansea Community Chaplaincy, which created the Spider assessment tool, has demonstrated that effective monitoring can be done [1].

We have heard from a number of interviewees that the staff team members are committed, concerned and caring individuals. They are now starting to work more as a team and there is still much work to be done.
During this evaluation we met with the staff team twice. We witnessed the team working well together.

A major objective of WYCCP is to provide additional support to service users through a link worker system of volunteers. Throughout the project there is widespread dissatisfaction about volunteering. There are 9 active volunteers some of whom feel underutilised, they have not had formal supervision and met as a group for the first time in January this year. The implications of an under-developed volunteer function in the project are widely felt.

The Board of Directors meets regularly, has had a number of away days and revisits policies from time to time. New Board members are given recent documents to read but do not receive a formal induction.

The Project Director's focus has been on strategic management and contextualising WYCCP locally and nationally. Operational management is now being prioritised.

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[1] Swansea Community Chaplaincy Evaluation Interim Report. The final report will be produced in June 2008.

One question the project wanted to address through this process was whether the internal perceptions of the nature of the project match external perceptions. We found that they do. The job of communicating what WYCCP is about has been done well. The project is clearly understood. The relationship with Leeds prison is made difficult in that WYCCP volunteers do not have access.

Community chaplaincies clearly have a contribution to make to the criminal justice system and can contribute to meeting several national Probation targets. External interviewees were clear about the benefits that community chaplaincies can offer - particularly to Probation services. Centralised funding for community chaplaincies makes sense. The evidence suggests that such funding is extremely unlikely.

There is a multiplicity of opportunities for organisations such as WYCCP to engage with central government. These include either of the Faith and Voluntary Sector Alliance, Voluntary Sector Unit at NOMS, and the promotion of the voluntary sector by both the Ministry of Justice [2] and the Cabinet Office's Office for the Third Sector. WYCCP's Director is an active member of the Yorkshire and Humberside Faith Alliance and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Pathway for NOMS.

We heard respect for WYCCP amongst the community chaplaincies we spoke to. This respect focussed on the capacity of WYCCP to work with offenders through its support workers rather than simply signposting or escorting clients to other agencies, and for demonstrating a multi-faith ethos in its work.

This evaluation is timely in that it is now right to take stock, reflect and make some strategic decisions about future priorities.

List of recommendations

Section 2. Where has WYCCP come from?
b) Board of Directors to return to the discussion about the importance of faith. Make a clear decision to continue to commit to this aspect of the project or abandon it. Our view is that the faith base is integral to this project and we see no reason why it should be abandoned.

Section 3. What is the impact of WYCCP?
c) We support the view that every service user be met at the gate.
d) The project should treat Community Engagement, and Volunteering, as equal priority with one to one work with service users.
e) Each priority should have a strategy, with clear targets.

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[2] See for example the MoJ's Third Sector Strategy consultation document of December 2007 at http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/cp3307.pdf

f) We support the work to find alternative premises, close to Leeds prison.

g) It is time for the Board of Directors to revisit the aims and objectives of the project to decide if they are still applicable.

h) WYCCP must attend to its data collection and management.

i) We suggest much closer case management through the staff supervision process.

Section 4. Is the WYCCP vision shared throughout WYCCP?

j) We see no reason for WYCCP to change its identity as a faith based project. However it is important for everybody to promote the project as such.

Section 5. How well does WYCCP use its resources?

k) New Directors would benefit from a consistent induction process.

l) The Board may wish to allocate specific responsibilities to particular Board members

m) Members who find they are too busy to attend meetings need to decide to create the space or stand down from the Board.

n) The Director should be supported in addressing poor performance and using supervision sessions to look at client records and ensure full and accurate recording of every contact.

o) We support the idea to increase operational management in all areas.

p) All service users to have a link worker.

q) We suggest a major volunteer recruitment drive and much more active use of link workers.

r) Chaplains to be involved in connecting link worker to service users

s) There is a need for the Volunteer coordinator to focus on development of volunteers.

Section 6. What is the national context within which WYCCP is located?

t) WYCCP should continue to give time and commitment to the Community chaplaincy association, and to ROMS and national consultations, but not to the detriment of work WYCCP must do for itself to ensure its own future.

u) WYCCP should prioritise its relationship with WYPS, and continue to explore with WYPS opportunities for joint working and partnership funding.

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1. Introduction

This evaluation of WYCCP has taken place between January and April 2008 and provides a snapshot in the life of the project. It has involved interviews with a range of stakeholders, a review of relevant documentation and statistical data as well as group work with the WYCCP staff team. A list of information sources is provided in Appendix 1.

The evaluation process is designed to make a judgment about the value of the work of the project. Formative evaluation – occurring during the life of the project as opposed to at the end of the project – aims to provide information from which the project can learn, amend its work accordingly and thereby improve the service delivered to its users.

Formative evaluation looks at:

- How the project is progressing
- Whether the outcomes of the work what are the ones the project want to achieve
- Whether the Project is meeting the expectations of its funders
- How collaboratively the staff and volunteers are working
- Whether there is anything anyone involved wants to change
- How the project's structure impacts on the work
- Where change is required to improve service delivery

The principles we have applied to this evaluation are detailed in Appendix 2.

In each section of this report we present our findings, the implications of the findings and our recommendations for addressing the implications. At the front of the report an executive summary lists the recommendations.

We would like to acknowledge the cooperation we were given by volunteers, service users, Board members, partner agencies and other community chaplaincies. We would like to give particular thanks to the staff team members who were welcoming from the outset, gave us their time (sometimes at very short notice), responded to requests for information and provided their opinions openly. We had full and frank discussions both with individual staff and with the team in two group meetings. As the direct providers of the service under scrutiny the staff team place themselves in the spotlight during an evaluation and we are grateful to them for working alongside us so willingly.

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2. Where has WYCCP come from?

WYCCP is a young project. Its 'life' story is very important as it helps us to understand how the project has arrived at its current shape, why it does what it does and where inevitable obstacles to the initial dream came into play.

2.1 Findings

The idea for the West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project emerged from a thriving multi-faith chaplaincy which operated within the prison in Leeds. The vision was driven by the chaplaincy coordinator. Since then personnel have changed. The prison chaplaincy team is much smaller and has been at times without a permanent coordinator.

So, by the time the first multi-faith community chaplaincy project in the UK received its three-year start up funding in 2005 its driving force had changed as had its relationship with the prison chaplaincy. The first obstacle had emerged before the first member of staff was appointed. The dream of a smooth bridge between the work of the prison chaplaincy inside the prison and continuation of its work on the outside was not lost but its energy was seriously weakened.

WYCCP's vision was to replicate the support provided inside the prison on the outside. A steering group began work on developing a community chaplaincy to be that bridge and found a lot of support from potential partner agencies in the community. Some members of that steering group are current WYCCP trustees.

Establishing any new service creates enormous challenges for those involved. Prior to bringing in paid workers the trustees found themselves on a rollercoaster from applying for and being granted £870,000 funding from Invest to Save, to registering as a charity and limited company, writing job descriptions and recruiting staff.

The roller coaster inevitably included highs and lows of energy, enthusiasm, belief in the possibility of the dream and realisation of what was actually possible given the project's birth into real life as opposed to its previous existence on paper.

The trustees are to be congratulated on the amount of work they put into creating WYCCP, their ability and willingness to adjust their ideas as reality kicked in and their absolute conviction that supporting men leaving prison to settle into their communities will improve their quality of life and thereby reduce their likelihood of re-offending.

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A major question we have addressed through this evaluation is the importance of a resettlement service being located within a chaplaincy project thereby aligning itself to the faith community sector. As part of the project's story we want to acknowledge that whilst different opinions exist as to the importance of 'faith' as an aspect of WYCCP there is no doubt that the vision was developed by people of faith. There is still a strong belief in faith communities as sources of social activists. As one Board member puts it, "faith communities can be the yeast that changes a system."

The first member of staff to be appointed was the Project Director – Clair Dowgill – in August 2005. To have a clean slate to work from is both exciting and challenging – and the slates don't come much cleaner than the one Clair had to work from. Her task was to find and equip office premises and appoint a whole team of staff. By December '05 this had been achieved and the project was up and running. Once staff were trained and the project's infrastructure in place they were ready to build relationships with other agencies and potential referrers. WYCCP was ready to undertake direct work with service users by March 2006.

An additional obstacle had been identified during this period. The bid for funding had included salaries but omitted some essential start up costs. As already outlined, the context within which WYCCP was to work had changed considerably which meant a great deal of work on building relationships within the criminal justice system. Developing a reputation within the prison had to be given the time it needed.

Whilst we have been able to summarise the Director's task in a short paragraph in our view the time taken from Clair's appointment to seeing the first service users was an amazing feat.

The project was officially launched in March 2007. The launch was attended by 200 people from 100 organisations and was supported by John Battle MP. In September 2007 the first of a series of partnership meetings was held, again well attended by representatives of organisations involved in resettlement of offenders. Attendance is a good indicator of the regard in which WYCCP is held and an endorsement of the success of the networking undertaken by the staff, board members and, in particular, the Director.

2.2 Implications

Some interviewees wonder if the original idea was "trying too hard to be all things to all people" and therefore unrealistic from the outset. A different option would have been to start small and develop organically. However, in our view to aim high is a realistic a way to establish a service. We have not unearthed anything we would describe as failure. We have seen how context has determined priorities and this has felt to some people like instability at times. We do not believe the project has lost its direction as a result.

This evaluation is timely in that it is now right to take stock, reflect and make some strategic decisions about future priorities.

2.3 Recommendation

a) We suggest the Board of Directors returns to the discussion about the importance of faith and make a clear decision to continue to commit to this aspect of the project or abandon it. Any value base needs revisiting regularly to prevent drift. Our view is that the faith base is integral to this project and we see no reason why it should be abandoned.

3. What is the impact of WYCCP?

In order to assess impact we have considered: the subjective experience of the service users we interviewed; whether or not the project is achieving its aims and objectives; and some statistical analysis.

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Service users

Everybody we interviewed considered a 'whole person approach' to WYCCP's work to be at the project's heart. We certainly found this approach to be appreciated by service users who identify it as a key difference between WYCCP and other services they are in contact with.

Service users come into contact with WYCCP through a range of channels from seeing a leaflet in the prison to being referred through the chaplaincy. Most referrals to WYCCP come from SORT – the prison's resettlement service. Service users we spoke to had decided they wanted to change their situations on release and therefore actively sought support to do so. As one interviewee explained:

> "A project like this works if you want to change. If you do
> want to change these lot are good."

The men we spoke to also value WYCCP's contacts – its relationship to other agencies - and the staff's ability to offer support from the community.

> "It's a hands on approach for local people."

Service users are supported in a range of ways: being listened to and heard, help to fill in forms, managing finances, accompaniment to appointments, practice for job interviews, feeling able to ring for help.
At one time WYCCP offered a unique service – meeting service users at the gate on release from prison. Now other agencies offer the same but for a specific reason – to take the person to an appointment etc. WYCCP offers the

meeting to all service users without any function to fulfil. The idea is the men are taken to appointments or taken home or taken for a coffee to talk through where they go next etc.

There appears to be a difference of opinion as to what the "pick up" service means. On one side is a feeling WYCCP is a glorified taxi service, the other side says "so what, if he only wants to go for a coffee fine" and sees the service as essential to the relationship building, the development of rapport outside the prison.

Many agencies discover their location has an impact on the level and form of contact they have with their service users. As a new project, creating a new model, it was difficult to know what would be required. Naturally the project's choice of accommodation was limited by what was available at the time. WYCCP is based in office premises 2.5 miles from the prison. The premises are pleasant but clearly not appropriate for service users to drop in.

3.1.2 Aims and objectives
Originally the project set out to establish and develop a team of community chaplains and specialised staff in order to fulfil its aims and objectives.

Objective	Extent to which achieved (as evidenced within this evaluation report)
Provide support and advice for ex-prisoners released from HMP Leeds.	From our interviews we determined the quality of support and advice provided is good. Statistical data is incomplete as to the level of support and numbers of service users supported.
Develop a network of contacts within the local faith communities from which volunteers will be sought	There appears to be a well established network. Volunteer recruitment is low
Develop partnerships with existing providers of resettlement support in order to provide an holistic and comprehensive package of support for prisoners leaving HMP Leeds. establish a pilot in the Leeds area in 2005/2006 and continue to extend into Bradford and Kirklees.	There is a well developed range of partnerships. WYCCP is well respected. There is frustration from some agencies about the lack of evidence of impact. There is frustration from within WYCCP about the obstacles within the system preventing earlier contact with prisoners and adequate notice of release.

These objectives were designed to meet an overarching aim to "help prisoners who are being released from prison to assimilate their place in the community". The aim is based on two underpinning beliefs:

- in helping prisoners in this way their quality of life will be improved and the community will be a safer place for all
- local faith communities have an integral part to play in this process.

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Work has been done to update the aims of the project in line with work at a national level with the Community Chaplaincies sector:

> "Community Chaplaincies are independent multi-faith based voluntary sector organisations. Through our practical and spiritual support for offenders and their families we contribute towards building a healthier society for all".

We heard differing opinions as to the importance of the aim to prevent re-offending. For some, improving the quality of life of service users is a means to preventing re-offending and thereby building safer communities – and thus meeting WYCCP's aims. To others, quality of life is an end it itself.

Within WYCCP there is a pervading attitude that as the project works with a difficult client group, it must therefore be hard to stay in contact as service users live chaotic lives, slip quickly back into old patterns and don't want to stay in touch. However, we have heard differing opinions about how hard staff try to keep in touch. Some interviewees (staff and volunteers) would like to see all staff being more persistent with service users and not give up so easily. Some staff feel clients are not followed up enough.

Whilst no-one could tell us how many people the team is working with at any one time most people felt they were not working with enough. It is true that WYCCP's client group is very challenging. They tend to be repeat offenders, serving relatively short sentences and leading fairly chaotic lives. Pinning the men down to keep appointments is difficult, tracking them down when they don't show can be impossible.

All staff members have created networks which apply to their particular area of work. In addition, the project has been successful in breaking down barriers within the prison in order to be accepted as a credible service provider. We hear WYCCP has the full support of Leeds Prison management.

3.1.3 Statistics and monitoring

The funding bid outlined a target of 150 users of WYCCP services in each of the three years of the development.

WYCCP believed it could "sustain 25 ex-prisoners free from offending per year in the community". Using NOMS statistics, the project estimated a total saving of in excess of £2.8 million.

Whilst reoffending does not of course equate to reconviction, WYCCP's target of 25 ex-prisoners out of 150 not reoffending equates to 17% of service users. This implies that 83% would reoffend.

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This reoffending percentage is higher than the national average but the particular client group is believed to have a higher thank national average re-offending rate.

For 2004, the national proven reoffending rate (i.e. reconviction rate) was 55.5% - a lower rate than the project's target. NOMS also reported that for 2004, those sentenced to 'old style' community sentences have a 50.5% chance of reconviction within two years. The reconviction rate for those released from custody is 67% [3].

The August 2007 WYCCP report to the Board notes that 107 service users from March to December 2006 were checked on the police computer. Only 40% of these "had returned to custody". Other service users may have been reconvicted but not sent to prison; and this check was done within the two year monitoring period used for national statistics on reoffending after release, so a direct comparison is not possible.

If accurate, and if it was sustained for service users two years after their release, this 40% reoffending rate would be below the national average. Incomplete as this statistic may be, it does open the possibility that the project may be having some impact on national proven reoffending rates. Without more regular monitoring of reconviction rates, no definite statement by the project will be possible.

WYCCP also believed "it is at the level of community integration that we believe that our Project will make most impact".

It is much too early in the life of the project to assess impact on community integration. There are no statistics to help us determine how many service users have or have not been reconvicted.

The first full year's statistics are for 2006 – 2007. In this time there were 276 referrals. Of these, it would seem that 87 were not seen by the project (for reasons ranging from "released before seen" through to "back in HMP Leeds". That would suggest that contact out in the community was made with 189 of the 276 referrals, well above WYCCP's target of seeing 150 individuals seen on release per year.

Of the 189 service users WYCCP supported 13 people (7%) into employment and 15 (8%) onto training schemes. 22 (11.6%) people were found temporary accommodation and seven permanent accommodation on release. Three service users had long term contact with a volunteer.

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[3] http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs07/hosb0607.pdf

We have been told the length of contact with service users varies considerably depending on their need and their willingness to engage with WYCCP. We have not seen any statistics from which to assess length of contact. In addition there is a lack of recording of unintended benefits for example from the work with volunteers. We have not seen any data to show the impact of networking and of awareness raising in congregations, for example recording the numbers of volunteers recruited as a result.

WYCCP is involved in a pilot scheme to assess Spider, a recording system introduced by the community chaplaincy project in Swansea. Spider is currently used with 20 service users. Spider requires assessments to be made with the service user prior to release, on release and six weeks later. It takes a client-centred approach to assessment. Thus the client decides for example on their confidence level to seek employment, or their attitude to reoffending.

Before the pilot has been completed, WYCCP has already adapted the data collection paperwork to meet requests from staff, to encourage staff to complete the forms and to better meet the data collection requirements. Further small modifications may be necessary to make the tool best serve WYCCP's requirements.

WYCCP is still early on in using Spider, but it already appears that not all staff are conducting and recording assessments.

3.1.4 Other community chaplaincies' experiences of monitoring and evaluation

Swansea Community Chaplaincy, which created the Spider assessment tool, has demonstrated that effective monitoring can be done [4]. Their interim evaluation used data from Spider assessments to produce a holistic or overall impression of change. The evaluation records an average improvement in Spider 'scores' within a majority of the offenders that the project has worked with, suggesting that "beneficiaries were becoming more robust personalities whose behaviour might be less influenced by outside problems (page 2, Interim Report).

The evaluation also commented:
"…it was found that the means for all scores increased at each assessment, which reflects positively on [Swansea] Community Chaplaincy as both maintaining and increasing its positive input in the more challenging post-release environment." (page 9, Interim Report).

Feltham Community Chaplaincy monitors reconviction rates. It reports that 74% of young offenders which engage with the project have not been

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[4] Swansea Community Chaplaincy Evaluation Interim Report. The final report will be produced in June 2008.

reconvicted, compared to an average of 78% for that age-range who re-offend within three months.

3.2 Implications

3.2.1 Service users

The whole person approach is working and is appreciated by service users as something better than they experience from other agencies. One to one support is clearly important and we would have liked to have heard of ideas for additional methods of supporting service users, such as group work.

WYCCP's premises are far from ideal. Service users occasionally call in but everybody involved with the project believes the base is not close enough to the prison. It is clearly an office space and not very inviting to visiting service users. Much work is being done to find alternative premises.

3.2.2 Aims and objectives

Strategy development is no longer (if it ever was) a question of devising complex plans which are strictly adhered to over a period of years. The complexity of working environments for voluntary organisations means that they must be able to respond to opportunities and constraints that emerge. Striking the appropriate balance between sticking to its vision and plan and adapting to changing circumstances is now key to effective strategy development.

One way to support the achievement of a project's objectives is to develop strategies with clear targets. Whilst we have been told there have been strategies for partnership working with the prison and probation services, we would like to have seen strategies for connecting to faith communities and active recruitment of volunteers. For example, a community engagement strategy could contain targets in year one for establishing relationships with a minimum number of faith communities, and in year two for converting those relationships into a number of volunteers and/or passporting a number of service users into those communities. The strategy would also create a vision of what successful community cohesion would look like, to provide some kind of benchmarking for the project against its activities over the years.

Some of the project's aims and objectives are being met, others are longer term and not ready to be assessed. Volunteer recruitment is very low.

Most people in the organisation – staff and board members – see WYCCP's most important activity as one to one work with clients. We disagree. If WYCCP is serious about engaging with faith communities, its outreach needs to be more focussed and more targeted. If WYCCP is serious about offering a mentoring service, it needs to recruit and manage many more volunteers. These functions are of equal value.

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Whilst improving the quality of life is a laudable aim, it is not enough if it does not lead to the objectives WYCCP has set for itself.

3.2.3 Statistics and monitoring

The available statistical information falls short of providing evidence of the impact of the project. The introduction of a new data collection method at the beginning of 2008 should help and relies on every member of staff recording every contact with service users. We are very concerned to learn that full records – especially case activity sheets, and spider assessments, are not being maintained efficiently.

Data needs to be analysed regularly in order to identify trends, check the project is on track and make changes to address problems as they arise.

We have during this evaluation shared with the project some ideas as to monitoring headings, which complement those already set up by the project. There is an opportunity now to review what data is collected by the project through the 'life-story' of each case to be able fully to represent the outcomes from the staff team's interventions. These ideas are already being acted upon.

Effective monitoring may not lead to sustainability: Swansea Community Chaplaincy risks closure later this year for lack of funding. Nevertheless, in assessing any organisation's chances of sustainability, we identify lack of evidence of effectiveness as a significant risk factor.

It is commonly said that so-called 'soft' outcomes, such as changes within a person's attitudes or thinking, are difficult or impossible to measure. We do not believe this to be a true assertion. In inviting clients to assess themselves on various numerical scales, the spider tool offers an excellent start in evidencing the success or otherwise of WYCCP's interventions.

Regular monitoring hard outcomes, such as reconviction rates, is also an important step. The data may not reveal any positive impact by WYCCP in terms of numbers returning to prison compared to the national average, but at least the project will gather important information about its work. And if the reconviction rate is at all lower than the national average, that success is instantly transferable into monetary values. The number of people who might otherwise but have not been re-imprisoned, represents a saving of tens of thousands of pounds to the public purse (one estimate suggests that sending one person to prison for one year costs £37,500 [5]).

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[5] Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing Re-offending by Ex-prisoners. London: SEU/Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, quoted in Poverty and Disadvantage Among Prisoners' Families Rose Smith, Roger Grimshaw, Renee Romeo and Martin Knapp, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2007.

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Monitoring its work is one activity that rests firmly within WYCCP's own hands. Our belief, as set out in the section on the national criminal justice context (Section Six below), is that individual community chaplaincies will stand or fall on their own merits. In relation to monitoring, that means their ability to demonstrate those merits. Any failure by WYCCP staff to use the Spider tool effectively in individual case files is a suicidal route for the project to take.

3.3 Recommendations

b)   We support the view that every service user be met at the gate.
c)   At a strategic and practical level, the project should treat Community Engagement, and Volunteering, as equal priority with one to one work with service users.
d)   Each priority should have a strategy, with clear targets to measure whether the strategy is being achieved and the impact of that achievement.
e)   We support the work to find alternative premises, close to Leeds prison.
f)   It is time for the Board of Directors to revisit the aims and objectives of the project to decide if they are still applicable. (This process needs to happen annually).
g)   As a matter of urgency WYCCP must attend to its data collection and management. This could include instigating monthly monitoring reports for the project as a whole, which will swiftly identify any gaps in recording. Regular checking of reconvictions of former service users is also critical.
h)   We suggest much closer case management through the staff supervision process.

4. Is the WYCCP vision shared throughout WYCCP?

It is important for WYCCP to have a clear vision for its future based on its responsiveness to local needs. It is also necessary to be aware of funding opportunities to work towards this vision. A key challenge for the organisation will be to mobilise the resources without allowing funding availability and conditions to compromise its overall sense of direction and identity.

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In a written answer on 4 July 2005, the Home Office estimated that in 2003–04 the average cost per prisoner for the whole prison system was £25,377 for contracted prisons and £25,718 for public sector prisons. http://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2005-07-04a.4540.h

4.1 Findings

On the whole the original WYCCP vision is still held by members of the Board and staff alike. At the heart of the vision is the importance, or otherwise, of the project being a faith based project.

Within the staff team and amongst Board members there is a range of opinion as to the importance of WYCCP being a faith based project. The range extends "as long as it's doing the work it doesn't matter" to "faith is key to this project." For some WYCCP is a resettlement project which happens to be faith based. For others it is a chaplaincy project whose strength is its faith base and more specifically its multi-faith role.

Having access to faith communities is acknowledged by most people as a strength whist others believe in the power of faith communities to effect major change.

Similar projects have been established elsewhere and have proved successful in reducing the rates of re-offending amongst those supported. WYCCP is the first multi-faith community chaplaincy project, and reflects prison chaplaincies in that respect. The role of Community Chaplain is the living face of the faith perspective.

It is believed by many people involved with WYCCP that accessing faith communities means accessing an enormous amount of good will. Experience in prisons is that people of faith make a sizable contribution to volunteer forces and that prison volunteering is popular. There is some frustration that the same is not true of WYCCP.

There are obstacles to the faith identity within WYCCP.

- Whilst some people do not think it matters that WYCCP is a faith based project there are some who think being linked to the prison chaplaincy has a distinct disadvantage.
- We have also heard that being a faith based project is a hindrance at a strategic level.
- Capacity within the staff team is certainly an issue in that the majority of outreach into faith communities sits within the remit of the two chaplains.
- There is a belief that engagement with faith communities is low in relation to the objectives of WYCCP because to get from raising awareness raising to galvanizing action is a very long term process.
- There is also a belief that faith communities as a resource are very limited.

4.2 Implications

Being a faith based project can create a number of difficulties including the need to deal with people's/agencies perceptions of what that means.

However, in our experience when faith based projects prove they deliver high quality services they become well respected by partners and communities. Throughout this evaluation we have referred to many successful faith based initiatives e.g. Street Pastors, The St Vincent de Paul Society, The Mother's Union. It is true there are also projects initiated by people of faith but not identified as faith based projects e.g. Cyrenians, Emmaus and Leeds Asylum Seekers Network.

We know that many people are supported in prisons by chaplaincies. The concern that service users may be concerned WYCCP staff will "drag them to church" or that the faith aspect will be any other kind of obstacle is overcome when the service offered is well known and has developed a reputation.

As long as some people within WYCCP actively play down the faith aspect the lack of confidence the project demonstrates will continue. We believe the Director provides a good example of someone who believes in the importance of the faith aspect even though she is not a person of faith herself.

It is difficult to assess whether prison visiting is considered more interesting or fulfilling than supporting people outside the prison but prisons are successful in recruiting ample numbers of volunteers, many from faith communities.

4.3 Recommendation

i) We see no reason for WYCCP to change its identity as a faith based project. However it is important for everybody to promote the project as such and not leave it to the people who do consider it to be important.

5. How well does WYCCP use its resources?

The resources we have chosen to focus on include the staff team, volunteers and the Board of directors. We have also looked at operational management and WYCCP's relationships to some of its partner agencies as resources.

5.1 Findings

5.1.1 Staffing
The function of the staff team is to provide a range of support services to ex-prisoners in Leeds, Bradford and Kirklees. Specific functions are allocated to specific roles – volunteer coordination, housing support, employment-education-training support, support on substance misuse and debt counselling. The team also has a secondee from West Yorkshire Probation Service who is tasked with providing a bridge between the organisations. All staff are responsible for developing relationships with relevant agencies. In addition the two chaplains on the team are tasked with building links across

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faith communities in order to publicise the work of the project, recruit support and raise awareness of the issues facing ex-offenders.

The Project Director works with the Board of Directors to develop policies and procedures, manages the staff team, holds responsibility for financial management and fundraising.

One specific role undertaken by the community chaplains is creating links with faith communities. This involves talking to congregations to raise awareness and also encourage active involvement either within the community itself or as volunteer link workers with WYCCP. Engagement with faith communities also has the potential to connect with employers and landlords through faith communities.

We have already commented on the importance of WYCCP's faith base but would also like to acknowledge how difficult it can be to encourage some communities to accept the term ex-offender, to become active in supporting ex-offenders or to volunteer with WYCCP.

From our interviews with service users and people from outside WYCCP we have heard that the quality of the work with service users is high. As we have said elsewhere the staff let themselves down by not showing evidence of WYCCP's impact.

As a multi faith project WYCCP has actively recruited a Board of Directors and a staff team to reflect the diversity of its service users and the communities with which it wishes to engage. As in any staff team managing the diversity can be difficult. There have been tensions and different views in how the work should be carried out. There have also been conflicts which both the Director and the Board have been engaged in trying to resolve.

We have heard from a number of interviewees that the team members are committed, concerned and caring individuals. They are now starting to work more as a team and there is still much work to be done. During this evaluation we met with the staff team twice. On each occasion we witnessed the team working well – giving their opinions, listening to each other and acknowledging their differences. We of course acknowledge our insight is based on the minimal contact of visitors and life is very different but we do accept what we have been told – the team is learning to work together.

The Director has started to look at team development as a specific task and there is an idea to introduce reflective practice – talking about the work with clients, developing consistency in WYCCP's approach and deepening the relationships between team members.

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5.1.2 Volunteering

A major objective of WYCCP is to provide additional support to service users through a link worker system of volunteers. Throughout the project there is widespread dissatisfaction about volunteering. More than one person lamented that they had wanted volunteers to become "key players".

Some staff believe that in theory WYCCP has 20 volunteers. In reality few are known to the staff team and it seems only 9 who are active.
The original idea was for the development of a mentoring scheme. In practice most service users need practical support and so the idea of volunteers as link workers was established.

One interviewee described the link worker function of the project as its "Achilles heel" in that the idea is great but it isn't working in practice. With so few active volunteers/link workers not all service users have a link worker attached. However, we have spoken to volunteers who feel underutilised and have been frankly surprised they have stayed around as long as they have. We have also been told volunteers tend not to stay.

The development of the link worker role has been hampered by their lack of access to the prison. Ideally they would meet a service user before release and continue the relationship outside the prison.

Originally all staff worked as key workers to all clients. The system was recently changed so that the Chaplains now assess initial referrals and allocate according to each individual's needs. There is disagreement within the team as to whether the chaplains should decide who has a link worker and when or whether all service users have a link worker.

The volunteers who have stayed and worked with service users have not had formal supervision and met as a group for the first time in January this year.

Volunteers report there is not enough structure, "it's all a bit loose" and want supervision. Newer volunteers assume they will receive close supervision and assume they will be "teamed up" with a service user after completing their training.

WYCCP has produced comprehensive policies and procedures as well as a volunteer manual but in practice it falls short of recruiting and managing an active volunteering force.

5.1.3 The Board of Directors

Through the evaluation process we have had a lot of contact with three Board members via the evaluation's review group. In addition we have spoken to three more. Our impression is that WYCCP is managed by a very committed governing body comprising founder members as well as Directors

joining within the last six months. Board members hold the vision well in that it remains clear and well understood.

The Board meets regularly and has had a number of away days. We hear that not all members attend the meetings. New members have proven to be very valuable in that they ask clear questions and are already actively involved. As one member reflected "they have transformed the board".

New Board members are given recent documents to read but do not receive a formal induction.

The project Director attends the Board meetings and presents reports from herself and the staff team. Like the project the Board is still learning and has recently begun to request more quantifiable information.

The Board revisits policies from time to time. As one person pointed out "when a policy is put into action it shows the shortcomings of that policy – we're still learning."

There is an acknowledgement that the needs from the beginning of WYCCP have changed – e.g. the need to establish its reputation through networking becomes less important as the project grows. Therefore roles change or are no longer necessary. When a member of staff leaves an opportunity is created to review the post and decide whether or not to fill it.

5.1.4 Operational management

Operational management has not been a priority and the Director, Clair, is the first to recognise this. Clair's focus has been on strategic management and contextualising WYCCP locally and nationally. In the first three years of the project this was essential and indeed needs to continue. However, Clair has recently introduced some changes in the work and is actively managing poor performance. Operational management has not been absent however. Clair is a popular manager. She is seen as fair, approachable, clear-headed and passionate about the project's vision. All the management systems we would expect to see are in place. Attention is being paid to oversights and shortfalls

At a strategic level Clair's commitment to WYCCP's vision is well communicated and has earned WYCCP respect from other agencies.

5.1.5 Relationship with the prison chaplaincy

Whilst the prison chaplaincy's circumstances have changed – not least a staff shortage – it remains a major source of referrals to WYCCP. The chaplaincy also remains complimentary to the service WYCCP offers and hears feedback from some prisoners to suggest the quality of the service is high. Referrals include any man who asks to be referred as well as men who are unable to access other services.

There seems to be an idea within WYCCP that the prison chaplaincy team has neither the capacity nor the will to relate fully to WYCCP. Our interviews suggest the will is certainly there.

5.1.6 Other key relationships

One question the project wanted to address through this process was whether the internal perceptions of the nature of the project match external perceptions. We found that they do. Clearly the job of communicating what WYCCP is about has been done well. The project is clearly understood. Inevitably there are some unrealistic expectations of what WYCCP could be doing – visiting every church and mosque to raise awareness for example.

The Director's role has involved her at local, regional and national levels. All members of staff have been involved in building local networks with relevant agencies and we believe this has all been done well (see more on the national context below, Section 6).

Last year WYCCP held the first of a series of partnership events. The event was very well attended. It is intended to continue bringing agencies together to address common interests and themes. This seems a good way of developing the relationships with partner agencies.

The relationship with Leeds prison is made difficult in that WYCCP volunteers do not have access. This severely hampers the work of matching service users to a link worker from the outset.

5.2 Implications

5.2.1 Staffing

The members of the staff team are clearly committed to their work. Our interaction with the team convinces us its members have the potential to work well together. To do so will inevitably improve the quality of service delivery. Reflective practice can be daunting at first for people who are not used to working in this way but talking about the work at this micro level does help a team to connect differently. More importantly talking about work with service users can contribute greatly to developing consistency in practice and approach. Consistent practice should not detract from the space staff members have had in developing their roles and in some cases being quite creative in their work.

The most significant implication, mentioned in a number of places throughout this report, is the teams' lack of evidence of the impact of its work. Once Spider is well established as an assessment and recording tool this should mitigate against an obvious danger of it becoming the focus of the interaction. However, staff need to realise how essential it is to fully record every interaction. We wonder how WYCCP intends to monitor re-offending rates amongst its service users.

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5.2.2 Volunteering

The implications of an under-developed volunteer function in the project are widely felt.

Whilst development of the link worker role has been hampered by their lack of access to the prison our view is that even with this limitation more could be done to develop the role and ensure the relationship begins immediately after a service user is released. We acknowledge the work now being undertaken at an operational management level to address this problem we were disappointed it had not happened sooner given the degree to which staff and Board members were aware of the problem.

In the context of a whole person approach mentoring will look different depending on the specific needs of a service user at any one time. Whether volunteers are called link workers or mentors is not as important as the need to provide both practical and non-practical support to service users.

5.2.3 The Board of Directors

Our impression is that the Board became a bit tired which is why it feels invigorated by new members. However, we do not agree with some members that it has lost its direction. Yes there exists difference of opinion about the emphasis of the work and the importance of the faith base but this does not appear to be to the detriment of the project.

We are pleased to hear the Board is beginning to ask for more quantitative data and keep a closer eye on the work. The staff reports provide a good opportunity to report regularly on Spider assessments and on monthly data for engagement with service users and outcomes.

The nature of the governing body of most not-for profit organisations is that its members are very busy people. However, it is essential for its members to be able to fulfil their roles: to lead the organisation and ensure it has a clear purpose; to develop overall strategies to achieve the aims; to monitor the progress of the organisation; to ensure compliance with the law and accountability to the organisation's stakeholders; and to ensure that the Board itself performs effectively.

5.2.4 Operational management

Clair's management style left staff a lot of discretion and space for staff to develop their roles. The advantage is that staff feel trusted and have been able to develop their roles in a new project. Some of the shortfalls now being dealt with are major in our view – management and support of volunteers, placing volunteers with service users at the time of release, record keeping/monitoring and evaluation.

5.2.5 Relationships

The staff shortage within the prison chaplaincy has limited how proactive the chaplaincy has been in making referrals. This has inevitably impacted on the ability of WYCCP to maximise the number of service users it can work with. There is an intention to allocate a chaplain to visit every man due for release which will create more opportunities for raising awareness of WYCCP's role. As a result of this evaluation there is now an intention to include information about WYCCP in the training of volunteer listeners in the prison.

5.3 Recommendations

j) New Directors would benefit from a consistent induction process.
The role of a Board is to hold the vision of a project and as such needs to meet annually to revisit the vision and make strategic plans for the way forward.

k) The Board may wish to allocate specific responsibilities to particular Board members (e.g. volunteering, monitoring), and/or to create subcommittees such as Finance or Recruitment/Human Resources.

l) Members who find they are too busy to attend meetings need to decide to create the space or stand down from the Board.

m) The Director should be supported in addressing poor performance and using supervision sessions to look at client records and ensure full and accurate recording of every contact.

n) We support the idea to increase operational management in all areas, not only poor performance. Operational management includes team development, supervision and promoting reflective practice.

o) All service users have a link worker. In most cases a link worker can be allocated prior to the service user being released.

p) We suggest a major volunteer recruitment drive and much more active use of link workers.

q) Chaplains to be involved in connecting link worker to service users

r) There is a need for the Volunteer coordinator to focus on development of volunteers. We see no need for the Volunteer coordinator to be involved in direct work with service users.

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6. What is the national context within which WYCCP is located?

6.1 Findings

6.1.1 The contribution of community chaplaincies

Prison overcrowding suggests that there is no better time, politically as well as practically, for organisations which address reoffending to be staking their claim to government support and financing.

Community chaplaincies clearly have a contribution to make to the criminal justice system. In particular, their work can:
- Fit closely within NOMS' seven Reducing Re-offending pathways
- Take place within the offender management route
- Offer opportunities to work on community cohesion
- Contribute to tackling racism, discrimination and extremism
- Support efforts to reduce prison overcrowding by reducing re-offending and preventing breaches by offenders on community sentences and on licence
- Support Local Area Agreements and their focus on creating safer (less offending behaviour) and stronger (multi-faith) communities
- Offer protection to the public against prolific and priority offenders

Community chaplaincies can also contribute to meeting several national Probation targets.

The NOMS National Commissioning Plan 2007-08 has targets, primarily the responsibility of Probation services, relating to the number of offenders who successfully complete their licence or order, achieve an educational qualification, engage in drug rehabilitation programmes, live in settled and suitable accommodation, and who keep employment or vocational training [6].

The NOMS National Commissioning and Partnerships Framework 2008/09's key priorities include ensuring end-to-end offender management services, and improving the targeting of interventions with increasing emphasis on joining up prison and Probation efforts.

External interviewees were clear about the benefits that community chaplaincies can offer - particularly to Probation services. Community chaplaincies are seen as being able to offer:
- Whole person support (the equivalent of pastoral care) rather than just focusing on some aspects of the ex-offender's circumstances or character

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[6] Targets 8 and 14-17, pages 10-11. http://noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/strategy/Nat_Commissioning_Fwork_0708?view=Binary

- Access to funding opportunities barred to statutory organisations
- Pass porting of ex-offenders into faith communities, which as well as offering religious experience can also offer practical support and a welcoming community to ex-offenders
- A channel for effective engagement by faith communities into the criminal justice system
- Flexible and innovative work, compared to the limitations that statutory organisations sometimes find themselves acting within.

Centralised funding for community chaplaincies makes sense. The evidence suggests that such funding is extremely unlikely.

6.1.2 The national criminal justice context

We emerged with a downbeat assessment of the opportunities open to WYCCP at a regional and national level to generate financial support. There are several opportunities to engage with government thinking, and to demonstrate the contribution that community chaplaincies can make; but we are not convinced that these will lead to funding or other tangible forms of support.

There is a multiplicity of opportunities for organisations such as WYCCP to engage with central government. These include either of the Faith and Voluntary Sector Alliance, Voluntary Sector Unit at NOMS, and the promotion of the voluntary sector by both the Ministry of Justice [7] and the Cabinet Office's Office for the Third Sector. WYCCP's Director is an active member of the Yorkshire and Humberside Faith Alliance and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Pathway for NOMS.

The government is offering engagement but there is no promise of financial return. Some external interviewees referred to 'broken promises' in the past. This suggests that like some other relationships between parts of the voluntary sector and government, hopes for centralised funding – whether justified or not – have been disappointed.

One interviewee said starkly that the future of the community chaplaincies rests on government interest in the third sector as part of the criminal justice system. In other words, faith-based organisations, as a separate identifiable sector, are unlikely to be seen as a key sector for the government to work closely with.

We did not get a sense that the regional Faith Alliance is very strong. The Believing We Can consultation may or may not yield tangible results. There are doubts about how NOMS will be structured in the future. Delays in NOMS'

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[7] See for example the MoJ's Third Sector Strategy consultation document of December 2007 at http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/cp3307.pdf

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commissioning substantial work in the voluntary sector will continue, and may well never materialise.

The *Believing We Can* consultation document [8] points out that of the £13.8 million available during 2006-8 for faith communities via the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, very little went to faith-based projects working with offenders. Identified barriers included the nature of the criminal justice voluntary and community sector, and slow progress on creating commissioning opportunities. Whether *Believing We Can* has identified those barriers correctly, the outcome was that even when money was available, for whatever reason it did not reach community chaplaincies.

Community chaplaincies instead draw their principal funding from charitable trusts, local authorities via Supporting People, and (to a lesser extent) from local Probation services.

6.1.3 The network of community chaplaincies
The Community Chaplaincy Association is very much at a nesting stage, with some way to go before being a fledgling organisation. In other words, it offers some mutual support amongst its members and some sharing of good practice, but is not yet in a position to lobby effectively at the national level. Nathan Dick from Clinks is working hard to build autonomy into the Association, but the ending of his contract in November 2008 raises questions about how sustainable in the Association will be.

It was interesting to hear of the tension within the network about whether some of its members deserve to be included as community chaplaincies. This is an area of fundamental importance for the network members to work through together, and could end in a great strengthening of relationships – or in the fragmentation of the network.

We heard respect for WYCCP amongst the community chaplaincies we spoke to. This respect focussed on the capacity of WYCCP to work with offenders through its support workers rather than simply signposting or escorting clients to other agencies, and for demonstrating a multi-faith ethos in its work.

Staff in Y&H ROMS and West Yorkshire Probation Service were generally positive about the work of WYCCP. We also heard affirmation of Clair's contribution within the community chaplaincy network and in various CJS fora nationally and regionally. Interviewees mentioned primarily her participation and presence, and one specifically referred to her positive attitude and flexible approach whilst still holding firm to WYCCP's core mission. WYCCP's investment in the National Peer Support Network, and the

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[8] Believing We Can, NOMS, November 2007. http://noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/BWC_third_sector_08/

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work that community chaplaincies have done on quality standards, have paid off in terms of informing WYCCP's work and in giving WYCCP the opportunity to pilot the Spider assessment tool.

6.2 Implications

Our view from all the above is that community chaplaincies will stand or fall on their own merits. The uncertainty about NOMS' future, the apparent fragility of the regional Faith Alliance, and the vulnerability of support to the ever-changing nature of political debate about crime and punishment.

Community chaplaincies have a unique contribution to reducing re-offending, but it will be up to them individually to make their case, and not to wait for other community chaplaincies, or the Community Chaplaincy Association, to make it for them. Such security as there is would appear to rest on local relationships with Probation services rather than with ROMS offices. Further funding may not necessarily flow from this relationship, but WYPS remains WYCCP's most significant local partner.

6.3 Recommendations

t) WYCCP should continue to give time and commitment to the Community chaplaincy association, and to ROMS and national consultations, but not to the detriment of work WYCCP must do for itself to ensure its own future.

u) WYCCP should prioritise its relationship with WYPS, and continue to explore with WYPS opportunities for joint working and partnership funding.

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7. Appendix 1: Information sources

Interviews within WYCCP

Team members:

- Adrienne Grant, Administrator
- Beth Willson Pepper, Community Chaplain
- Clair Dowgill, Project Dorector
- Cliff Challenger, Volunteer Coordinator
- David Hirons, Development Worker
- Jutta Zapf, Employment Worker
- Kelly Manton, Administrator
- Neil Bent, Drugs and Substance Misuse worker
- Susan Doherty, Debt and Finance Worker
- Zahida Khan, Community Chaplain

Staff team – two sessions

Volunteers:

- Andrew Richmond
- Anne Hepworth
- Sonia Hussain
- Vic Reeves

Board members:

- Betsy Randolph-Horn
- Jane Clay
- Karl Oxford
- Khalil Kazi
- Maureen Browell
- Paul Grafton
- Roger Davis

Evaluation review group – four sessions

We also spoke to five service users.

Outside agencies:

- David Emery, Swansea Community Chaplaincy
- Fiona Neasham, Open Gate

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- Jackie Lowthian, NACRO
- John Battle MP
- Kevin Armstrong, Futures Unlocked
- Louise Garland, NOMS
- Lucia do Rosario, Feltham Community Chaplaincy
- Maxine Myatt, West Yorkshire Probation Service
- Nathan Dick, Clinks
- Paul Allen, Leeds Prison Chaplaincy
- Rachel Batchelor, NOMS
- Rita Hindley, Jigsaw Healthy Living Project
- Shirley Clarke, Y&H prisons
- Sister Katherine, Leeds Prison Chaplaincy

Documents:

- Leeds Pilot Faiths Consultation Exercise on Restorative Justice and Rehabilitation of Young Male Ex-offenders, January 2004, Kim Knott and Matthew Frances
- NOMS National Commissioning Plan 2007 / 2008
- NOMS National Commissioning and Partnerships Framework 2008 / 2009
- Swansea Community Chaplaincy Evaluation (Interim Report), Alexi Brook and Claire Luscombe, University of Kent
- North Staffordshire Community Chaplaincy Project Evaluation Report, Edwin Lewis, Wider Impact Consultancy, September 2006
- The Supervision of Community Orders in England and Wales, National Audit Office, January 2008
- Believing We Can Consultation Document, NOMS, November 2007
- Third Sector Strategy: Improving policies and securing better public services through effective partnerships Consultation Paper, Ministry of Justice, December 2007
- Discharge statistics from Leeds Prison
- Job Descriptions
- Volunteering Draft Policy
- Volunteer Agreement
- Volunteer Manual
- Publicity information including press release and web site
- Staff reports to BoD

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8. Appendix 2: Framework's evaluation principles

Evaluation and learning integrated into work
Framework firmly believes that all evaluation processes should lead to learning being integrated into the day-to-day work of any project. We have tried to work with WYCCP staff, volunteers and service users to ensure that evaluation has been a dynamic – and enjoyable – experience.

Clients at the heart
Framework believes strongly that service users or clients should be at the heart of any evaluation project. Our style is fundamentally participative. Framework has worked with WYCCP staff to give service-users a significant contribution to the evaluation. Our commitment to this way of working intends to ensure that service users are able to contribute to the outcomes of the evaluation in a meaningful way.

Commitment to a participatory approach
Participation is key to the way Framework functions. We hope we have modelled a participatory approach through the way in which we have worked with clients, staff and community stakeholders in carrying out the evaluation.

Sustainable change learning
We have been committed not just to finding out more about WYCCP's work with its clients, but also to designing an evaluation which will lead to long-term change. We hope the process will result not only in greater understanding about how men leaving prison can be better supported, but also in how structural barriers to better inclusion in the community can be tackled. We have ensured that the learning from the evaluation is fed back throughout WYCCP – and more widely if appropriate.

Equality, diversity and ethics
A core value of Framework is in recognising the equality of each individual's views and worth while respecting the diversity which individuals and groups bring to our society. All Framework consultants work to a Code of Practice, a copy of which was enclosed with our proposal.

Framework is committed to behaving ethically at all times. Our actions and advice will always conform to relevant law. We believe that all organisations, including Framework itself, should avoid causing any adverse effect on the human rights of people in the organisations we deal with, the local and wider environment, and the well-being of society at large.

Our intention has been to design an evaluation process, in collaboration with WYCCP staff and board members, which has:

- enabled a process of learning and ongoing reflection about what is being achieved and how the project is working
- helped identify changes needed in the way the project is working
- facilitated greater clarity about the needs of men leaving prison and the links between project goals and processes
- measured progress in the individual beneficiaries around integrating into their communities

Moira Halliday and John Gray
Framework
www.framework.org.uk
April 2008