

Fair Shares

community time banks

Interim Evaluation of 'Timebanking for Offenders' Funded by the Big Lottery Fund



by CG Consulting

September 2018

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1. SUMMARY

Fair Shares Gloucestershire commissioned CG Consulting to undertake an evaluation of their prison programme (funded by the Big Lottery Fund), focusing on the first three years of delivery, from September 2015 to August 2018.

The programme was established to develop approaches to support prisoners utilising time banking, focusing on the development of skills, confidence and self esteem, and maintaining family relationships.

The evaluation was undertaken using internal data and case studies, and interviews with key staff and stakeholders. The original tender included a methodology involving visits to the prisons, but due to the challenges of timescale, ethical clearance and security clearance, on-site visits were not undertaken, but telephone interviews were arranged with at least one member of staff per prison.

The evaluation aims to:

- Assess progress in the first three years
- Identify areas of good practice, and areas for improvement
- Provide recommendations for the final two years of the Big Lottery Funded programme

In summary, the programme has succeeded in reaching far more people than anticipated, and delivering the key outcomes, despite operating in a challenging environment within the prison sector. The partner prisons were overwhelming positive about the programme and the impact on prisoners.

In developing the programme, it is recommended that the focus for the remaining funding period (September 2018 to August 2020) is consolidation of the existing work, and prioritising capacity and sustainability over the development of any further activities.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

FAIR SHARES GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Background

Fair Shares Gloucestershire was established in 1998 as the UK's first time bank, and continues to innovate and lead the way in time banking, testing new approaches to time banking and co-production to rebuild communities.

The organisation is built on the principle that it is the little things that can make a big difference. By providing people with a way to share their skills and experience in their local community, Fair Shares brings people together, building stronger more resilient communities.

Activities

Fair Shares runs a range of community based projects that use reciprocal volunteering to reward people for the time and effort that put into their neighbourhood including:

- Community time banks
- Training and mentoring for young people
- Projects for older people with dementia, including walks and reminiscence activities
- Time banking and peer mentoring within prisons in the South West

The time banking activities are located across Gloucestershire, and currently reach over 600 people across the county, with working relationships with over 200 organisations.

Prison Programmes

Fair Shares first began working with prisons in 2004 when they established an innovative new approach to supporting prisoners and their families at HMP Gloucester. Through this project, prisoners earned time credits for hours spent on a range of activities such as the bicycle workshop. The time credits were then donated to family members, the local community, other prisoners or used by the prisoner on release.

This work was then rolled out to HMP Leyhill, which continued when HMP Gloucester closed in 2013. Later in 2013, the organisation piloted Times2, a new peer mentoring maths programme. This programme was found to increase numeracy skills, confidence in learning, encouraged peer support beyond the lessons, and had a wider impact on the prisoners' wellbeing.

At the time of the current programme ('Timebanking for Offenders') being developed, Fair Shares worked in HMP Leyhill, and now works in four further prisons: HMP Eastwood Park, HMP Erlestoke, HMP Dartmoor, and HMP Guys Marsh, where work is in the early stages of implementation.

CONTEXT

'Timebanking for Offenders' takes place in prisons across the South West. It is important to recognise that the prison sector as a whole, and the environment within these prisons has changed significantly since 2014, when the programme was researched and planned.

Prison Population

The number of people in prison has not changed dramatically since 2014:

- In December 2014, there were 84,442 people in prison in England, of which 80,535 were men and 3,907 women, with 97.6% of the prison capacity in use

- Three years later, in December 2017, numbers were similar with 84,746 people in prison in, of which 80,794 were men and 3,952 women, with prisons at 97.3% of total capacity

However, the population within prisons has changed, as has the prison environment. There are now longer sentences, and more prisoners sentenced for Violence Against the Person and Sexual Offences (Source: Ministry of Justice: Story of the Prison Population: 1993 –2016 England and Wales). This is also highlighted in the section on the individual prisons where the programme operates.

The Summer 2018 Bromley Briefings summarises a range of challenges facing prisons:

- Many prisons are overcrowded, affecting capacity (in terms of staff, activities and other resources) to reduce the risk of reoffending, and distance from families and support networks
- c.21,000 people were held in overcrowded accommodation in 2016/17 (almost a quarter of the prison population)
- Safety in prisons has deteriorated in the last six years, with prisoners and staff being less safe than any other point since records began.
- Self harm and serious assaults are at the highest level ever recorded, and sexual assaults in prison have more than tripled since 2012
- Assaults on staff have increased by 158% in the last four years
- There was a 25% cut in frontline operational staff between 2010–2017, and to address this the government set a target of increasing numbers by 25%. This has now been met but there are still issues relating to staff retention and experience. 39% of prison staff leaving the service last year had been in the role for less than two years, and 21% of prison officers have been in post for a year or less, with only 51% having 10+ years of experience
- People aged 60+ are the fastest growing age group in prison
- 45% of men in prison aged 50+ have been convicted of sex offences
- Nearly a third of people assessed in prison in 2016–17 reported that they had a learning disability or difficulty (compared to 2% of the general population)
- 48% of prisoners are reconvicted (64% for those serving sentences of less than 12 months)

The Autumn 2017 Bromley Briefing also notes that:

- Convictions for sexual offences had risen sharply, with a 75% increase between 2003 and 2016
- Inspectors found that safety was not good enough in 62% of male prisons visited in 2016
- 73,500 of adults in prisons participated in education in the first three quarters of the 2016/17, an 8% decrease on the previous year
- 31% of people held in a local prison spent less than two hours out of their cell each day

Prisons are now extremely challenging environments to operate in. The Prison Governors Association called for an Independent Public Inquiry into the state of prisons in 2017 following the increases in self-inflicted deaths, serious assaults on staff and incidences of self-harm.

The latest Safety in Custody statistics (up to June 2018) show that prison safety is worsening, but notes “Audits of prison data quality have revealed some under-reporting in assaults and self-harm incidents”. In the 12 months to March 2018 there were 46,859 reported incidents of self harm (549 per 1,000 prisoners), with an 8% increase in the number of prisoners self-harming. Prisoner on prisoner assaults increased by 16%, and assaults on staff by 26%.

Prisoner Needs

There has been little change in the specific challenges facing prisoners that this programme addresses (although the environment in which activities take place to address these issues has):

- Education, skills and employment: prisoners continue to be less likely to have numeracy skills and more likely to have truanted from school, been excluded, left school by 16 and have no qualifications (compared to the general population). The Bromley Briefings indicate that people with a qualification are less likely to re-offend (45% reconvicted within a year, compared with 60% with no qualifications)
- Isolation and wellbeing: prisoners are more likely to have mental health issues (including psychosis), and suicide is far more prevalent in prisons
- Family relationships: family relationships contribute enormously to reducing re-offending rates. Reoffending rates are 21% higher for people who did not receive family visits in prison compared to those who had (Bromley Briefings). This is echoed by the 2017 Farmer Review which refers to Ministry of Justice research highlighting that prisoners who receive family visits are 39% less likely to reoffend. The study refers to family relationships as “the golden thread” which needs to run through the prison estate to help reduce reoffending.

In recent years, there has been greater focus on ‘desistance theory’ recognising that a key factor in the ability of ex-offenders to successfully rebuild their lives and their sense of self, is the development of a positive, non-criminal identity. Desistance includes the absence of offending alongside the change in offenders’ identity and view of themselves as a non-offender.

Government Policies

In 2018 the government announced new education targets: that all prisoners should leave prison with Level 2 English and Maths. In some prisons the prison college is working in collaboration with Times2 to improve prisoner numeracy, with Times2 offering initial engagement and progression to formal learning. In others, the formal programmes are targeting all but the hardest to engage, which means that Times2 is reaching those with extremely low levels of numeracy.

Individual Prisons

The programme works in five prisons, all of which have faced their own challenges and changes in recent years, primarily:

- Increased numbers of sex offenders, which has had a direct impact on the programmes aims to maintain family relationships
- Staffing turnover and staffing capacity
- Incidents at the prison

HMP LEYHILL

HMP Leyhill is a Category D prison in south Gloucestershire, holding 500 men. The population has changed dramatically in recent years. In 2012, c.20% of prisoners were sex offenders, in September 2016 this was over 60% and there were plans to increase this to 90% by last year, although the news that HMP The Verne is to re-open may impact on this figure in the future.

The most recent inspection of Leyhill (published January 2017) was positive overall (in contrast to many of the other prison environments that Fair Shares is operating in): *“HMP Leyhill was a safe and decent prison. The high standards inspectors saw in 2012 had not only been maintained, but improved upon. The outcome of this inspection is a credit to all of the staff at Leyhill and the way they have responded to the energetic and committed leadership given by the senior management of the prison.”*

HMP EASTWOOD PARK

HMP Eastwood Park is the one women's prison that the programme operates in. It is based in Gloucestershire, holding 400 women (100 more than in 2013). It is a local resettlement prison and holds remand prisoners and a few young offenders.

A 2017 inspection found that the women in the prison are vulnerable:

- Many were a long way from home, as the catchment covers nearly all South West England and Southern Wales
- Over half the women reported issues with drugs and a third reported issues with alcohol
- Over three quarters have mental health or emotional wellbeing issues
- Levels of self harm had increased since 2013 and were high
- There were three self-inflicted deaths in 2016
- Increase in levels of violence within the prison

This is in keeping with the findings of the Corston report, which highlighted the vulnerability of women in prison. Whilst some women are serving sentences of many years, the majority of women are on short sentences, some as little as two or three weeks, which obviously impacts on the ability to engage the prisoners. The prison recognises that there is a 'revolving door' culture of women returning to the prison, and staff are working to address this issue. The prison also has a Mother and Baby unit, re-opened in September after water damage.

HMP ERLESTOKE

HMP Erlestoke is a Category C prison in south Wiltshire, holding just over 500 men.

An inspection in 2017 found that:

- Prison safety was not good enough, violence had increased and more of it was serious
- There was a significant drug problem which inspectors felt increased incidents of bullying and violence
- Incidents of self-harm had doubled since the last inspection in 2013
- 23% of prisoners were found to be locked in cell during the working day, with significant numbers of others not doing anything purposeful during a spot check
- 40% have emotional or mental health problems
- 55% said it was difficult or very difficult for family/friends to visit the prison

There have been a number of serious disturbances in the prison during the delivery of the programme. In 2016, two wings were closed following such an incident and August 2017 a Prison Officer suffered a broken jaw and four more were taken to hospital due to a disturbance. 140 prisoners were moved as a result with two wings closing, with two blocks on lock down and staff from Bristol moved over to address the lack of staffing, which contributed to increased lock downs and reduced activities.

The 2017 Independent Monitoring Board report noted that "Of the 88 prison officers now working at Erlestoke, 34 are new and have served less than one year. Lack of experience and confidence is a concern". In terms of education, it found that English and Maths 'functional skills' is a problem area, with courses not full, and the success rate is only 46% (compared with 98% on the other courses).

Education Managers are having some success in getting the wing staff to cooperate in encouraging the reluctant learners to engage, but the outreach work in Maths and English only restarted in January of this year with the appointment of a generalist tutor.

HMP DARTMOOR

HMP Dartmoor is a Category C prison in Devon, holding 600+ men, primarily high risk prisoners deemed suitable for Category C.

In recent years, the number of prisoners convicted for sexual offences had increased significantly, to 70% in the 2017 inspection, with an integrated regime where vulnerable prisoners live and work alongside other offenders.

HMP Dartmoor is not a resettlement prison, but nonetheless releases c.20 prisoners each month. Resettlement support was considered poor in the inspection, despite the prison releasing a significant number of men, including from the high risk population.

57% of men said that they had felt unsafe in the prison, and 36% had been victimised by other prisoners. 42% of the men said that they had mental / emotional health issues. 23% of prisoners do not get visits from family or friends.

The 2017 Independent Monitoring Board report noted a significant number of older prisoners, requiring health care and also external health visits / bed watches that reduce staffing capacity, leading to a reduced regime and prisoners behind their doors for longer.

The prison also has ongoing challenges related to both drugs and NCS (spice) and the prison environment. Built in 1809 the prison has a poor infrastructure and has been under constant threat of closure, until the lease was renewed this year for a further 10 years.

The prison (along with HMP Guys Marsh) is part of a CLINKS Good Prison pilot, which has appointed a Volunteer Co-ordinator to address the lack of coherence in volunteering in the prison. The programme works closely with the Co-ordinator in both prisons.

GUYS MARSH

The programme recently started working with HMP Guys Marsh, a Category C prison in Dorset, holding 550 men.

A 2017 inspection of the prison found failings in almost every area:

- Safety was poor, with high levels of violence, with the number of assaults on staff had tripled since 2014
- Much of the violence was serious and linked to debt and the widespread availability of illegal drugs (74% of prisoners said illegal drugs were easily available)
- Rates of self harm is higher than at similar prisons
- Prisoners lack access to basic amenities including bedding and kit
- At any one time c. 30% of prisoners were not engaged in work, training or education
- Staff shortages undermined work to help prisoners progress
- Despite a relatively high-risk population, about half of prisoners did not have a current risk assessment
- Increasing numbers of elderly prisoners - IMB
- High turnover of prisoners
- March 2017 roof top protestor started a fire that led to closure of entire wing

Guys Marsh has benefited from the role of Volunteer Co-ordinator which benefits the Fair Shares activities.

3. PROGRAMME REVIEW: DELIVERY

OVERVIEW AND TARGETS

Overview

'Timebanking for Offenders' aimed to set up a comprehensive programme to establish time banking in prisons, developing new approaches which learned from previous work. The programme has interlinked strands of activity:

- Establishing time banking in prisons
- Developing peer education maths projects
- To replicate the approach in more prisons

The overall delivery approach was intended to be:

- Building partnerships with prisons, introducing time banking so that prisoners can earn time credits (for new and existing activities)
- Prisons use time credits in different ways – donating them (to families, other prisoners or the community), or saving them to use on release
- Once time banking is established in prisons, set up peer maths learning activities

Delivery Model

Although each prison works slightly differently there is a core delivery model for each area of activity.

In the prisons with core timebanking, prisoners undertake volunteer activities for which they earn time credits. This includes activities organised by Fair Share and those by other agencies.

HMP Dartmoor differs from this approach, in that it is establishing the first fully integrated time bank within a prison in England where there is an organised skills exchange between prisoners. The time bank incorporates a wide range of activities within the prison, including formal established activities such as Listeners, informal support between prisoners (there are plans to create a skills register where prisoners can offer help), support to benefit community organisations (for example, one prisoner is skilled at making origami objects and spent hours making apples for the All Ways Apples festival in Devonport). This approach is building momentum and different departments within the prison are now looking for ways in which they can become involved in the time bank

Times2 delivers peer maths mentoring in the prison, with the Lead Mentors (in some cases with the help of the prison education team) helping to recruit mentors and learners as part of the induction process, distributing promotional leaflets in the prison and carrying out the initial maths entry test to assess the most appropriate start level. Mentors and learners are provided with workbooks covering a range of basic maths from Entry Level 1 to Level 2 which includes graphs, fractions, decimals etc. The learners and mentors will then work together 1-3 times each week for 30-60 minutes, with cell work being given between meetings for learners to practise.

In each prison there is a Lead Mentor who co-ordinate the work, and Fair Shares staff work with the prison to maintain records of meetings, receive feedback from mentors and mentees, order course material and liaise with prison staff to facilitate the movement of mentors to learners' cells within the security regime.

In all models, prisoners earn time credits for participation which can then be used in a number of ways:

- Being saved to use on release, linking to support from local time banks in the area
- Passing them on to families for practical support from local time banks
- Donating them to other prisoners to use (in the prison such as for DVDs at HMP Eastwood Park or on release), or pass onto families, or in the case of HMP Dartmoor the whole prison will benefit from the time credits generated
- Donating them to local time banks to help the wider community

Targets

The programme aimed to work in eight prisons, reaching 670 prisoners over the five years, and within the first three years (the period covered by this evaluation the targets were to:

- Be working in five prisons
- Reach 226 prisoners in total
- Engage 181 in peer maths learning (as both learners and mentors)

BENEFICIARIES

Reach

The programme reached the three year target for reaching prisoners within the first quarter of Year 3, and despite the difficulties in working within prisons there is a clear demand for the work.

Overall, the number of prisoners reached in the first three years is 427 (exceeding the target of 226) with 293 involved in Times2 (exceeding the target of 181).

All of the prisons with the Times2 project had very clear pathways to reaching potential learners, with many having multiple routes such as initial assessment and outreach.

Demographics

The programme reaches prisoners of all ages and backgrounds, reflecting the wider prison population. Nationally 26% of the prison population being from minority ethnic groups, the reach of 21-22% of programme beneficiaries being from BAME communities shows that overall they are succeeding in reaching the general prison population.

The number of prisoners with disabilities is lower, but this is due to many prisoners not disclosing disability in the project.

Prisons

The programme planned to work in five prisons across the three years, and this has been achieved with work taking place in HMP Leyhill, HMP Eastwood Park, HMP Erlestoke, HMP Dartmoor and HMP Guys Marsh. Whilst the programme is on track in this area, this represents a significant achievement given the current climate in prisons.

DELIVERY

Models in Prisons

The model within each prison varies enormously:

Prison	Timebanking	Times2	Notes
Leyhill	✓	✓	Hours from organised volunteering

Eastwood Park	✓	✓	Hours from organised volunteering, with some additional FS activities and a volunteer counsellor donating her hours to FS. Times2 focusing on maths at lowest level, funnelling into prison education. With additional capacity time banking could be expanded.
Erlestoke		✓	Hours from Times2 only
Dartmoor	✓		Whole prison time bank in development (prison has existing maths programme). Exploring plans to create targets for hours generated, which will result in rewards for the prisoners (such as a pop up photo booth so that prisoners can take photos with families which are not simply against a prison wall), or using time credits in exchange for other support (i.e. Pride Plymouth doing workshops with the transgender prison population)
Guys Marsh	✓	✓	Linking with a local charity in Dorchester which is able to use time credits to support families.

Challenges

There is no doubt that there have been some challenges in delivery as a result of external circumstance, above and beyond the anticipated challenges, such as:

- High turnover off prisoners with short sentencing (HMP Eastwood Park)
- Disturbances within the prison affecting delivery, with prisoners involved in the programme being moved on a short notice (HMP Erlestoke)
- Higher levels of sex offenders, which has directly impacted on the family relationships work and outcomes (HMP Leyhill and HMP Dartmoor)
- Staffing and capacity within prisons, affecting both delivery and the development of new projects

In addition, there has been challenges as a result of internal circumstance in Fair Shares:

- Change of CEO: In 2017, the existing CEO (who had many contacts within the prison service) left, which mean that the programme lead needed to establish new relationships or re-establish those previously with the CEO.
- Staffing Changes: There has been a relatively high turnover of staff, although with one key consistent member of staff throughout the project. Most recently, in April 2018, one of the delivery staff who had been involved since the programme started, also left.

In setting up the programme it was anticipated that Fair Shares would lead with setting up time banking within prisons, and then progress to the Times2 work. However, in many cases the prisons wanted the Times2 work initially, which has evolved into wider time banking.

Specific issues affecting delivery of key strands are covered in the impact section.

Recommendations:

- The delivery model works well and Fair Shares has responded well to leading with Times2, and time banking adds a clear USP for prisons.

- Given the challenges within the prison sector and the fact that HMP Guys Marsh is in the early stages of development, this work needed to be fully consolidated before establishing work in new prisons.

PARTNERSHIPS

The wider context already outlined has undoubtedly impacted on the delivery of the work. The lack of capacity in both in the secure estate and in community services along with frequent changes of staff and moves of prisoners, has created delays to the development of new partnerships and created delays and disruptions to the project.

There is no doubt that the development of new partnerships with prisons is time consuming and in some cases, the work is unable to progress despite a great deal of work being undertaken.

The increased workloads of prison staff and staff illness meant that replies to calls, arranging meetings and actioning requests slowed significantly, impacting on the progress of the project, and the time taken to establish activities. For example, meetings in HMP Bristol were delayed for more than a year due to long term sickness of prison staff and development in HMP Guys Marsh was also delayed.

The difficulty in gaining security clearance for Fair Shares and project staff, also had an impact on the project.

However, in talking to the staff working in the prisons, there is an understanding that this simply reflects the nature of working in prisons. For example, the project whereby women use time credits in exchange for creating DVDs of reading a story at HMP Eastwood Park was delayed for various reasons due to security issues with only 2 DVDs created in the first year. However, the staff working with families are now confident that as all staff and filming equipment has clearance, and the prison has agreed that the activity can be staffed by PACT (rather than prison staff) the work will now build momentum with 2 DVDs created every 4-6 weeks. PACT staff did not see the delayed start as a major issue, and simply the nature of establishing a new activity. Similarly at HMP Guys Marsh, staff said that it has been a slow start but *“this is just how long things take – it is an achievement just to get things set up”*.

The understaffing and disturbances have affected the prisoners working on the project including the orderlies and Lead Mentors. For example, it affected the ability of mentors to move around HMP Erlestoke which had a direct impact on the Football Maths project and slowed progress generally with mentors not always able to access learner’s wings. In HMP Eastwood Park, they also recognise that whilst much of the project can continue during periods of shutdown, there are inevitably difficulties with different clearance levels as prisoners move to other wings. In the men’s prisons this is also a factor, alongside moving to other prisons, or moving on through release. As the recruitment and training of mentors is time consuming, this can impact on delivery although the organisation is trialling a deputy Lead Mentor post at one site and Co-Lead Mentor posts (with two prisoners) at another as a way of minimising disruption when a lead mentor leaves.

One area that seems lacking in the project is the ability for staff working on each of the projects, including prison staff, to get together and share information. Ideally this would happen face to face, but given the capacity of all staff, this may be too difficult. Initially, twice yearly meetings were organised but prison staff were unable to take the time to travel to another location for these. Fair Shares also tried to incorporate this into Learning and Skills Manager meetings, but

this was not possible. Despite these practical barriers, there should be some capacity to share information such as a regular newsletter or email sharing details of models in other prisons.

In addition, to the five partnerships created, initial development was undertaken in other prisons:

- HMP Ashfield is a private prison and although initial discussions took place, they did not progress
- Initial discussions took place with HMP Bristol which has internal challenges being understaffed and with significant drug problems (spice). HMP Bristol is a category B prison with a segregated regime (with vulnerable prisoners and sex offenders segregated), and also has a high turnover. Although the Governor likes the programme, at the current time there are too many challenges in the prison to establish the work.
- HMP Channings Wood has also been discussed – whilst there is interest, this is also a difficult environment to operate in due to issues relating to violence, drugs and the physical layout of the prison, which makes safety more challenging.

There are two other possibilities for future work to be developed, HMP The Verne which is due to be opening later this year, and HMP Hewell which although outside the South West is geographically close to Fair Shares.

Recommendations:

- Although the original funding application focused on developing work in new prisons in Years 4 and 5, this should be discussed with the funder. Given the time taken to establish new projects and the current climate, it may be more sensible to consolidate the existing activities and look at future sustainability.
- If successful, roll out the deputy and co-lead mentor posts to build in sustainability in the work.
- The programme should look at ways in which to share practice more formally amongst the partners

STAFFING

The internal capacity in the programme also presents challenges, with changes in staff causing gaps and therefore a reduction in staffing during the programme. Whilst this continues to be a key challenge, the organisation has responded well to the changes and is testing new staffing models to both minimise disruption in the programme and build long term sustainability.

The programme was initially established with four part time members of staff, including the CEO, Admin support and two delivery staff, with existing staff moving into the delivery roles. This combined with the experience of the CEO in the prison sector meant that the work was quickly established and gathered momentum.

In setting up the programme a Co-ordinator was also recruited to oversee and deliver the work, but it took six months to gain security clearance for this person, who then left after six months, struggling with the nature of the work.

After this person left, one of the existing staff was promoted, the second focused on delivery in HMP Eastwood Park, and an additional member of staff was employed locally to focus on HMP Dartmoor. However, it was 8 months before the person could start due to the time taken to gain local security clearances, and then national clearance took a further 6 months. This person then left within a year, and the example of HMP Dartmoor is a good example of the time taken

to both establish partnerships and to recruit staffing – initial partnership development began in early 2016, and it wasn't until late 2017 that national security clearance was granted.

HMP Dartmoor Timeline

- Initial discussions began in early 2016
- Meeting at the prison in autumn 2016, agreeing to proceed
- October 2016 recruited for the role, with offer subject to clearance
- November 2016 started the process to gain clearance
- July 2017 local clearance granted and staff member started, working on site one day per week
- November 2017 national clearance granted
- March 2018, member of staff resigned

However, the difficulties at HMP Dartmoor, resulted in Fair Shares developing a new approach, working with a local agency (Exeter Drugs Project) which currently has a member of staff in the prison one day per week, undertaking the role of Volunteer Co-ordinator (co-ordinating all volunteer activities in the prison).

A Service Level Agreement between the two organisations means that the Volunteer Co-ordinator will deliver the Fair Shares programme one day per week in the prison, with clearance and networks already in place. This is a sensible solution to the very real challenges of new staff understanding the difficult environment that they will be working in, as well as the issue of security clearance. In addition, the distances between some prisons and Fair Shares, and the lack of motorway infrastructure in the South West of England, make this an effective and sustainable solution.

A different model has been adopted in Guys Marsh, with the CEO of Volunteer Dorset who already had a role in the prison, helping to develop the work with the Prison Project Lead. Fair Shares is now looking at different models to sustain the work including a local worker, a secondment similar to that in Dartmoor or creating a community volunteer role. delivering the work.

This model is in its infancy but already seems to be very successful. In talking to the partner staff, they noted the:

- Benefits of setting up the project, in terms of already having security clearance and significant contacts and networks within the prison
- Greater co-ordination between activities within the prison, as Volunteering Dorset noted, *“we could have been in competition but instead we are working together to benefit the whole prison community”*.

At the current time there continues to be a team of five involved in the project, with the CEO, Admin Support and Project Lead at Fair Shares, along with two other members of staff who provide additional support for specific activities such as making the DVD's. In addition there is the part time seconded post in HMP Dartmoor, and the in kind support HMP Guys Marsh. Overall, this is a reduction in capacity than initially planned and from an external perspective the project runs on the minimum capacity and the implications of this needs to be considered.

However, despite this the programme is delivering in line with original plans and producing strong outcomes. In talking to all prison partners, there have been no complaints about the delivery, nor have there been significant concerns about project capacity. In undertaking the evaluation, it is clear that this success is due to both the strong groundwork set with developing activities and the experience and commitment of the Fair Shares Prison Lead, who has a background in working with people with complex needs and whose commitment and energy has sustained the programme, backed up by a wide range of comments by various prison staff.

Fair Shares is looking at solutions to the capacity including securing additional funding and additional secondments – for example, a further secondment in HMP Eastwood Park would help enormously, and in HMP Erlestoke.

In addition, the original plan involved local volunteers supporting activities. This was not initially feasible, but is now being explored and Fair Shares is working with different volunteer agencies to progress this.

Finally, in addition to the issue of capacity within the programme, there should be a review of support for all staff working in the prisons (including those seconded to the programme). This needs to consider:

- Support for staff, including arrangements to ensure that there is no risk of burnout or secondary trauma. Whilst the risk of this at the current time is low, given the experience of the staff this needs to be in place for any future staff, and to ensure that organisational procedures match the requirements of the work.
- Regularly updated risk assessments for working in each prison, and regular assessments of training needs which specifically responds to this (such as radio training, hostage training etc.)
- Reviewing if existing organisational policies cover working with offenders, or whether separate policies are required

Recommendations:

- As a sustainable and timely solution, the organisation should explore increasing capacity with SLAs with local organisations already working in individual prisons focusing on HMP Eastwood Park and then HMP Erlestoke. This will increase capacity, and provide an effective and sustainable solution, and ideally should be explored as a way forward for every prison, particularly those outside Gloucestershire.
- Staff are working in difficult and challenging environments, and the organisation should explore the possibility of wellbeing support for staff.
- The existing Co-ordinator is an experienced and committed member of staff, but there is a real and significant risk that without her, the organisation would struggle to deliver the programme. Both capacity and sustainability need to be reviewed in the coming two years.
- Staff support structures to be reviewed, including the need for wellbeing supervision.
- Organisational policies including risk assessments to be reviewed.

4. PROGRAMME REVIEW: IMPACT

OUTCOMES ONE: EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Increased access to education, increasing skills, engagement in education and confidence in future employment prospects, through peer maths mentoring

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Increased skills Target of 181 people by end of Y3 (132 learners, 49 mentors)	70 (41L, 29M)	105 (77L, 28 M)	102 (71L, 31M)	277
Increased engagement in education Target of 94 people by end of Y3 (all learners)	5	16	57	78
Increased confidence in future employment Target of 181 people by end of Y3	45	67	113	225

Delivery

The model is now well established in most of the prisons (in development at Guys Marsh), and generally working well despite issues around some of the prisoners being moved.

There has been some innovation within the work such as:

- Football Maths approach developed by with the University of Manchester in Years 1 and 2. This approach was originally developed for PRUS with Manchester United, and was used in the prison to encourage the least willing to participate in maths and access it via football. This approach was hugely successful until the key member of staff was injured in the disturbance at the prison, and subsequently left.
- HMP Eastwood Park breaking down the resources into bitesize workbooks, which increases the sense of progression for learners.

The context for this work has changed considerably since it was established, with HMPPS targets meaning that everyone is now working towards Level 2, and increased pressure on formal learning to achieve this. There is a risk that Times2 is used as a 'get out clause' during inspections for their solution to dealing with learners who are unlikely achieve Level 2, or struggling to reach it.

However, all of the prisons said that the Times2 programme complemented the formal education programmes within the prison: *"There could have been in competition [with the other projects] but instead we are working together to benefit the whole prison community"* (Staff at HMP Guys Marsh).

Challenges in delivery which could potentially affect outcomes are:

- Appropriateness of learning materials, some of which are focused on younger learners. Fair Shares wants to develop a range of materials which are more appropriate but there is currently insufficient capacity for this.
- There can be difficulties if the mentors and learners are on different wings, or where security clearances create difficulties in movement between wings.
- The Lead Mentor role is key, and with short term changes, there is a regular need to have people ready to move into this role. In some situations, mentors are able to step up, but in others there may not be anyone suitable already involved in the programme.

- Sudden changes in mentors and prisoners moving can also have an impact. For example, as a result of the disturbance at HMP Erlestoke, 140 prisoners were moved (including 7 participants in the programme) and two wings were closed. In addition, the prison Physical Educator Instructor working on the Football maths programme was assaulted and left the prison service.

Impact

The increased learning and engagement in education has been one of the strongest outcomes of the project, as well as innovative delivery, with far more people engaging in the Times2 programme than originally anticipated. The impact in all outcomes is strong, and it is suspected that there is some under-reporting, particularly in terms of the numbers increasing engagement in education.

The prisons where Times2 operates all confirmed that the project is having a positive impact on the prisoners including:

- Improving confidence in terms of overall confidence, and pride in gaining a certificate and progressing with learning
- Improving maths skills and ability, both for those with low ability, or those with gaps in their knowledge
- Helping access learning per se, building the confidence to access other classes

Feedback from individual prisoners' echoes this:

- F, a learner at HMP Dartmoor said he *"suffers from anxiety and stress in the classroom"* and that he wants to take part in Times2 to get a better understanding of maths, and to help with his education
- M, a mentor at HMP Eastwood Park said that mentoring others *"keeps me occupied, made me happy to be able to help people that want to learn and that want to improve their maths"* and that she hopes that *"on release I would be able to prove that I worked in prison, not just served my time and potential employers can see this as a positive thing and give me a chance of employment"*
- D, a mentor at HMP Guys Marsh (who was released whilst being a mentor) said *"I believe the skills and qualifications I have achieved in prison will further my employment prospects"*

In addition, a focus group run by Fair Shares in December 2017 found that being involved in Times2 helped prisoners with their families, developing confidence and building skills, as prisoners said when asked how the project had helped:

- *"It will help my two children and my work"*
- *"It has improved my drawing so I can send more pictures and cards"*
- *"I will be able to help my son with his education"*
- *"Communication skills"*
- *"Confidence building"*
- *"Ability to do day to day calculations"*
- *"Helped me become more employable"*

Fair Shares and prison staff have noticed that within the prison community there is a real desire to help other people and the work has benefited from some fantastic mentors, but unfortunately many of these move on.

OUTCOME TWO: ENGAGEMENT AND CONFIDENCE

Increased engagement with other prisoners, increasing confidence and self-worth, through timebanking

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Increased engagement in prison activities Target of 135 people by end of Y3	30	60	102	192
Increased engagement with other prisoners Target of 227 people by end of Y3	38	97	164	299
Increased self worth and confidence Target of 227 people by end of Y3	44	87	131	262

Delivery

Prisoners earn time credits for the Times2 project and a range of other activities in the prison. In addition, the programme has developed additional activities such as:

- A personal development programme at HMP Leyhill and HMP Erlestoke, was successful but needs significant additional funding to be rolled out.
- HMP Dartmoor is being developed as the first fully interactive prison time bank, and has developed new activities such as the whole prison rewards when the target of 2,000 hours is reached

Some of the prisons are embracing time banking and looking at ways in which different departments can get involved. For example at HMP Dartmoor, they have established a range of activities through the prison time bank including the creation of a poppy sculpture, and the Psychology Department is exploring ways to become involved. Staff said that these activities *“wouldn’t happen without time banking... People are thinking about how to involve everyone, rather than thinking about setting up specific activities”*.

Finally, the programme has used a new monitoring forms this year, in line with GDPR, and involved men in the monitoring more – however, as always within the prison system the implementation of this can be challenging.

Impact

The programme has reached far more people than anticipated, exceeding the original targets set out in the funding application, despite the incredibly challenging environment that the work took place in.

However it is hard for the figures to highlight the added value that time banking brings to the prisons, and this was explored in talking to prison staff, who were asked if they thought that this approach brought additional value compared to other volunteer programmes. There was a unanimous agreement that the time bank element and the time credits was an additional motivator and reward for the prisoners.

In addition to encouraging interaction between the prisoners, either directly through the Times2 project, or indirectly through the sense of being part of the time bank, or the shared goal of reaching the time credit target.

Staff at HMP Erlestoke said that the time banking element does add value, and the men know that every hour earned goes somewhere, which they like. Many are not local, so can’t directly give back to their families but they are pleased to be giving something back to the community.

Staff also said that there is likely to be an indirect benefit to the wider prison community, as men build communication skills and increase their confidence in engaging with others, this can improve overall demeanour and interaction. There have been interesting approaches to the prisoners giving back to the local community, such as making Pokemon Go cards in HMP Dartmoor for the RNLI raffle, as well as the origami apples made for community events.

In many of the prisons, staff said that the prisoners enjoy hearing what the hours were used for (in the community), and that time banking hours do provide a particular motivation and connection with the community. The Prison Good Will Pot time credits have been used in a range of ways, such as helping an organisation for vulnerable women, or supporting individuals referred by Victim Support – participants are told about these through newsletters and meetings.

Staff at HMP Dartmoor said that the time bank is definitely bringing prisoners together, and the time banking approach does add a new dimension. For example, when a recent theatre production ended, the mood of the men noticeably dropped but because they were part of the time bank, they could focus on what the next time banking activity could be.

Feedback from prisoners highlights the range of activities and ways that help build engagement within the prison:

- *“Coming from a mainly mining area in the North East I hadn’t had much contact with people from different cultures. Whilst helping people with maths, I have benefited from the mentees, in learning and appreciating our many similarities, and understanding our differences”*
- *“I enjoy feeling part of something bigger than myself, I see my mentees growing in knowledge and confidence. I am proud of seeing changes in my mentees, but also improvements in me and how I interact with others”*

OUTCOME THREE: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Increased ability to help their families, increasing ability to maintain family relationships, through using time credits

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Prisoners earning time bank credits Target of 226 people by end of Y3	79	142	206	427
Prisoners using time credits to support and maintain family relationships Target of 35 people by end of Y3	13	11	9	33
Prisoners and families benefiting from time credits to maintain family relationships Target of 35 people by end of Y3	6	25	9	40

Delivery

The engagement with families has worked on two different levels.

Although, the targets for family relationships were met, this has been more challenging year on year as the prison population changed. Direct support has been more difficult with the population of men reached and the increasing number of sex offenders in the partner prisons. However, there have been successes such as time credit vouchers passed on to other time banking organisations in Wales, or the DVDs created for families in HMP Eastwood Park.

Establishing the DVD programme was initially time consuming, with obtaining clearance for additional staff to film, clearance for all equipment and booking suitable times in the prison. However, now established it is running smoothly, and prison staff are happy for PACT to oversee the work. PACT staff are also mindful of the needs of the women following the filming, particularly if they are emotional or at risk of self-harm, and liaise with prison staff to keep them safe.

Impact

The overall engagement in time banking has been strong with the 3 year target met in the first quarter of Year 3.

In terms of the direct benefits, some prisoners have been able to provide practical support for their own families in their home community through passing on time credits to their local time bank.

Although the numbers are currently small (with plans to increase next year), the creation of the DVDs at HMP Eastwood Park has a huge benefit for women and their families. Staff from PACT said that the women enjoy participating throughout the process: from choosing the book and practising reading to make themselves feel more confident, to the filming, and sending it to their children. The women who have already participated in the programme regularly ask if the DVD has been edited and sent (Fair Shares send a copy of the DVD to PACT so that they can see the DVD).

At the current time the prison prioritises women who don't get to see their children (due to geography or where children cannot visit for other reasons), but there is a hope that this can be extended if Fair Shares can provide the capacity. Staff from PACT said "*its brilliant, and there will always be a need for it*" she noted the need to manage expectations as with more women learning about the DVDs there are people asking for it.

The time credit target at HMP Dartmoor is an interesting approach to involving families and has had both an indirect benefit, as well as plans to directly benefit many families. The target of 2,000 hours has become a real area of focus, not just within the prison but for families as well, who are asking the prisoners how close they are getting to target. Staff at the prison believe that the photo booth for family visits will make a big impact on many families – before a photograph would have a prison background with the family member often in a prison shirt, and now people will be able to have something totally different – children will now have a photo that they feel proud of and able to share.

The Times2 project also has a strong indirect benefit, in some cases prisoners are able to help their children with their maths homework. In other cases, simply being part of the programme means that there is something to talk about, and a sense of pride that they can share with their families. For example, W a mentor at HMP has a son who works in education. His son told W, that he was proud that his father was involved in educating others.

Recommendations:

- Fair Shares should seek to secure funding for the additional capacity for staff to film and edit the DVDs for women at Eastwood Park.

SUCSESSES

There is no doubt that this programme has been a great success, despite considerable challenges within the prison system and in staffing.

The programme now works in five prisons and has developed a range of models including the integrated time bank at HMP Dartmoor. Many of the prisons communicated the same sentiment – that it has been a bumpy road to establish the activities but there is now a firm base to build on for the future.

Key successes identified by staff include:

- Integration with other volunteering projects, particularly HMP Dartmoor where the member of staff is seconded, and there are plans at HMP Guys Marsh to add value to Times2 by linking with their existing volunteering project
- Success of Times2 in terms of learning outcomes and examples of ‘above and beyond’ mentoring, such as at HMP Erlestoke where mentors engaged with men in the Care and Separation Unit (solitary confinement)
- Use of time credits for families including DVDs, time credit vouchers being sent to families through local time banks, and support on release with transport being arranged for one man on release in exchange for time credits
- Prisoners telling the project that they want to stay engaged once they leave

LESSONS LEARNED

A summary of recommendations is detailed in the next section but the key lessons which will help with development of new projects:

- Lead in time: establishing the projects is time consuming, in terms of capacity and the length of time needed to make progress.
- Capacity: the projects need weekly / ongoing support, and this needs to respond to the individual sites, all of which are different.
- Sustainability: working with local agencies who have clearance and networks with the prisons can resolve staffing issues and help build in local sustainability. Times2 can be more sustainable when there are strong Lead Mentors (with succession plans) as well as strong links with formal learning

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The below summarises the recommendations throughout the document:

- The delivery model works well, and the approach has been hugely successful. Both the timebanking and Times2 add value to the prisons and the approach should be disseminated. The programme should explore opportunities for sharing learning within the programme and to a wider audience.
- However, within this programme, in the remaining two years it would be sensible to focus on consolidation and sustainability within the existing prisons, rather than expansion into new prisons and this should be agreed with the funder.
- Working with local partners to second staff as a solution to staffing and future sustainability issues is in the early stages but working well and this model should be replicated wherever possible.
- Planning should be undertaken on sustainability for all activities in the coming years, and staffing arrangements should reflect this.
- Within Fair Shares, the possibility of wellbeing support for staff should be explored, alongside wider policies and risk assessments to support staff.
- Additional fundraising to be undertaken, for the programme as a whole but also to add value to activities, such as the additional capacity for staff to film and edit the DVDs for women at Eastwood Park.

APPENDIX 1 : EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fair Shares Gloucestershire an evaluation of their prison programme (funded by the Big Lottery Fund), focusing on the first three years of delivery, from September 2015 to August 2018.

The programme was established to develop approaches to support prisoners utilising time banking, focusing on the development of skills, confidence and self esteem, and maintaining family relationships.

DELIVERY MODEL

The programme is being delivered in five prisons: HMP Leyhill, HMP Eastwood Park, HMP Erlestoke, HMP Dartmoor, and HMP Guys Marsh (in early stages of delivery).

The model differs in each prison, but all have timebanking at the core, where prisoners undertake volunteer activities for which they earn time credits. In some prisons this includes Times2, Fair Shares peer maths mentoring project, where prisoners earn credits for being Mentors and learners. The project covers basic maths from Entry Level 1 to Level 2 which includes graphs, fractions, decimals etc.

The delivery of the work has been affected by both wider changes in the prison sector, and within Fair Shares itself, but despite these challenges, the work has continued to be successful.

Within the prison sector, the main challenges have been:

- Increasingly unsafe prison environment (for staff and prisoners) and disturbances within individual prisons affecting delivery in a number of ways (staff leaving following injury, participants being moved to different prisons, etc.)
- The population in two of the prisons changed significantly (HMP Leyhill and HMP Dartmoor) with much higher levels of sex offenders which impacted on the work undertaken with families
- Overall staffing and capacity within prisons, affecting both delivery and the development of new projects

Despite these, Fair Shares has responded well to the challenges, and there is understanding with Fair Shares staff and all parties about the prison environment. As one member of staff at HMP Guys Marsh commented on the slow start: *“this is just how long things take – it is an achievement just to get things set up”*.

Within Fair Shares, there have been staffing changes, including the CEO, and project staff leaving for a variety of reasons (moving on, struggling with the nature of the work). However, the organisation has found solutions to staffing issues which present more manageable and sustainable solutions, such as seconding staff from partner organisations to the project in individual prisons. This benefits the project in terms of local networks and knowledge, and addresses issues such as travelling time and the difficulties in getting security clearance for new staff.

REACH

The original targets were to work with five prisons on the first three years, reaching a total of 226 prisons, of which 181 would be participating in Times2. They exceeded this number, reaching 427 prisoners, with 293 involved in Times2. Given the challenges in the prison sector and in staffing, this is a significant achievement.

OUTCOMES

The programme envisaged resulting in outcomes in three key areas: the development of skills, confidence and self esteem, and maintaining family relationships.

Skills, Education and Employment

The programme exceeded the target in most areas, other than increasing access to education (although this is likely to be under-reporting, rather than under-delivering):

- 277 people benefited from increased skills through Times2 (exceeding the target of 181 people)
- 78 people benefited from increased engagement in education (just under the target of 94 people)
- 225 people benefited from increased confidence in future employment (exceeding the target of 225 people)

The prisons all confirmed that the project is having a positive impact on the prisoners including: improved confidence in learning, improved maths skills and ability and increasing engagement with learning. This was also backed up by prisoners, for example M, a mentor at HMP Eastwood Park said that mentoring others *“keeps me occupied, made me happy to be able to help people that want to learn and that want to improve their maths”* and that she hopes that *“on release I would be able to prove that I worked in prison, not just served my time and potential employers can see this as a positive thing and give me a chance of employment”*

Engagement and Confidence

The programme exceeded all targets:

- 192 people benefited from increased engagement in prison activities (exceeding the target of 135 people)
- 299 people benefited from increased engagement with other prisoners (exceeding the target of 227 people)
- 262 people benefited from increased self-worth and confidence (exceeding the target of 227 people)

The prisons all confirmed the value of the project in this area, and the unique impact that time banking has brought to the prisons (above and beyond existing volunteer programmes). In talking to prison staff, there was a unanimous agreement that the time credits provided an additional motivator and reward for the prisoners.

In addition to encouraging interaction between the prisoners, the time bank also created a sense of common purpose, as well as adding value through the rewards of time credits. Even when prisoners or their families did not individually benefit, the fact that the time credits helped people in the community or the prison was important and there was a sense of pride in giving to others.

Family Relationships

The programme exceeded most targets:

- 427 prisoners earning time credits (exceeding the target of 226 people)
- 33 prisoners used time credits to support and maintain family relationships (just below the target of 35 people)
- 40 prisoners and families benefiting from time credits to maintain family relationships (exceeding the target of 3 people)

The overall engagement in time banking has been strong and the time credits have helped families directly and indirectly.

In terms of the direct benefits, some prisoners have been able to provide practical support for their own families in their home community through passing on time credits to their local time bank. Women at HMP Eastwood Park have also benefited from Fair Shares staff filming a DVD of them reading a story to their children.

The programme also had unexpected benefits from families – this means that targets were mostly achieved despite delivery being affected by the number of sex offenders participating in the project. For example, HMP Dartmoor is setting a target of 2,000 hours and when achieved there will be a reward in the Family Centre (photo booth) and feedback indicates that this is already having a positive impact with families asking prisoners for updates on the target, and all benefiting from this shared goal. For those taking part in Times2, people are helping their children with maths homework. For example, W a mentor at HMP has a son who works in education. His son told W, that he was proud that his father was involved in educating others.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, the programme has succeeded in reaching far more people than anticipated, and delivering the key outcomes, despite operating in a challenging environment within the prison sector. The partner prisons were overwhelmingly positive about the programme and the impact on prisoners.

The below summarises the recommendations throughout the document:

- The delivery model works well, and the approach has been hugely successful. Both the timebanking and Times2 add value to the prisons and the approach should be disseminated. The programme should explore opportunities for sharing learning within the programme and to a wider audience.
- However, within this programme, in the remaining two years it would be sensible to focus on consolidation and sustainability within the existing prisons, rather than expansion into new prisons and this should be agreed with the funder.
- Working with local partners to second staff as a solution to staffing and future sustainability issues is in the early stages but working well and this model should be replicated wherever possible.
- Planning should be undertaken on sustainability for all activities in the coming years, and staffing arrangements should reflect this.
- Within Fair Shares, the possibility of wellbeing support for staff should be explored, alongside wider policies and risk assessments to support staff.
- Additional fundraising to be undertaken, for the programme as a whole but also to add value to activities, such as the additional capacity for staff to film and edit the DVDs for women at Eastwood Park.